

# Procurement Progress

Autumn 2007  
Edition 4

## Introduction and highlights

Welcome to the autumn procurement newsletter from the NWCE. This edition is bumper-packed as projects continue to deliver. Highlights include delivery of the standards project, postal framework being awarded and the soft launch of our regional procurement portal.

Planning is now underway for our 2008/11 programme with input from current work streams and the sub-region to define requirements. If you have any other suggestions then please let us know.

As a reminder, if you have yet to complete our feedback survey [click here](#). This will also help with our planning process.

## Project Updates

Further information is available on each project from our web site. If you need any more information, get in touch. Click on the title for the project pages.

### Standards

All deliverables from phase I of this project have now been completed. These include:

- Contract Award and Rejection Letters
- Contract Procedure Rules
- Equality and Diversity
- Financial Thresholds
- Pre-qualification Documentation
- Tender Documents
- Terms and Conditions

Full details and copies can be found in our new [Docking Station](#).

A number of councils have said they want to continue this work, so a next phase has been developed. Details of Phase II can be found [here](#).

### Portal & eSourcing

The regional procurement portal is now live for councils to visit at <http://www.thechest.nwce.gov.uk/>. Each council currently has its own holding page while the system is fully populated. AGMA and Cumbria will be the first sub-regions to utilise the system, with other areas to follow.

The project team will be working hard over the next few weeks to populate the system before a full launch to suppliers with the relative Chambers of Commerce.

If you need further information or a demo of the system, then please let us know.

### Postal Procurement

After a mini-competition the NWCE has awarded the regional postal contract to TNT. A summary of the tender evaluation can be found [here](#).

The agreement offers vastly reduced prices to each sub-region. On average, councils can expect to see savings of 20% on postage costs alone. This will equate to more than £1m for the 17 councils currently involved. Further savings will be incurred with process changes.

The Greater Manchester region achieved the lowest prices. However, when 12 councils have migrated these prices will be available to all north west authorities with rebates available.

A site visit is being arranged for interested authorities with contract kick-off meetings to follow.

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## Sustainable Procurement

The sustainable procurement project continues to make good progress in this developing area. The NWCE is working with the NWDA on a regional programme as well as taking part in a national learning network managed by Wakefield Council.

A draft plan for councils wishing to implement level 1 of the Flexible Framework has been developed and is available [here](#). Any feedback on this would be appreciated.

The project also wants to carry out a number of risk assessments in specified category areas. The first is planned for staff uniforms. This exercise will work with the region's top suppliers to ensure the supply chain is procuring sustainably.

A number of training and dissemination events have also been arranged to help councils increase skills in this area. More details are under the events section opposite.

## **Contact Details**

The teams contact details are as below. All can be contacted via the programme office on 0161 342 2839 or on email.

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## **Events**

Details of upcoming events are below. Click on the link to book your place today.

### Standards Group Meeting

October 26 2007 at Dukinfield Town Hall: The next meeting will start to look at the phase II deliverables.

### "Free" Sustainability Training

November 13 2007 at Wigan Investment Centre: The NWCE is working with ActionSustainability to deliver a practical and "hands-on" training that will enable you to discover the tools & techniques of sustainable. See Cost section for conditions.

### BT/Telecoms Workshop

November 23 2007 at Wigan Investment Centre: As you maybe aware BT have introduced new billing and other charges that has impacted on many local authorities. This session will look at how councils can reduce this charge and, possibly, reduce their invoice values with BT.

### Sustainable Procurement Conference

December 6 2007 at Sefton Town Hall: The NWCE will be hosting a sustainable procurement conference. The event will bring together latest thinking and suppliers in this area. There will also be time for discussion on the way forward for the region.

### "Free" Sustainability Training

January 29 2008 at Red Rose Hub, Preston: A repeat of the November 13 session.

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