

# How to do business with Northumbria Police

## A guide for suppliers



**NORTHUMBRIA POLICE**



## Introduction

This guide has been produced to assist suppliers who wish to supply Northumbria Police with goods and services. It provides information on:

- Responsibilities for procurement within Northumbria Police.
- How to bid for work.
- Rules and regulations which the Force must abide by.
- Appropriate contacts.

## About Northumbria Police

Northumbria Police is the sixth largest Police Force in England and Wales. It covers an area of more than 2150 sq. miles of England's border country and sits between Durham, Cumbria and the Scottish border. The Force covers two distinct counties Northumberland and Tyne and Wear. The Force has more than 4000 police officers and 1800 support staff who together provide policing for a population of approximately 1.4 million.

## Spend

Northumbria Police spends approximately £30m on goods and services each year. In addition it has a capital programme covering: building schemes, computers and communications and vehicles and related equipment. The capital budget varies each year according to the resources available.

Contracts can vary from one-off purchases to periodic contracts for goods and services that last for a specific period of time.

## Responsibilities for Procurement

Procurement of all goods and services, with the exception of services arranged by the Property Adviser to Northumbria Police Authority are dealt with by the Force Procurement Section.

The Property Adviser to Northumbria Police Authority is responsible for:

- Providing a property management service to Northumbria Police Authority
- Advising and delivering on all aspects of the property portfolio, particularly regarding acquisitions, development, management, valuation and disposal.

For further information contact Joyce Patton, Principal Business Support Officer, email: [joycepatton@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:joycepatton@gateshead.gov.uk) or telephone 0191 4332967.

The rest of the information within this guide is focused on giving suppliers information to assist in bidding to supply the Force with goods and services procured by the Force's Procurement Section.

## Importance of effective procurement

The aim of Northumbria Police is to make the Force area a safer place to live, work and visit, by reducing crime and fear of crime. Expenditure on goods and services is a significant part of the Force's overall budget. It is important that procurement is undertaken effectively and efficiently and best value solutions are obtained. The Force encourages competition, and bids from both new and established suppliers are welcomed.

## How to bid for business

As a public sector organisation there are certain rules and regulations which must be followed when procuring goods and services. These rules are called Standing Orders.

## Advertisements

Goods and service contracts valued in excess of £156,442 are advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). This value is reviewed every two years and the next review is due on 1st January 2012. Goods and services contracts valued over £100,000 (one hundred thousand pounds) are generally advertised in the Newcastle Journal or specific trade publications. Details of contracts opportunities can also be viewed on the 'Bluelight' Emergency Services Procurement Portal. See e-procurement section on page 5 for further details on how to access this site.

## Procurement Portal

A procurement portal has been created by a network of police forces, as part of the National Police e-procurement Strategy. This portal is called 'Bluelight' and enables the exchange of tender information between member Police Forces and interested suppliers. It incorporates an e-tendering module and allows suppliers to view opportunities, register an interest in a contract, receive and submit tenders and quotations all online.

The expression of interest window is opened for each contract at a specific stage during the procurement process, Suppliers are encouraged to register as a potential supplier and check the site regularly for current opportunities. You can set the system up to send automatic notifications for the areas of business you are interested in.

For more details please go to [www.bluelight.gov.uk](http://www.bluelight.gov.uk)

## Contracts Register

All current Force contracts are detailed on the Bluelight Contracts Register and can be view via the following link:

[www.blpd.gov.uk/foi/foi.aspx](http://www.blpd.gov.uk/foi/foi.aspx)

## Responding to a tender advertisement

In nearly all cases tenders will be sent electronically to suppliers through the Force's web based e-tendering system. Suppliers will be informed of the procedures for completing the tender and returning it. The tender document will contain the following:

- Tender form.
- Instructions on how to complete and return the document.
- Special conditions.
- Specification or scope of requirements.
- General terms and conditions of contract.

As the cost of administering and evaluating tenders is significant, suppliers may be required to complete a pre-qualification questionnaire to determine their suitability to be invited to tender before it is issued.

## Contract award

Tenders are evaluated using predetermined criteria. The criteria will cover areas such as whole life costs, commercial awareness and ability to meet the requirements of the contract etc. The full criteria will be listed within the original tender documentation. All tenderers are notified whether they have been successful or unsuccessful. We will always endeavour to offer unsuccessful suppliers feedback on why their bid has failed and assist in future bids.

## Vetting of Contractors

In some service contracts it will be necessary for the Force to security vet contractor's personnel that will require access to police premises and/or to Force information in order to perform the contract. The Force will charge for this service as follows:

- NPPV Level 1 = £35 (valid for 3 years). This level will apply to those personnel who require access to external areas of police premises as well as internal areas where non-sensitive material/information is accessible.
- NPPV Level 2 = £70 (valid for 3 years). This level of vetting provides access to most of the Force site (excluding sensitive areas and some authorised systems).
- NPPV Level 3 = £150 (valid for 5 years). This is the highest level of vetting and provides access to all elements of the site and to both information and systems.

The Force will decide the most appropriate level of vetting based upon the degree of sensitivity of the buildings and the Force information to which access is required.

## Contract compliance

All awarded contracts will be monitored in order to:

- Ensure satisfactory performance of the contracted supplier (Contractor) and compliance with the contract.
- Ensure resolution of any disputes arising during the contract.
- Develop relationships with suppliers with the objective of producing continual improvements in contracts and deliver efficiency savings throughout the contract period.

## Complaints procedure

We will adopt a variety of contract monitoring arrangements appropriate to the value and nature of each contract. It is hoped that complaints will be discussed and resolved through these arrangements. However, if any supplier has a complaint about unfair treatment or discrimination that cannot be resolved through procurement officers, the complaint can be made in writing to the Procurement and Supplies Manager, Northumbria Police Procurement Section, Block 70, Northumbria Police Headquarters, North Road, Ponteland, NE20 0BL.

## Collaborative procurement

As part of the Government's aim to increase efficiency across the public sector and release resources to frontline services, public sector organisations are actively encouraged to collaborate with each other. Best value for money can be obtained by combining requirements for goods and services and sharing professional procurement best practice. The Force participates in many national and regional police contracts and also uses Framework Contracts arranged by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and contracts arranged by Local Government consortia such as NEPO, a purchasing consortia of local authorities in the North East of England.

For further details go to [www.buyingsolutions.gov.uk](http://www.buyingsolutions.gov.uk) and <https://www.qtegov.com/systems/nepocms.nsf/vHomepage/fsection?opendocument>

## Sustainability

We are committed to reducing our impact on the environment by improving the environmental performance of our operations. This is done by procuring goods, services and works that have minimal environmental impact and by disposing of waste in an environmentally friendly way. The Force strongly supports equal opportunities and equal access. We include a questionnaire in all tenders asking for details on how equality and diversity issues are included in supplier's employment practices. The Force also actively encourages all types of businesses, including ethnic minority and small/medium enterprises (SME's) to complete for our business whilst complying with the requirements of the EU regulations, standing orders and best practice guidance.

Further details of our Sustainable Development Strategy and Sustainable Procurement Policy for the next three years can be found on the Northumbria Police website.

## Freedom of information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 came into force on 1st January 2005. The Act aims to make public sector organisations, such as the police, more accountable to the public, to give a better understanding of how public authorities carry out their duties and how they spend their money.

The Force has a duty to disclose certain information upon request held in relation to contracts unless it is considered to be exempt under the Act. Exemptions may relate to confidential information and protection of an organisation's commercial interests. Details of the procedures for applying for an exemption from disclosure under the Act are included within individual tenders and contracts.

For more information on the Freedom of Information Act visit the Office of the Information Commissioner website at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk) or telephone 01625 545745.

## Contact Us:

**Bill Sword, Procurement Officer – Tel: 01661 869293**

Fleet, Workshop Equipment, ICT Hardware and Software, Waste and Vehicle Hire.

**Claire Roxburgh, Procurement Officer – Tel: 01661 869292**

Stationery, IT Consumables, Furniture, Washroom Services, Food and Beverages, Business Travel and Photocopiers/MFD's

**Simon Baird, Procurement Officer – Tel: 01661 869291**

Uniform and PPE, Telecommunications, CCTV Maintenance and Print Services.

Email: [procurement@northumbria.pnn.police.uk](mailto:procurement@northumbria.pnn.police.uk)