

Commissioning and Procurement – The Challenge

Why you should take this challenge

The 'commissioning council' is a reality as major services are increasingly delivered by external partners. This is why the processes and people involved in commissioning, procuring and managing the subsequent contracts need to have a commercial edge. Existing practices need to be challenged and key questions need to be asked including:

- Is good commissioning seen as a key contributor to delivering the council's vision and objectives?
- Are these commercial activities featured in the corporate / strategic plan?
- Are we planning ahead and shaping markets or simply going to tender?
- Do we specify for outcomes or just do what we have always have done?
- Is the procurement process seen as a barrier and delay to be rushed or a real chance to influence events and challenge potential suppliers?
- Are our skills and knowledge gaps costing money and creating risk?

If you are striving to become an effective Commissioning Council but are concerned that your commissioning and procurement activities are not giving you the commercial edge, then ***The Commissioning and Procurement Challenge*** is for you.

What you receive

You will receive a short Management Report with an Executive Summary informing future direction and outlining areas for improvement backed with evidence based information. Findings and recommendations are clearly laid out under seven distinct topics. We also offer the option to present the results to Members and/or Chief Officers.

We gather evidence using three approaches:

- Multi-stakeholder workshop – bringing together people from across the organisation, including commissioners, budget holders, auditors and contract managers to discuss what works well and what doesn't within their organisation
- One-to-one interviews – with representatives from different departments and/or disciplines
- Expenditure analysis – a full review and breakdown of third party expenditure

Our goal is to help staff to understand how commissioning, procurement and contract management activities are connected and why they are relevant to costs and outcomes.

“ Having people from different departments and disciplines in the same room reminded us of the need to share a common vision and approach for the way we commission from external organisations and make best use of our limited staff resources. We learned very quickly the need for effective and consistent management of the commercial cycle, particularly where we are letting large contracts.

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Andy Cavanagh
Head of Finance, Performance and Asset Management
North Hertfordshire District Council

“ The Fire Authority was pleased to have independent confirmation of the strengths of its procurement function and a clear focus on where we can make further improvements. ”

Mike Clayton
Finance Director and Treasurer
Essex Fire & Rescue Service

Why Us?

We are one of the UK's leading independent consultancy firms that specialises in commissioning and procurement. We have worked with dozens of public bodies and have a proven history of delivering results:

- We offer exceptional value for money and work on a fixed price basis
- We have an enviable track record of successful engagement and delivery
- We guarantee the continuity of the consultants assigned to projects
- We can offer a choice of options to ensure you fulfil your desired goals
- We have an ethical charter ensuring that no organisation pays for research already undertaken by us for any other client

Cost and next steps

The Challenge:

- Takes 4-6 weeks from start to completion
- Is Fixed price - £6,000 for a medium sized council
- Has positive reviews from many clients

After we send you the report and subject to discussion, we can help you deliver commissioning and procurement transformation through up-skilling your staff and/or providing advice on strategy, systems and change.

It was very thought provoking for all of us when we realised just what was involved in procurement, particularly how different markets operate and how suppliers might perceive us. David Gardner, Director of Corporate Resources and Governance, Three Rivers District Council



The challenge is led by Ken Cole, a leading authority on Public sector commissioning, procurement and contract management with over 30 years direct experience. He has been involved in the inception and delivery of many high profile, ground breaking projects which have helped public sector organisations make significant cashable savings and expand their commercial skills and knowledge. Ken is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) and has worked at senior levels in both the public and private sectors.

Booking a Challenge:

East of England LGA members can contact Eddie Gibson, eddie.gibson@eelga.gov.uk, 01284 758300.