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2012/2013 Financial Guideline 03

National Procurement Service for Schools

Introduction

The National Procurement Service (NPS) was established by Government decision in 2009 to ensure maximum efficiency in the area of public service procurement of goods and services. It is now Government policy that all publicly funded bodies should have access to public procurement contracts to reduce costs and increase efficiencies across the public service.

To start the process **all schools should register immediately with the National Procurement Service on www.procurement.ie** which entitles the school to avail of a whole range of goods and services at reduced cost. By using the national procurement service, schools are also fulfilling tendering requirements under Irish and EU law as outlined in FSSU Financial Guideline 04 2011/12. Details of all available goods and services are specified on the NPS website.

1. Electricity Procurement

Last October, voluntary secondary schools were invited to submit an application to register with the National Procurement Service (NPS) for the supply of electricity. 108 voluntary secondary schools applied at that time and the contracts for these schools are now being finalised. The NPS will be in touch with these schools shortly to sign the final contracts. Every school included in the contract is guaranteed significant savings, some as high as €3,000 over the course of one year. All schools can expect an average saving of 15% in one year.

At this stage **all voluntary secondary schools who have not yet done so should apply for electricity procurement**. Very shortly it will be mandatory for all public bodies including all schools to register with the NPS for supply of electricity. Any school applying at this stage will either be added to the existing NPS contracts or will be included in new contracts to be negotiated over the coming weeks.

For electricity supply the NPS identifies each individual school by the unique MPRN number quoted on all electricity bills. The contact person for Electricity Procurement is Niall Gunning (Tel. 046 9426915 or email niall.gunning@opw.ie).

To join the Electricity Framework for Schools please return the Electricity Procurement Registration Form.

2. Natural Gas Procurement

As with electricity it will become mandatory for all public bodies to source natural gas supplies through the NPS. Any voluntary secondary school currently using natural gas should register with NPS by returning the application form enclosed. As with electricity, significant savings are guaranteed. For natural gas supply, the NPS identifies each individual school by the unique GPRN number quoted on the gas bill.

The contact person for Natural Gas Procurement is Róisín Killeen (Tel. 046 9426156 or email roisin.killeen@opw.ie).

To join the Natural Gas Framework for Schools please complete the Natural Gas Procurement Registration Form.

3. Managed Print Services (MPS)

Significant savings for schools in Managed Print Services (MPS) (photocopying and printing) are also available through the National Procurement Service. The MPS framework includes photocopiers, printers, fax machines and scanners. In general, MPS is delivered in the school through multi-function devices which combine all of the above in a single device.

No capital outlay is required for an MPS as billing is on an all-inclusive per printed page/image basis per quarter. This payment includes supply of all necessary devices, maintenance, repairs, consumables (cartridges, paper, etc) and reporting. In other words, all printers, photocopiers etc. will be replaced by the contracted supplier as part of the deal. The MPS deal should yield savings of 30% on average for total print costs and gives the school a "modern print fleet" covering all print and imaging requirements of the school.

The NPS has put in place a two year framework for MPS and seven companies were chosen. If a school or group of schools wishes to avail of the framework a mini-competition is organised and a contract for three years is awarded to the successful bidder. The successful company will be required to deliver a total print solution to the school, provide simple yet detailed quarterly invoices on a "per click" basis and provide regular performance reports.

Detailed information on MPS is available on www.procurement.ie. Under the section MPS there are a number of templates and a Best Practice Guide which shows step by step on how to procure from the MPS framework.

The contact person for MPS at the National Procurement Service is Andy Bogie (Tel. 046 9426649, andrew.bogie@opw.ie) or Sandra Doyle (Tel. 046 9426039, sandra.doyle@opw.ie)

4. Heating Oil and LPG

The NPS is in the process of putting a procurement framework in place for schools covering heating oil and liquid petroleum gas (LPG). Again this should yield significant savings for schools. In order to progress this framework the NPS needs to estimate what the current consumption of heating oil and LPG is in schools. To obtain this information we will be requesting schools to fill in a short questionnaire on the school's usage of heating oil and LPG in bulk and cylinder form.

The contact person for Heating Oil and LPG in the National Procurement Service is Teresa Collins (Tel. 046 9426534 or email teresa.collins@opw.ie).

5. Office Consumables

The NPS is currently putting new contracts in place for the purchase of office supplies and stationery. The contracts being drawn up in this area include:

- **Office Supplies and Stationery:** The current contract in this area expires in April 2013 and does not apply to schools. However, the new contracts to come into effect next April will cover all schools who wish to avail of them. Office supplies and stationery will include notebooks, labels, refill pads, envelopes, writing materials, whiteboard markers, noticeboards, flip charts, ring binders, lever arch files, calculators, shredders etc.
- **Paper:** A new contract for paper will be put in place for October next. This contract will be available to all public bodies including schools.
- **ICT Consumables:** The contract for ICT consumables has been in place since March 2012. This contract was awarded to Datapac and is open to all schools. Full information on this and other contracts is available on www.procurement.ie

6. Other Areas of Procurement Available to Schools

Apart from the areas of purchase listed above, there are many other areas of purchasing of relevance to schools where significant savings can be made. These areas include:

- Science Equipment
- Cleaning materials/consumables
- Telephone systems
- Waste framework

Schools need to be aware that there is now a legal requirement to tender for all purchases above a certain value over the course of a year in line with the FSSU Guideline 04 2011/2012. Purchasing through the National Procurement Service ensures that all schools are in compliance with national and EU procurement regulations.

Further information relating to National Procurement for Schools will be issued as it becomes available.

**Fergus Dunne, Director,
JMB Financial Support Services Unit.**

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