

Selling to Cardiff Council

A guide for
suppliers &
contractors



This guide aims to help potential suppliers and contractors understand how Cardiff Council currently buys goods, services and works and help them to increase their chances of finding out about opportunities and bidding for work.

The guide has been developed in collaboration with Caerphilly, Torfaen and Rhondda Cynon Taf Councils and similar guides are scheduled to be published by these Councils during 2013. This guide will be updated in late 2013 to reflect changes that are planned to take place over the coming year as the Council seeks to increase the number of lower value opportunities advertised on Sell2Wales.

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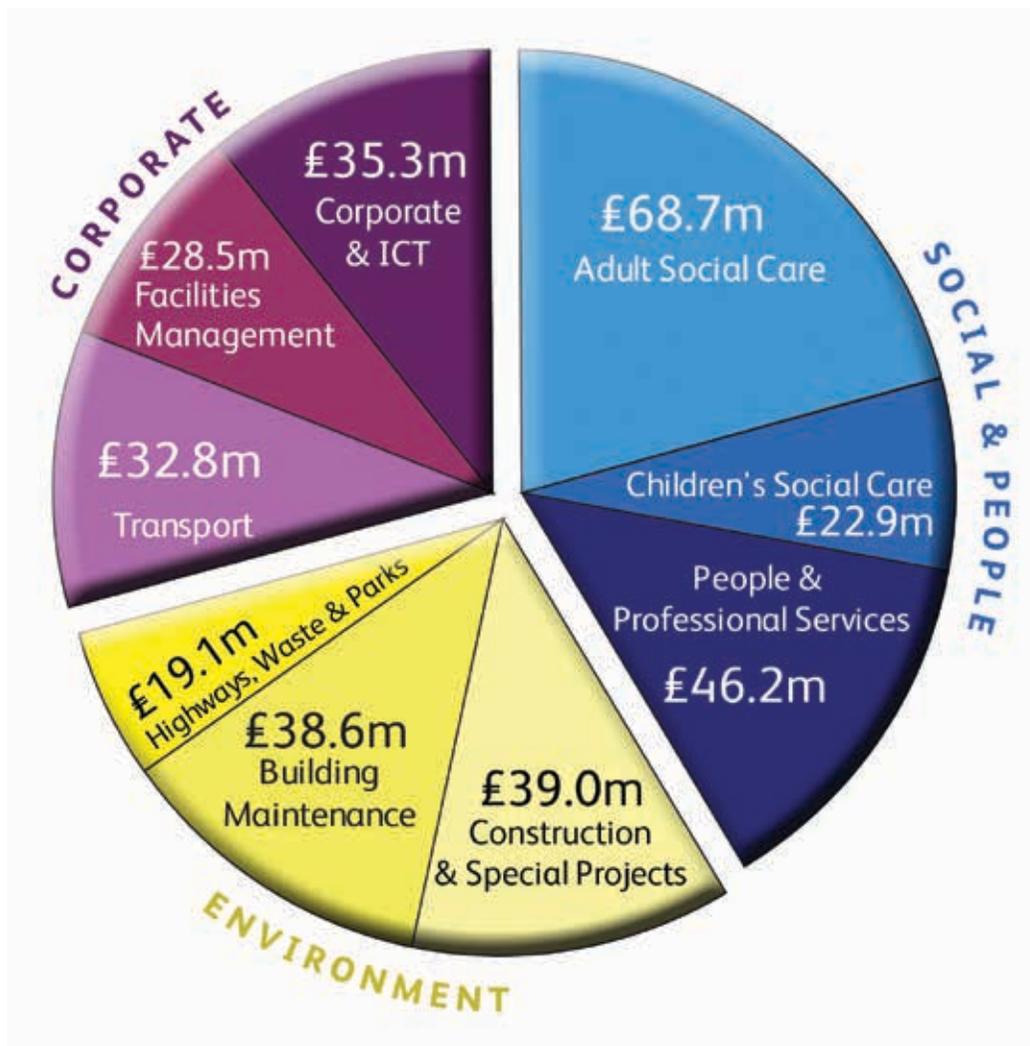
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How is Procurement organised?

Cardiff Council spends over £300 million per year on the procurement of a diverse range of goods, services and works from external organisations in the private and third sector.

This spend must be managed efficiently and effectively and it is the responsibility of the Commissioning and Procurement team to manage all of the Council's procurement activities.

In 2012, the Council implemented a Category Management approach to commissioning and procurement. This is simply a way of managing buying activity by grouping together related products and services across the entire Council. There are nine key categories as set out within the chart below.



“Cardiff Council aims to increase the number of lower value opportunities advertised on Sell2Wales”

Fig 1: Council Spend 2011/12 by Key Category

Where can I find out about contract opportunities?

Cardiff Council publishes contract opportunities via one of two systems:

- **Sell2Wales** is the National Procurement website for Wales, this includes all widely advertised contract opportunities valued both below and above the EU thresholds. Sell2Wales has a direct link to the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) where contracts above the EU thresholds must be published.
- **Alito Procurement Portal Wales** (appwales) is the Council's e-tendering portal, also used by RCT, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent. Contract opportunities are advertised to registered suppliers/contractors.

The Council encourages suppliers to register on Alito and Sell2Wales. Both are free of charge and allow suppliers to receive automated tender notifications by email, view opportunities via the Bulletin Boards, update and maintain their profile, receive instructions on how to access tender documents and view details of awarded contracts.

To access Sell2Wales & Alito, click on the icons below



N.B. It is important to only register against the categories which are relevant to the goods/services/works you supply. This will ensure that you only receive notifications about contract opportunities relevant to your field of work.

The web link for instructions on how to register on Alito can be found at the end of this guide.

Assistance and support is available from a number of organisations; for further information please see the 'Further Support' section.

In addition to the above, Cardiff Council has a Contract & Framework Calendar which provides information on its current contracts and frameworks. This includes details of current suppliers, the contract manager and expiry dates.

“We strongly advise suppliers to register on both Alito & Sell2Wales for free to access opportunities”

Please click on the image to view the calendar.

Contract Title	Reference	Contract Categories	WPC Lead	Expiry Date	Extension	Contract Manager	Website
App. Platform	APP/2022/05/001	Software & Digital Services - Equipment Agencies	Current	31/03/2023	Not applicable	Debbie Cooper@cc.gov.uk	Cardiff Council
Public Services	APP/2022/05/002	Building Supplies & Works, works & sports and medical works	Current	30/06/2024	Not applicable	app.procurement@cc.gov.uk	Cardiff Council
Financial, Training Services, Training & Learning Consultancy (until 2024/2025)	11/2022	Consultancy Services - Academic/Non-Academic		30/06/2023	Not applicable	learning@cc.gov.uk	Cardiff Council
Asset Renewal (RSC)	CCSP/2022/05/001	Engineering & Environmental Services - Academic/Non-Academic		31/03/2023	Not applicable	De-Ziwan@cc.gov.uk	Cardiff Council
Asset Renewal (Quoted Services) (RSC)	CCSP/2022/05/002	Engineering & Environmental Services - Academic/Non-Academic		31/03/2023	Not applicable	De-Ziwan@cc.gov.uk	Cardiff Council
Asset Renewal (Specified Services) (RSC)	CCSP/2022/05/003	Engineering & Environmental Services - Academic/Non-Academic		31/03/2023	Not applicable	De-Ziwan@cc.gov.uk	Cardiff Council

What rules, regulations & procurement procedures does the Council follow?

The way in which the Council purchases goods, services and works is governed by European Union (EU), UK law and by the Council's own internal Contract Standing Orders and Procurement Rules (CSOPR).

Cardiff Council has a legal requirement to comply with EU Procurement Directives, which govern the way in which public sector procurement is conducted for contracts over the thresholds set out below.

Goods	Services	Works
£173,934	£173,934	£4,348,350
€200,000	€200,000	€5,000,000

Fig 2: EU Thresholds (values effective from 1st January 2012 for two years)

The purpose of the EU Directives is to encourage open and transparent competition which is delivered through competitive tendering throughout the European Union. All public sector procurement, including below EU thresholds, must abide by the EU Treaty Principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination, mutual recognition, proportionality and transparency.

The Council's Contract Standing Orders & Procurement Rules provide the framework for ensuring that public money is spent with demonstrable probity and accountability regardless of value.

Before sourcing external suppliers the Council will identify whether the need can be met through an existing contract or framework agreement (see [Why Do We Use Framework Agreements?](#)). If the need cannot be met through an existing contract or framework agreement, a Request for Quotation (RFQ) or Tender process will be carried out depending on the value of the contract, as set out in the table in Figure 3 on the next page:

RFQ or Tender	Value	Process	Advertisement
RFQs Carried out by buyers within service areas who will usually send a request for quotation by email to supplier(s).	Less than £3k	Receive at least 1 quote	Discretion of the buyer as to whether the opportunity requires advertising.
	£3k to less than £10k	Receive at least 2 quotes	
Tenders The majority of tenders valued above £10k follow a Restricted or Open Procedure. Restricted = 2 stages Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) & Invitation to Tender (ITT). Open = 1 stage Tender document made up of selection questions (equivalent to PQQ) and award questions (equivalent to ITT).	£10k to less than £100k	A minimum of 3 tenders must be invited	Advertising is discretionary subject to the type of procurement. Adverts may be placed on the bulletin board on Alito or Sell2Wales.
	£100k to below EU Threshold	A minimum of 4 tenders must be invited	
	Over EU Threshold	EU Procurement Directives apply	Adverts must be published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) for which Sell2Wales has a direct link to.

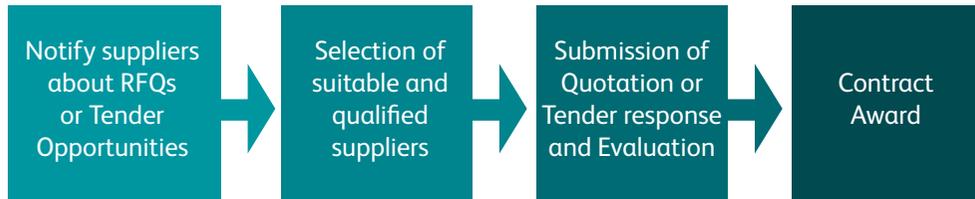
Fig 3: Procurement Processes

EU procurement processes must follow **minimum timescales** as set out in the EU Procurement Directives; these vary according to the procurement process chosen and whether a Prior Information Notice (PIN) was issued. The actual timescales will also vary according to the scale and complexity of the procurement.

“The Council needs to buy in a way that is legal, manages risk and delivers value for money”

How are suppliers selected and appointed?

Although the exact process followed for selecting and appointing suppliers will depend on the value of the goods, services or works being procured it will essentially contain the following steps which are explained in more detail below.



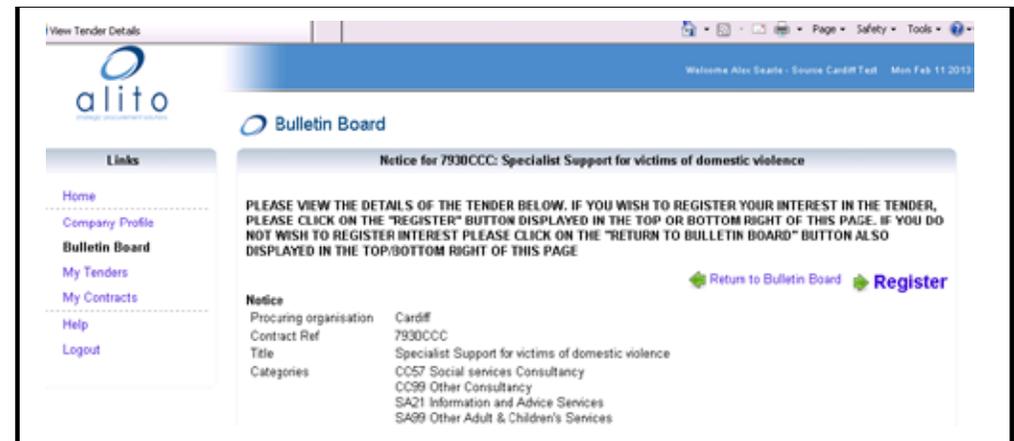
Notify suppliers about RFQs or Tender Opportunities

The Council can notify suppliers about an RFQ or Tender opportunity in one of three ways.

Buyers will either:

- Consult the supplier directory on Alito and select appropriate suppliers to invite to quote or tender in accordance with the minimum number required (as shown in the table above), or;
- Issue a contract notification by email to all suppliers registered under the relevant category of goods, services or works on Alito, or;
- Place an advert on Alito and/or Sell2Wales which any supplier can view. The advert will provide instructions to suppliers on how to obtain the tender documents and submit a response. Contracts advertised on Sell2Wales which are above the EU thresholds will automatically be published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

When the contract is advertised, whether it's via Alito or Sell2Wales, prospective bidders will be directed to Alito to **express an interest**. Simply registering on Alito is not regarded as an expression of interest; if a supplier sees an opportunity they are interested in suppliers will need to select that opportunity and click 'Register' to express an interest. Tender documents for **advertised** contracts will not be sent to suppliers by email; suppliers must download the documents from Alito



Selection of suitable and qualified suppliers

Where opportunities are advertised the Council must ensure that suppliers are suitable and are qualified to deliver the specified requirements against an agreed contract.

In order to assess the supplier's suitability, the Council will either:

- Issue a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (for a restricted procedure).
- Use selection questions as part of the tender process (for an open procedure).
- Issue a Self Certification Form.
- Rely on supplier data already held by the Council.

To ensure the Council does this in a way which is consistent and proportionate to the value, risk and complexity of the contract, the Council has adopted the Welsh Government's **Supplier Qualification Information Database (SQuID)**. This provides a standard set of questions and guidance in respect of their application and use for the following areas:

- **Supplier Acceptability:** discretionary grounds for excluding a bidder on the basis of offences such as conspiracy, corruption, fraud, bribery, bankruptcy and insolvency.
- **Economic / Financial Standing:** in some cases, potential suppliers may need to be registered with Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) and/or provide the last 2 years profit and loss figures. This will depend on the type of services being tendered.
- **Insurances:** potential suppliers may be asked to provide evidence of minimum levels of Employer's & Public Liability & Professional Indemnity.
- **Technical Competencies and Qualifications:** provide evidence of contract specific competencies or qualifications e.g. Gas Safe.
- **Capacity and Capability:** detail about previous experience & contracts delivered.

- **Management:** information on quality-assurance techniques & performance review.
- **Equal Opportunities:** confirm suppliers' commitment to equal opportunities.
- **Sustainability:** confirm suppliers' commitment to economic, social and environmental sustainability.
- **Health & Safety:** the extent of the assessment will be appropriate to the nature of the contract, depending on the goods, services or works provided. Where the Council identifies that Health & Safety must be assessed, contractors must be accredited by a Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) member (or equivalent) before any contract is awarded.

If the supplier meets the requirements above, they will progress to the tender/award stage of the procurement process.

“The Council is committed to improving the use of SQuID in order to simplify & standardise the selection process whilst improving transparency.”

Submission of Quotation or Tender response and Evaluation

Dependent on the value of the contract, selected suppliers will either be issued with a Request for Quotation (RFQ) or an Invitation to Tender (ITT).

Request for Quote – is a much simpler process compared to a tender. At present, quotes will typically be requested by email and suppliers may receive all or some of the following:

- Instructions for submitting the quote.
- Specification of Requirements (on which suppliers must base their quote).
- Method Statements (questions asking how the requirements will be delivered).
- Evaluation criteria & scoring methodology (if there is an element of quality that must also be assessed).

Suppliers will usually be required to return the quote by email.

Tender – is a much more comprehensive process. Suppliers who express an interest in the opportunity will receive a tender pack which consists of a range of tender documents. These documents will either be issued by email (if the tender was not openly advertised) or downloaded from Alito (if the tender was openly advertised). The tender pack typically consists of the following:

- Instructions to Tenderers / Bidders.
- Specification of Requirements.
- Method Statements (questions asking how the requirements will be delivered).
- Evaluation criteria & scoring methodology.
- Pricing schedule.
- Contract Terms and Conditions (Ts&Cs).
- Form of Tender.
- Tender Return label.

At the tender/award stage, the Council will evaluate the supplier's proposal of how they intend to deliver the specified requirements and at what cost. This differs to the **selection stage** which qualifies the supplier based on capability and capacity derived from **past experience**.

Tender responses will either be assessed on a pass/fail basis or scored. Everything a tenderer needs to know about how they will be evaluated will be clearly stated in the tender document pack.

Tender evaluation will be based on one of the following:

1. **Price and Quality**, used for the majority (if not all) services and works. Known as the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) with weightings assigned, for example, 40 % price and 60 % quality.
2. **Price only** (lowest cost) – usually used for goods only.

In order to assess the quality criteria, suppliers will be asked to submit a written tender response. Where appropriate they may also be invited to an interview and/or presentation.

N.B. Although tenders are issued via Alito (if advertised) or by email, (if not advertised) tenders must be returned in **hard copy**.

Contract Award

Request for Quote – typically the supplier who submitted the lowest price will be awarded the contract. However, if there is a quality element as part of the evaluation, then the supplier who submitted the lowest quote may not necessarily be the one who wins the contract.

Tenders – for those evaluated on the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT), the contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose overall score is the highest. For those based on price only, the supplier who submitted the lowest price will be awarded the contract.

N.B. Registration on Alito is a Council requirement **before** a contract can be awarded. Therefore if the tender process has been conducted outside of the Alito e-portal then the successful tenderer must ensure they are registered on Alito if they have not already done so. This is a straightforward and quick process.

“The Council is committed to implementing further improvements in e-procurement”

Community Benefits

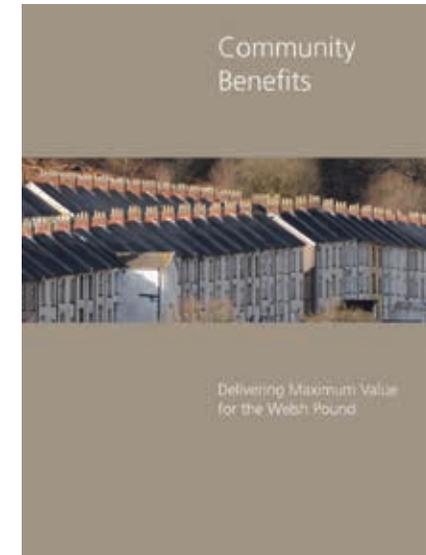
Where appropriate, the Council aims to include community benefits in its procurement activities to ensure that wider social and economic issues are addressed. We aim to encourage suppliers and contractors to consider ways in which they can add value to local communities, for example:

- Provide training and employment opportunities to economically inactive persons.
- Work with local schools and communities to help unemployed young persons gain experience through apprenticeships or voluntary work.
- Requiring main contractors to open up their subcontracting opportunities to local businesses, Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the Third Sector, i.e. through 'Meet the Buyer' events.

For larger value contracts, typically those over £2m, tenderers may be asked to submit a Community Benefits Plan or Method Statement setting out how they will deliver community benefits through the contract.

N.B. Community benefits can only be evaluated and scored (i.e. make up part of the award criteria) if they are **core** to the contract activity. Community benefits which are non-core to the contract activity will not form part of the evaluation; however they will be contractually binding.

For further information on the inclusion of Community Benefits, please click on the image 'Community Benefits, Delivering Maximum Value for the Welsh Pound'.



“The Council aims to maximise the social, economic & environmental wellbeing of people in Wales derived from the inclusion of community benefits in its procurement activity”

Why do we use framework agreements?

Where appropriate, the Council will establish a framework agreement for categories of common spend, where goods, services or works are bought on a recurring basis.

Framework agreements set out the broad terms and conditions on which the buying organisation will purchase goods, services or works from those suppliers in the future. Framework agreements can have a single supplier or multiple suppliers and last up to 4 years.

Before going out for quotations or tender, the Council will first establish whether there is an existing framework in place which can meet the requirements. This will also include a consideration of frameworks let by collaborative purchasing organisations such as the Welsh Purchasing Consortium, Value Wales and other national collaborative groups such as the Government Procurement Service. The following types of frameworks are available:

- **Cardiff Council Local Frameworks**, e.g. Domiciliary Care Services.
- **Regional Frameworks**, e.g. South East Wales Schools Capital (SEWSCAP).
- **Sector Specific:** Welsh Purchasing Consortium (WPC), e.g. groceries.
- **National Frameworks (Wales):** Welsh Government / Value Wales, e.g. stationery.
- **Other National Frameworks**, e.g. Government Procurement Service (GPS), Eastern Shires Purchasing Consortium (ESPO), North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO).

In order to prepare in advance for upcoming opportunities, we advise suppliers to find out when frameworks are due to expire. For Cardiff Council frameworks, suppliers can view the Contract Framework Calendar and for all other national frameworks, suppliers can access their websites by following the links at the end of this guide.

Consortia and Collaborative bids

Cardiff Council encourages suppliers and contractors to submit consortia or collaborative bids for Council work, particularly for larger value or complex contracts. Consortia bids may help to increase the chance of winning work and in particular benefit SMEs and the Third Sector who may not have the skills or capacity to submit bids for larger contracts alone. The Council acknowledges the challenge consortia or collaborative bidding creates at the early stage of a tender process. Therefore, in order to allow time to prepare consortia or collaborative submissions the Council will aim to provide sufficient information to suppliers prior to the tender process commencing.

As well as working collaboratively or through consortia we encourage SMEs and the Third Sector to seek subcontracting opportunities and build relationships with main contractors. Main contractors can help make supply chain opportunities visible by advertising on Sell2Wales or through Meet the Buyer events.

Assistance and support is available from a number of organisations. For further information please see the '**Further Support**' section.

Can tendering organisations receive debriefing (feedback)?

Cardiff Council aims to offer feedback to successful and unsuccessful tenderers to help them improve for future opportunities. Where appropriate, debriefing is likely to be given in writing as part of the letter which informs the tenderer that they were unsuccessful (known as a regret letter). Further information can be provided via telephone or face to face as long as the debriefing request is submitted **in writing** (by email).

How does the Council pay their suppliers?

Payment terms should be set out in the contract documents. Payment is normally within 10 working days of the Accounts Payable Team receiving a correct invoice.

To ensure prompt payment of invoices the Council now operates a '**No Purchase Order, No Pay**' policy (**No PO, No Pay**). Suppliers who do not submit an invoice with a valid Purchase Order number are likely to experience a delay in receiving payment. Therefore, we encourage suppliers to insist on receiving a valid purchase order from the person within the Council who raised the order.

Contract Monitoring and Management

Suppliers and contractors will be expected to meet their obligations to provide the goods, services or works in accordance with the requirements set out in the contract documentation and demonstrate value for money. The Council will strive to ensure that there is a good open and constructive working relationship with its suppliers and contractors, which will also help to identify and resolve any problems at the earliest possible juncture.

Tendering Dos & Don'ts

DO	DO NOT
<p>Check the deadline time and date for return of tenders. Ensure you put enough time aside to complete the documentation.</p> <p>Use the tender return label issued to return your completed tender to the Council.</p> <p>Make sure you answer the questions as set giving details of the specified requirements and provide evidence as indicated in the guidance.</p> <p>Ask for clarification if you are unsure on any part of the specification or have general queries in relation to tender documents, including contract terms and conditions. Queries can be submitted by Alito (if the portal has been used for the tender process) or by email.</p> <p>Respond promptly to any requests for further information from the Council.</p>	<p>Do not return your tender after the date or time as late tenders will not be considered unless in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Do not mark the envelope with your name / company name or anything else that can indicate who the sender is. Your tender will not be considered.</p> <p>Don't 'make up' the questions so you can include what you want in your response, we can only evaluate information that we have asked for.</p> <p>Don't be put off by the documents, seek support, e.g. from tender advisors, attending meet the buyer events.</p> <p>Don't submit prices which are so low that if awarded the contract you can not supply the goods/services at that price to the quality specified. The Council has the right not to accept any tender which we think will be unviable.</p>

Further Support

Business Wales is a new service run by the Welsh Government which provides businesses of all sizes from the private, public and third sectors with information, guidance, support and one to one mentoring. The service can be accessed by phone, online and through a network of eleven one stop shops located around Wales.

Business Wales also offers contract and tender support specifically for SMEs via '**Business Wales - Tendering**'. Prior to January 2013, similar support was given via the Supplier Development Service (SDS), however the SDS is no longer in existence. **Tender advisors** (formerly known as Supplier Development Champions) are based throughout Wales and work with SMEs and the Third Sector to develop their capacity, run workshops and help complete tender documents. For further information on 'Business Wales - Tendering' please see the 'Growing a Business' section on the Business Wales Website. (The weblink and contact details for tender advisors can be found at the end of this guide).

Meet the Buyer Events are run by the Council and Business Wales to provide suppliers with information on contract opportunities and the tender process. They can also provide an opportunity for suppliers to meet with main contractors to find out about potential supply chain/sub-contracting opportunities.

Cardiff Council's Economic Development Team can provide business support and advice to help SMEs secure financial support in the form of loans and grants for new start-up enterprises or capital investment for established or expanding companies via the Capital Cardiff Fund.

The Wales Co-operative Centre has a specialist team that can help organisations develop consortia. The team can provide support on how to structure your consortium, and can provide advice on governance and legal issues that might affect you.

Cardiff Third Sector Council exists to support and develop Cardiff's third sector. Working with the Welsh Government and WCVA, they are committed to increasing the knowledge and skills of the sector to ensure that groups and organisations in Cardiff can make themselves sustainable and meet the needs of their communities. Their third sector officers can give you support in looking for funding for your organisation.

Contact details for the above organisations can be found at the end of this guide.

We would like to hear from you

This guide aims to help provide organisations who want to work with Cardiff Council with a clearer understanding of how to bid for work and what may be asked of them as a supplier or contractor.

We would like to receive your feedback on how we could improve this guide, what information you feel is missing and whether there is anything you would like to see included in the updated guide later in 2013.

We would also like to receive your feedback with regards to your experience of doing business with the Council, the service provided by the Commissioning and Procurement team and any issues or problems you have encountered.

Please send your comments to procurement@cardiff.gov.uk

Useful Websites

ORGANISATION	
Cardiff Council - Procurement	www.cardiff.gov.uk/procurement
Contract Standing Orders and Procurement Rules (found under 'Related Items' on the procurement web page)	http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/csopr
Contract & Framework Calendar	http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ott
Alito	http://appswales.alito.co.uk
Alito: Online registration instructions	http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/alitoeng
Sell2Wales	www.sell2wales.co.uk
Constructionline	www.constructionline.co.uk/static
SSIP (Health & Safety)	www.ssip.org.uk
Tenders Electronic Daily (TED)	ted.europa.eu/TED/main/HomePage.do
United Kingdom Public Sector Information Website	www.gov.uk
Working Links	www.workinglinks.co.uk
EU Legislation / Public Contracts Regulations PDF	www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/5/contents/made www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/5/pdfs/uksi_20060005_en.pdf
Part A & Part B Service (EU tenders)	www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/5/schedule/3/made
Welsh Purchasing Consortium (WPC)	www.welshpurchasingconsortium.co.uk/Home.aspx
Government Procurement Service (GPS)	http://gps.cabinetoffice.gov.uk
Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO)	www.espo.org
North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO)	www.qtegov.com

Useful Contacts

ORGANISATION	CONTACT	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL	WEBLINK
Cardiff Council Commissioning & Procurement	Procurement One Stop Shop	029 2087 3732	procurement@cardiff.gov.uk	www.cardiff.gov.uk/procurement
Cardiff Council Economic Development Team / Capital Cardiff Fund		029 2087 1412	businessadvice@cardiff.gov.uk	
Business Wales		030 0060 3000		http://business.wales.gov.uk
Tender Advisors	Phil Spooner	07766-724467	phil.spooner@menterabusnes.co.uk	
	Sean Hamill	07766-561791	shamill@menterabusnes.co.uk	
	Wayne Griffiths	07970-688590	wayne_griffths@menterabusnes.co.uk	
Cardiff Third Sector Council	Customer Services	029 2048 5722	enquiries@c3sc.org.uk	www.c3sc.org.uk
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	Customer Services	0800 2888 329	help@wcva.org.uk	www.wcva.org.uk
Wales Co-operative Centre		0300 111 5050	info@walescooperative.org	www.walescooperative.org
Business In Focus	Customer Services	0870 950 90 90	enquiries@businessinfocus.co.uk	www.businessinfocus.co.uk/en/home.aspx
Federation of Small Businesses	Customer Services	0292 0747 406	wales.policy@fsb.org.uk	www.fsb.org.uk
Federation of Master Builders	Wales Office Head Office Join the FMB	01656 750955 020 7242 7583 08000 965 765	richardjenkins@fmb.org.uk	www.fmb.org.uk/about-fmb/fmb-regions/devolved-countries/welsh/
South Wales Chamber of Commerce	Graham Morgan (Cardiff) Swansea Newport	0292 0481 532 01792 793686 01633 222664	Graham.Morgan@southwaleschamber.co.uk info@southwaleschamber.co.uk	www.southwaleschamber.co.uk