



MORAY PROCUREMENT INITIATIVE - BUSINESS INFORMATION LINK

The Moray Council is working to address barriers to business. It is important to us that we keep you informed and advised of any procurement developments that may affect the way in which we do business with you.

This second newsletter is to advise you that The Scottish Government has introduced a new service to give suppliers to the public sector in Scotland advice on procurement issues.

- SINGLE POINT OF ENQUIRY FOR BUSINESS-

The *Single Point of Enquiry* will provide advice on procurement issues and will work with the Scottish public sector to address supplier concerns and improve public procurement practice. Suppliers can seek advice on public procurement legislation and raise issues they may have with public procurement practices in Scotland.

The new service offers an informal 'honest broker' channel to improve the interface between suppliers and buyers. It is not a 'point of appeal' on procurement decisions nor will it influence, or change, sourcing decisions made by a contracting authority. It will, in conjunction with the relevant contracting authority, suppliers and stakeholders, pursue the review and resolutions of such issues and concerns and, if appropriate, seek to establish the need for any remedial action.

In all cases suppliers will be advised to address issues, in the first instance, to the contracting authority concerned and to seek resolution or clarification at that level. Where the supplier has, unsuccessfully as they see it, pursued issues with contracting authorities then the Single Point of Enquiry will seek to pursue positive outcomes.

The Review of Public Procurement in Scotland recommended the Single Point of Enquiry service. Endorsed by both The Public Procurement Reform Board and the Public Procurement Advisory Group, its Terms of Reference and Operating Instructions have been agreed with all major Scottish business representative organisations.

John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth, introduced the new service as a positive and welcome step. “It will give suppliers, and their business organisations, a new channel to seek advice or register their concerns regarding public procurement practices. This will undoubtedly lead to improvements and better standards in procurement across the public sector.”

Iain McMillan, CBI Scotland’s Director, responded by welcoming the new service. “This ‘one-stop-shop’ is a welcome move to strengthen public procurement and the voice of business within it, raising standards across the public sector and ensuring that best practices become common practice throughout. This ought to benefit public procurers, private sector suppliers, and taxpayers alike.”

Andrew Watson, spokesman for Federation of Small Business in Scotland, thinks the Single Point of Enquiry is another milestone in public procurement reform. “It cannot overturn the decisions of public agencies, but it will give businesses the opportunity to report examples of poor procurement practice and raise concerns about the way some buying organisations are performing.”

Suppliers can approach the Single Point of Enquiry on a confidential basis at spoeprocurement@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or visit its website for more information at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Procurement/Selling/supplier-enquiries>

The Moray Council
Corporate Procurement Team
01343 563137
procurement@moray.gov.uk