Adur District & Worthing Borough Council's
In-Tend E-Sourcing Solution - Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

1. Why is Adur District Council & Worthing Borough Council using an e-sourcing Solution?

Using the In-Tend e-sourcing solution will help us to make improvements in:

- The cost of conducting tender and quotation processes
- The efficiency with which these processes are conducted
- The transparency and openness of the Authority internally and externally to our suppliers and other interested parties

Cost

Electronic transmission and storage of documentation should facilitate costs savings associated with:

- Paper Usage
- Printing
- Postage

This will not only reduce our financial costs but will also reduce the costs to the environment through paper production, energy consumption, transportation etc.

However the major savings will through freeing up time of our staff who work on administrating procurement exercises. This will not only save money but will also allow our technical staff to concentrate more on the quality of the tender documents that contain the information with which we ask you to base your bids on and against which you will be evaluated.

Efficiency

Implementing the In-Tend solution will provide us with the opportunity to review the current processes used by ourselves in procurement and our colleagues working in other departments across the Authority. This will aid us in taking a more consistent approach to the way we carry our procurement processes as an authority and ensure that the methods utilised are both effective and efficient. Using the In-Tend system will aid us further through facilitating:

- Sharing of standard documents across the authority
- Sharing supplier information across the authority
- Sharing of contractual information across the authority
- Standard automated methods for evaluating supplier returns
- Standard automated methods for evaluating contractor performance

Transparency

The In-Tend solution will allow us to keep track of all procurement projects and contracts being run through the system. It will not only allow us to identify how far a project has progressed but it will also allow us to quickly view all of the actions that have taken place on that particular project since it was first created. These will be recorded down to exactly who accessed the project, the nature of the action that was carried out (documents published by AWBC, documents returned by supplier, etc) and the exact time and date that it was done. The system will also maintain an audit trail of all of your actions against a particular project in addition to those carried out by our staff. This will allow us to keep far tighter controls on our projects, reducing the risk of project failure and delays.

The system will help us to work together more effectively as an organisation and also with other organisations such as neighbouring local authorities. The improvements in communication provided by using In-Tend should help us to reduce costly duplication of work and backlogs where one department or authority is reliant on another to ensure that a project progresses to the next stage.

Currently we reply on the press to advertise our requirements and as such are restricted by the timescales they impose on us which can subsequently result in delays. Through using In-Tend we will be able to advertise requirements as soon as they have been properly identified helping us to satisfy these requirements more efficiently and provide a better level of service to our internal customers, potential suppliers and the public.

Once fully implemented all lower value quotation exercises that we undertake will be process through In-Tend, in addition to our formal higher value tender exercises. This will provide us with visibility of procurement projects of every value helping us to ensure that all projects are conducted fairly and provide value for money through the use of fair and transparent competitive processes.

2. How will using the In-Tend be of benefit to my organisation?

Similarly using the system should also facilitate the realisation of cost, efficiency and transparency benefits to you.

Cost

Electronic transmission of documentation via In-Tend will also allow you to reduce expenditure on paper; photocopying and postage, reducing your direct overhead costs and the costs of your operation have on the environment. Also, using the system will allow you to make your returns right up to the point of closing date and time allowing you to spend more time putting your bid together. Although we would advise you to give yourself five or ten minutes breathing space. This could also help you to reduce your expenditure on costly courier services that are often utilised to ensure that deadlines are not missed.

Efficiency

Registering with the system will allow you to introduce your organisation to the authority in one go, saving you time and money on promotional material that may not get read due to our busy workloads. The system is also accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week allowing you to obtain and return documentation whenever is most convenient to you. In addition as the system is accessed and run via the web you and your colleagues can view documentation and work on bids even if you are working on opposite ends of the country or world, potentially saving you time travelling to and sitting in meetings.

The system does currently allow you to store documents with your company details such as Insurance certificates and Health & Safety Policies, the system will also send out automatic reminders via email to alert you when these documents you have uploaded onto the system as part of your company details are due to expire.

Transparency

The system maintains a full audit trail recording all of the actions that have taken place within it. This audit trail is also readily accessible to you through clicking on the "View Tender History" button once

you have logged into the system and accessed the project through clicking on the "My Tenders" button. This allows you to see exactly which stage that project is at and the most recent actions that have been undertaken by us and yourself. This should help you keep track with what you have done on the system and save you time chasing us up for information on progress.

All procurement projects will be run through the system including lower value quotation exercises. Although it is currently our intention to advertise all of these lower value requirements using In-Tend you will be able to access information on lower value work that we have awarded. You will be provided with visibility of which of our departments commissioned the work and who the responsible officer was which should be of assistance to you. You will be able to express interest in the contract once it is reaching its expiry date and thus being included on the re-tender list.

Furthermore, the system will act as our supplier directory and so will replace any lists that may have been used before. Therefore, in registering with the system we would advise you to take care to register your organisation against the appropriate business categories that you are capable of delivering. Further information is contained within the "Supplier Registration user guide".

3. How will information about my organisation be kept secure?

Access to the system is password protected. In registering with the system you will be required to enter an email address and a password of your choice. You will then use your user name and password to log into the system and view your company details, returns, etc.

4. How will information I send through the system be kept safe from interception by hackers?

All documentation and other information transmitted through the systems are automatically encrypted. The only users able to view the information are those that either we or you have assigned as recipients. As such, in the unlikely event of someone intercepting information they would not be able to make any sense of it and so would not be able to use it to their advantage in any way. The method of encryption used within the system is to the same security standards as those used by the MoD and have been extensively tested.

5. When I register with the system what information on my organisation should I ensure I provide?

(The following covers the basics of the registration process, however please refer to the Supplier Registration User Guide that we have made accessible on our website when registering your organisation.)

In first registering with the system on the first tab you will be required to provide the following information:

- Company Name
- 1st Line of Address plus Post Code

- Telephone Number
- E-mail address for notifications to be sent to

You will also be able to register yourself as a user, which once you have completed the mandatory fields, will enable you to log into the site, express interested in current opportunities and view and update your company details. In order to do this you will need to input the following information:

- First Name
- Surname
- E-mail Address
- Password

On the 2nd tab you will be able to register your organisation against any business categories your operation is equipped to provide. This information is not mandatory, however, it is very important that you take time to complete this part of the registration process. We will search against business categories in our area of the system to find appropriate suppliers who we may then invite to bid for lower value works that will not be processed through a formal advertised tender process. As such, if you do not register your organisation against any of these categories you are running the risk of missing out on potential future opportunities to do business with us.

Once registered you will now be able to log into the system and view your company details where you can input further information on yourself and your company such as:-

- Full Company Address
- Your job title
- Number of employees
- VAT number
- Company Registration number
- Accounting details
- Banking details
- Insurance details
- CIS Certification
- CORGI Registration
- Constructionline Registration
- Details of any accreditations
- Business Categories

Although providing information relating to the areas above is not mandatory we would strongly advise you to take the time to input this information. As we will use the system as our supplier database, the more information you can provide us may increase the chances of you being invited to quote for lower value works.

6. What if I make a mistake registering my organisation on the system?

If you make a mistake during registration do not worry. When you log into the system you will have access to update all the information you provided through logging in and clicking on "Company Details" on the right of the screen. Please do not attempt to re-register or we could end up in the position of us inviting both of the companies you have registered so that in effect you would be competing against yourself.

7. What if additional people from within my organisation require access to the system?

You should not tell your colleagues to register themselves as this could result in having two registrations for your organisation appearing on the system. Instead you should log into the system yourself and click on the "Company Details" button. You will then need to select "Company Contact Details" button to access the screen where you will be able to view details of all of the people from within your organisation who currently have access to the system. From here you can edit or remove your company contacts or add new individuals to provide access to colleagues.

8. What if the system becomes unavailable whilst I'm working on it?

As the system is internet based there is a danger of the system becoming unavailable due to internet wide problems. As soon as you become aware of any problems, contact us her at the Procurement Department on 01903 221162 and we will investigate and get back to you and any other organisations taking part on the project to ensure fair treatment.

9. Where can I get help if I experience difficulties using the system?

There are a number of options open to you to obtain help depending on the particular nature of the problems you are encountering.

Problems with logging into the system

If you enter the wrong password or user name more than twice, for security reasons the system will lock you out and deny you access to the site if you subsequently enter the correct details. If you have forgotten your password there is a large red button that reads "Forgotten your details?" If you click this button your password will be promptly emailed to you. However your log in will still be locked and you will have to call our Procurement department on 01903 221162 or email procurement@adur-worthing.gov.uk who will unlock your account for you.

Problems with the operating system

We have prepared a "Supplier Registration User Guide" that is accessible on our website and takes you through the processes you will need to follow in registering on the system.

In addition to this there is also an extensive on-line help available on the system that you can access through clicking on the "help" icon. In-Tend also provide an expert helpline available between 8am - 6pm Monday – Friday. The number is 0844 272 8810 or alternatively you can email your query to support@in-tend.co.uk

Queries regarding documentation and other information

If you have technical questions regarding specifications, terms and conditions, timescales, etc. These should be addressed to our contact for the project whose details you should find in the tender advert on our external site or in the tender description accessible through logging on In-Tend. These queries should be sent by using the correspondence option linked to the project.

10.   How will I know when to access the system to obtain information?

You will be sent an email from the system as soon as documentation becomes available on the site alerting you of this and asking you to log onto the system. As such, it is vitally important that contact details are correct on the system. It is also strongly advised that these emails are sent to more than one person to ensure cover over holiday and sickness periods.

11.   How will I know that my return has been submitted successful?

Once you have uploaded the documentation you wish u to consider as part of your bid on the system, you will still need to click on the red "submit return" button. **Simply uploading the Documentation will not transmit it to us** and without clicking this button we will not be able to access the documentation. Also, please ensure that you have uploaded all of the documentation you wish to be considered before submitting your return. Depending on the project we may have set up the system to block multiple returns and so you may not be have another chance to submit.

12.   What if I accidentally submitted documentation before I wanted to?

In this instance you should contact us straight away on 01903 221162 or email using procurement@adur-worthing.gov.uk however, in this instance it would probably be best to call to ensure a quick response. If you notify us at least two working days prior to the submission deadline when we will be able to temporarily reconfigure the system to allow you to resubmit. However, any requests to resubmit received within two working days of the deadline will be left to the discretion of our lead officer for the project and as such we cannot provide any assurances that you will be able to resubmit these cases.

13.   How Can I keep up to date with a tender I am involved in?

The system will notify you via email if there is a change in the status of a tender you have expressed interest in. However, if you have accidentally permanently deleted one of these emails or have access to the internet but not your inbox you can still keep up to date with any developments. If you log onto the system and click on the "My Tenders" tab at the top of the screen you will be able to access all of the tenders you are involved in. Directly under the title of each of the tenders you are attached to you will see the field "status", that provides information on what stage the tender has progressed to and your current status in relation to the tender. To ensure that you are kept fully up to date you should regularly check this site.

14.   Is there a limit on the size of files that I can transmit through In-Tend?

No limit is imposed on file sizes that can be sent through the system. The limiting factor is the speed of your internet connection. If you have a very fast connection you will have no problems submitting documents of any size, however if it is fairly slow you may encounter difficulties. The system providers recommend average file sizes of between 10-15MB. Also, if you want to include images,

graphics, photos etc. within word documents we would advise you to insert them into a document using the "paste special" function. You should then choose the option of inserting the file as a word picture. This will greatly reduce down the size and ensure that your documentation is submitted to us swiftly.

15.   Can I transmit all file types through In-Tend?

In-Tend can handle all file types including office documents, CAD drawings and PDFs. You should, however, only upload documents from your desktop or hard drive, as uploading documents from across a server can sometimes cause problems. The system providers also recommend that you avoid using unnecessarily long file names and those that contain the characters ',*()&

16.   How do I view and reply to correspondence sent using the system?

Viewing Correspondence

If we send out correspondence via the system you will receive an automatically sent "Correspondence Notification from Adur & Worthing Council" email notifying you that additional information is now available for a tender you are involved in.

To view the correspondence you will need to log onto the system. Once you are logged on, in the main area of the home page will be a message saying that you have 1 piece of unread correspondence in red text. To view the correspondence click on the text link which will then take you through to the correspondence page.

From the correspondence page you will be able to view a summary of the correspondence showing the date and time it was sent, the tender it is associated with and whether any attachments are included. Under options there is a "view message" button, click on this button to view the correspondence. From the message window you will also be able to view and download any attachments.

Replying to Correspondence

To reply to the correspondence click on the "Reply" button, you can then type in your message on the following screen. If you wish to attach any documents click on the "Browse" button to access your drives. Once you have selected a document click on the "Attach" button. The document will now appear under the "Attachments" section on the screen. You can now view the attachment to check that it is the right document and remove it if it isn't. You can also add additional attachments following the process you followed for attaching the first one. When you are happy with your message and have attached all required documentation click on the " Send" button.

Viewing the Correspondence Log

When you log onto the system again you can view all of the correspondence that has been sent to you and those that you have sent yourself. By clicking on the "messages" tab on the top of the screen, and then selecting "Correspondence" you will be taken to the correspondence screen. On the left hand side you can select correspondence that you have received, sent, read and unread. From this screen you are also given the option to reply and to filter by Project/Contract.

Creating new Correspondence

To send your own correspondence that is not in reply to any you have received from us Click on the "Create New Correspondence" button on the left of the screen whilst in the Correspondence Log window. Ensure that the correspondence you are sending relates to the tender or contract you are involved in by selecting from the drop down lists. If the correspondence relates to a specific stage of that tender use the drop down list to select the appropriate one. You should then enter the subject of the message, the actual message itself and upload any attachments that you wish to send to us.

When you are happy that the correspondence is allocated to the correct tender/contract, correct stage (if appropriate), the subject of the message, the content of the message and that all of the required documentation has been attached click on the "Send" button. The system will then open a window confirming that the correspondence has been sent successfully.