

Welcome to the second edition of

North East Supplier

A newsletter for suppliers from NE local authorities

Business Exchange North East event exceeds expectations

The Business Exchange North East event that took place on 3 and 4 March has been hailed a great success. The event saw over 2,000 people take part in seminars and networking with a wide range of buyers over the two days.

Alastair MacColl, Chief Executive of Business & Enterprise North East said:

“The Business Exchange North East event really has proven to be the must-attend event of the region’s business calendar. Over the two days thousands of companies from across the North East came together under one roof to share ideas and information, make new business leads and learn from some of the UK’s leading thinkers and the feedback has been extremely positive.

As well as highlighting the diverse range of products and services here in the region, the large number of businesses attending the event reflects the fact that we are a region packed with innovative businesses proactively looking for new opportunities to develop and grow, and that really is encouraging.”

A number of keynote speakers gave direct information on forthcoming opportunities. These included the following:

- Laurie Neville of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG). Laurie gave information on contracts across a diverse range of areas, as over the next two years LOCOG will be procuring approximately £700m worth of products and services to stage the Games in 2012.
- Chris Bell at the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA). Chris gave an insight into the remaining on-site business opportunities and advised companies on how to get the most out of the CompeteFor website, one of the main access routes for 2012 contracts.
- Barry Rowland representing the North East Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnership (NE IEP), gave an update on the region’s major programme of procurement reform, which aims to make the region the best place to do business.



Tell us your views

Please let us know what information about local authority procurement in the North East you would like to see in future editions of this newsletter. Send your comments, questions or suggestions to Jo Sanderson (jo.sanderson@northeastcouncils.gov.uk)

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Pathways Through the Maze: A Guide to Procurement Law

Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP

This guide is invaluable to anybody working for a charity, voluntary organisation, community group or social enterprise who is interested or involved in the commissioning and procurement of public services. It will help you understand procurement processes and give the information needed to challenge some of the myths and mistruths about procurement.

If you are a public sector commissioner, this document can help you improve your engagement with third sector organisations and shows you the options, rather than constraints, procurement processes can present.

Commissioning and procurement are a means to an end and that end is good, effective services and stronger communities. This needs the involvement of local third sector organisations in designing and delivering public services - but bad commissioning and procurement practices can block their involvement.

By presenting the facts in a clear and easy to understand way, this guide gives local voluntary organisations and public sector commissioners the knowledge to work together to create more intelligent commissioning processes. By improving processes, we will improve our ability to get the effective services and stronger communities which local people need.

This will no doubt prove to be an essential guide for anyone involved in commissioning. Download the document at: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/pathways>



What is Sustainable Procurement?

Sustainable procurement is a term which has been developed to describe an approach to procurement which seeks to minimise negative impacts and to maximise the positive. Increasingly local authorities will be looking to work with their suppliers on this basis. Those suppliers which adjust to this may be able to secure a competitive advantage whilst also securing bottom-line benefits. For example, drives to reduce energy, water and waste carry a financial benefit, which only increase as the costs of energy, waste disposal and so on inevitably increases.

The NE IEP in collaboration with regional partners such as North Eastern Purchasing Organisation (NEPO) is helping to raise the skills and awareness of procurers through a programme of events, training and pilot projects. In the future it is also intended to run sessions for suppliers with a view to providing them with information about sustainable procurement and the types of action they might take to improve the sustainability of their operations.

For further information contact Bill Kirkup, Sustainability Project Manager at the NE Improvement & Efficiency Partnership, bill.kirkup@northeastcouncils.gov.uk or phone 07766 500 054.

Selling to the Public Sector

Free events to equip North East suppliers with the skills needed to win public sector work

The North East Improvement & Efficiency Partnership, Compete North East and ONE North East have joined forces to develop, manage and run a supplier development programme in the region.

The events will help suppliers to better understand the requirements of, and have the expertise to participate in, public sector procurement and will improve their overall business-winning capability. At the same time the programme will undertake an evaluation to more accurately assess the exact support needs of the regions suppliers to enable the development of a long term procurement skills improvement programme.

These free procurement events offer you the chance to get ahead of the game - gaining top tips and secrets on how to maximise your tendering potential.

Procurement Awareness Seminars

(from 08.45 to 11.15)

Understand the scale and diversity of public sector opportunities, learn where to look for tender opportunities, identify the key elements of winning a bid:

**Gosforth Racecourse, Newcastle upon Tyne -
Tues 22 June 2010**

**The Wynyard Rooms, Billingham -
Wed 23 June 2010**

Procurement Workshops

(from 09.00 to 16.00)

These more detailed sessions will explain how public procurement is managed, the rules that impact and affect buyers, and how all businesses can improve their chances of winning contracts:

Beamish Hall, Durham - Tues 6 July 2010

**Marriott Hotel, Gosforth, Newcastle -
Wed 7 July 2010**

Copthorne Hotel, Newcastle - Tues 13 July 2010

**Blackwell Grange Hotel, Darlington -
Wed 14 July 2010**

Bid Writing Masterclasses (times tbc):

**The Wynyard Rooms, Billingham -
Thursday 22 July 2010**

**Marriott Hotel, Gosforth, Newcastle - Thursday
29 July 2010**

Procurement Masterclasses (times tbc)

**Marriott Hotel, Gosforth, Newcastle - Tuesday 20
July 2010**

**The Wynyard Rooms, Billingham - Tuesday 27
July 2010**

Don't miss out on improving your chances of winning new business. For more information and to register your place visit <http://www.procurementevents.org.uk/> or call 0191 426 65 69

Business & Enterprise North East, the organisation which delivers the Business Link service in the North East, has recently published 'Making the Change' the North East's first framework for Social Enterprise.

The framework, which has been developed and delivered by a partnership of Social Enterprise providers and representative organisations is aimed at driving growth in the region's social enterprise and wider third sector.

Based on seven priorities, including funding, access to finance, and business support, the framework highlights the critical role local authorities can play in supporting Social Enterprises, as market shapers as well as direct procurers of services.

Download Making The Change: The North East Social Enterprise Framework from www.be-ne.co.uk, or contact Rhiannon Bearne, Social Enterprise Executive, Business & Enterprise North East, **0191 426 6392**.

**BUSINESS &
ENTERPRISE**
NORTH EAST

Regional Framework Contracts for Construction

This newly set up project is considering the business case for implementing a number of managed frameworks for all aspects of local authority construction activity across the region.

A number of benefits have been realised through the implementation of regional managed frameworks in other regions. Mutual benefits for the contractors and clients include:

- **lower 'process' costs associated with fewer tendering exercises;**
- **faster implementation of construction projects; and**
- **the ability to ensure social benefits.**

Initially there will be an assessment of all current and proposed construction and asset management activity within the region undertaken by Local Authorities and Fire & Rescue Services. Existing frameworks and strategic partnering arrangements will be reviewed before making recommendations on a range of options for improved ways of working in design, advice and construction activities.

The savings for this project are estimated to be as much as £750,000 through aggregating procurement and the packaging together of similar projects across the region.

Your views needed

The North Eastern Purchasing Organisation has recently completed a review of its structure and business processes; to find out more please visit <http://www.necc.co.uk/article.aspx?id=24048>

Please forward any comments on the future operational aspects of the new organisation to riep@northeastcouncils.gov.uk

Coming soon...

Relaunch of Standard Procurement Documents, to include:

- Plain English - easier to read and understand procurement documentation;
- Remedies Directive - transparency to evaluation criteria;
- Escalation process - where to go next if you have a query regarding the procurement; and
- Review procedure - an opportunity to suggest further amendments to the suite of documents.

A new image for the NEPO portal

A revitalised NEPO portal will include more functions, including improved search facilities, pre-populated fields, toolkits and much more. Search for local authority opportunities at www.nepoportal.org

For more information about the work of the Collaborative Procurement and Commissioning Programme, you can contact:

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