

# Report

9

Report to:	<b>Finance and Information Technology Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>14 June 2011</b>
Report by:	<b>Chief Executive</b>

Subject:	<b>Public Contracts Scotland "Quick Quote" Trial</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ Obtain approval to conduct a pilot exercise on the use of the "Quick Quote" facility for low value/low risk tender facility.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the trial use of the Quick Quote facility within Housing and Technical Resources and Enterprise Resources on a pilot basis be approved
- (2) that the issue of a communication to suppliers as included in the attached appendix be approved.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. In 2009, the Scottish Government launched "Quick Quote" facility as part of the suite of tools available to public bodies and suppliers on the national tender web site "Public Contracts Scotland".
- 3.2. The purpose of Quick Quote is to provide a single standard and efficient online solution for low value procurement exercises that benefits contracting authorities and provides a "one stop shop" for suppliers intending to supply the Scottish public sector.
- 3.3. Quick Quote is an online request for quotation facility which is used to provide competitive quotes for low value/low risk procurement exercises from suppliers who are registered on the portal. In terms of the Council's Standing Orders on Contracts this would be for quotations of a value of below £50,000 only.
- 3.4. The Quick Quote request is created online and sent to only those suppliers that SLC selects from the suppliers registered on the site. Only those suppliers selected to quote can access the details of the quote and submit a bid. The suppliers complete the required details and submit their quotation using the secure electronic post-box. A full electronic audit trail is maintained.
- 3.5. With approximately 52,000 suppliers now registered, this is a well recognised and utilised site within the supply base and public bodies.

- 3.6. As a result of the Procurement Service's initial review of this system, it is believed that Quick Quote will offer an efficient, transparent, accessible and standard option for the Council's low value quotation requirements.
- 3.7. The use of the Quick Quote facility is in line with the Scottish Government's "Procurement Journey" best practice guidance and, as such, would deliver an improved Procurement Capability Assessment score.

#### **4. The Process**

- 4.1. Following initial feasibility work on the Quick Quote facility with Housing and Technical Resources the Procurement Service would like to undertake a pilot exercise covering Housing and Technical and Enterprise Resources.
- 4.2. Housing and Technical Resources have already been working with the Procurement Service to review Quick Quote on a range of low value requirements. These have proved to be simple and issue-free but this tool requires to be utilised on a wider basis to confirm that this is the best route for the Council's low value spend.
- 4.3. It would be expected that the pilot would last for 2 months to allow for a range of low value quotations to be put through the web site. Upon completion, the Procurement Service and the Resource teams will agree the success or otherwise of the pilot based on basic criteria such as ease of use, both internally and externally, time taken to conduct the quotation process and ease of access to historical quotation data.
- 4.4. If the pilot proves to deliver the expected benefits, then the Procurement Service would look to begin a consultation process with all Resources with a view to recommending Quick Quote as the preferred method for low value quotations in line with Standing Orders.
- 4.5. The Procurement Service would note that, although Quick Quote may prove to be the most efficient process to follow in general, in some instances a more paper based process may still be required.
- 4.6. Although the Scottish Government and the Supplier Development Programme communicated this portal widely at the time of introduction, it is felt that prior to an expansion of the current trial of this site within SLC, that another more local communication should be undertaken. A copy of this is included as Appendix 1.

#### **5. Employee Implications**

- 5.1 None.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1. Improved access should deliver increased competition.

#### **7. Other Implications**

- 7.1. Reduced risk of challenge through introduction of a more standard approach to the quotation process
- 7.2. Contributes to sustainability through reductions in paper, postage and space.
- 7.3. Positive impact on the local SMEs and their access to winning business within the Council.

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

8.1. There is no equality impact assessment required.

8.2. Consultation is underway with various Resources.

**Archibald Strang**  
**Chief Executive**

20 May 2011

### **Link(s) to Council Values/Improvement Themes/Objectives**

- ◆ Value: Accountable, effective and efficient
- ◆ Value: Sustainable development

### **Previous References**

None

### **List of Background Papers**

None

### **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Paul Manning, Head of Finance

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## Communication Drafts

### **SLC SUPPLIER COMMUNICATION – email**

Dear Sir/Madam,

A message from the Procurement Service at South Lanarkshire Council.

South Lanarkshire Council is continuing to ensure it is maximising access to its tender opportunities for suppliers, service providers and contractors.

As such we have identified your company as an existing supplier to the council and wanted to ensure you were aware of the national procurement portal [publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk](http://publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk).

This web site allows you to register your company for free and so ensure that you are kept informed of the majority of public sector tenders. In addition this makes your company's name available to public sector organisations who are looking to run "Quick Quotes".

Quick Quote is a relatively new development within the national advertising portal. It is an online request for quotation facility which can be used to obtain competitive quotes for below the threshold procurements from suppliers who are registered on the portal. The Quick Quote request is created online and sent to a selected list of suppliers. Only those suppliers registered and selected to quote can access the details of the request and submit a bid through the secure electronic post-box.

The Procurement Service is about to begin a trial of the Quick Quote facility and would like to recommend that you register with this portal if you have not already done so.

Please note that there are FAQ's and help available within the portal or contact us at EMAIL.....

### **SDP SUPPLIER COMMUNICATION – email**

A message from the Procurement Service at South Lanarkshire Council.

South Lanarkshire Council is continuing to ensure it is maximising access to its tender opportunities for suppliers, service providers and contractors.

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