

Thame Town Council

Procurement Policy

1. The underlying objective is to ensure that sensible procurement decisions are made when sourcing goods, services and works. This should be from the identification of need through to acquisition and the full lifecycle of contract. It is essential that everything is carried out in line with relevant law/Trading Standards Legislation while not being overly onerous for the Town Council or the Supplier.
2. Relevant sections in Standing Orders / Financial Regulations must be followed, to ensure legality in public sector procurement. The National Association of Local Councils Legal Topic Note 87 also provides sensible guidance.
3. It is recognised that different (proportional) mechanisms may be needed at different cost levels and for different types of expenditure.
4. A specification of what is to be purchased (product or service) is the starting point, so that a check can subsequently be made to see the extent to which what is being offered matches that specification. The specification should define a minimum required standard with desirable features and be written objectively (i.e. not based around any pre-existing product or service).
5. Quotations must only be requested once a specification along with a relevant scoring / weighting mechanism / decision process is fully defined.
6. Any mechanism can be used to identify potential suppliers.
7. Quotations that do not meet the minimum specification must be immediately rejected.
8. Missing information relevant to the agreed specification should be established and post tender clarification should be done to ensure fair assessment.
9. Initial assessments must be objective, based on a pre-declared scoring system against relevant features as determined by the specification. A weighting mechanism may also be used.
10. Scoring will normally identify a clear preference that represents the most economically advantageous outcome.
11. Where there is no clear preference, a sampling / testing process may be executed to assist final decision making. This needs to be defined in advance and kept anonymous both in terms of product / tester as far as possible. There may be a necessity for a sample process to be introduced from the start.
12. Where a sampling / testing process is not possible, more subjective aspects can be used to make a decision, provided that they are clearly documented.
13. There should be no presumption to use local suppliers except when all other factors including the cost are deemed equal.
14. All bidders must be treated equally with full transparency regarding process but respecting bidder's commercial confidentiality.