



Department of

Finance

An Roinn

Airgeadais

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SUPPLIER CHARTER

CPD's Complaints Procedures

Issued: 12 October 2015



CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Who does the Charter apply to?.....	4
Our responsibilities.....	4
Our values.....	4
The twelve principles of public procurement	5
Annex A - CPD's service standards	7
Annex B - Process for dealing with a complaint regarding the procurement process... ..	10
Annex C - Process for dealing with a complaint regarding CPD's service standards.....	12
Annex D - Contact points	14

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Supplier Charter is to give you information about what we do and the standards of service you should expect when you deal with us.

Suppliers play a critical role in the delivery of public services. CPD recognises this and wants to work with suppliers in a way which promotes a clear understanding of Government's needs. We do this by promoting effective working relationships and by understanding the issues which are important to suppliers.

We will listen and, where appropriate, act upon your suggestions/comments about the way we carry out our business. If you have any comments you should contact us at the contact point provided in [Annex D](#). If you are not happy with our service this Charter also includes advice on what action you should take to ensure your complaints are dealt with promptly.

I hope you find the Charter helpful.

DES ARMSTRONG

Chief Executive

WHO DOES THE CHARTER APPLY TO?

CPD does business with many companies and individuals who are either existing suppliers or who want to do business with us. These relationships are important as they are critical to ensuring that we deliver a quality procurement and advisory service to the bodies covered by NI Public Procurement Policy.

The principles and service standards set out in this Charter will underpin our dealings with our suppliers.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

CPD is part of the Department of Finance (DoF). We support the bodies covered by NI Public Procurement Policy by helping them to obtain value for money in the procurement of supplies, services and construction works. We provide expert advice and professional skills during the procurement lifecycle, from initial concept to completion and realisation of benefits. We work in partnership with suppliers, potential suppliers and industry representatives to help them meet the needs of the public sector market.

More details of the services we provide can be found on the [DoF website](#).

OUR VALUES

Those doing, or wishing to do, business with CPD can expect us to embody the CLEAR values set out below:

Customer focused on service

Leadership strong with clear direction

Ethical honest, fair, equal

Accountable to citizens & their representatives

Results working to deliver best value

THE TWELVE PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

The administration of public procurement is governed by the following principles:

1. Transparency – we will ensure that as far as possible there is openness and clarity in policy and its delivery.
2. Competitive Supply – we will procure through competition unless there are convincing reasons to the contrary.
3. Consistency – suppliers can expect CPD’s Centres of Procurement Expertise – Construction Division, Health Projects, and Supplies and Services Division - to apply our procurement policy consistently.
4. Effectiveness – we will meet the commercial, regulatory and socio-economic goals of government in a balanced manner appropriate to the procurement requirement.
5. Efficiency – we will carry out all procurement processes as cost effectively as possible.
6. Fair Dealing – we will treat suppliers fairly including protecting commercial confidentiality where appropriate. We will not impose unnecessary burdens or constraints on suppliers or potential suppliers.
7. Integrity –there should be no corruption or collusion with suppliers or others.
8. Informed Decision Making – we will base decisions on accurate information and monitor requirements to ensure that they are met.

9. Legality – we will comply with the Public Contracts Regulations where they apply and other legal requirements.
10. Integration – our policies will pay due regard to Government’s other environmental, economic and social policies rather than cut across them.
11. Responsiveness – we will endeavour to meet the aspirations, expectations and needs of the community served by the procurement.
12. Accountability – we will ensure that effective mechanisms are in place to enable Accounting Officers to discharge their responsibilities on issues of procurement risk and expenditure.

CPD's SERVICE STANDARDS

CPD is committed to providing a high standard of service to suppliers. This means our staff will:

- be polite and helpful at all times;
- give you their name;
- treat all information given to us in confidence as far as we can in accordance with the law and the principles of transparency and openness in public procurement; and
- treat you fairly.

WHEN WE MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO MEET YOU

When we make an appointment to meet you we will aim to do the following:

- arrive promptly or, if you are calling to see us, see you at the appointed time. If we are delayed, due to circumstances beyond our control, we will make every effort to advise you of this and agree a new time.

WHEN YOU WRITE TO US OR E-MAIL US

You can write to us or e-mail us at the addresses provided in [Annex D](#).

When you contact us we will aim to do the following:

- acknowledge all formal correspondence upon receipt and follow-up with a full reply within the timescales set out in this Charter. If we cannot give you a full reply within the timescales we will write to you and advise when you can expect to receive a response; and
- make sure all our correspondence is clear and presentable.

WHEN YOU CONTACT US BY TELEPHONE

You can contact us by telephone Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm.

We aim to answer your call promptly. If the person you wish to speak to is not available, you can either leave a message or we will try to get someone else who can help you. If we cannot help you immediately we will call you back before the end of the next working day.

If you do not have the direct line number of the member of staff you want to contact, our general enquiries number is 028 9081 6445.

ACCESSIBILITY

Information about our services is available on the [DoF website](#).

We will take steps to ensure that our services and building are accessible to suppliers and we will do our best to cater for those with special needs or whose first language is not English.

CONSULTING YOU

We continually strive to improve the way in which we deliver our business by consulting with commerce and industry in Northern Ireland, particularly through the Business and Industry Forum and Construction Industry Forum.

IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT

CPD aims to provide a high quality, efficient and professional service, but occasionally things may go wrong.

CPD monitors and reports on suppliers' complaints and tries to learn from them in order to improve the service it provides. CPD also welcomes suggestions for improvement.

PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS REGARDING THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The process for dealing with complaints regarding the application of the principles of public procurement or other elements of the procurement process is set out in [Annex B](#).

PROCESS FOR DEALING COMPLAINTS REGARDING CPD's SERVICE STANDARDS

The process for dealing with complaints regarding CPD's service standards is set out in [Annex C](#).

PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH A COMPLAINT REGARDING THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

If you have a complaint about the procurement process you should follow the process set out below. This process, however, is not an appeal mechanism for suppliers who are dissatisfied with the outcome of a procurement competition and should not be used if you are seeking a remedy under [The Public Contracts Regulations 2015](#) or other legal action through the courts. This process cannot be used to halt or delay a procurement competition.

Stage 1

Any queries/clarifications regarding a procurement competition must be communicated through the [eTendersNI](#) portal. The staff dealing with the procurement will also issue their responses through the portal. If you are not satisfied with a response to a query/clarification you should try to seek further clarification. If you are still not satisfied and have a complaint, inform the staff dealing with the procurement through the portal.

The staff dealing with the procurement will escalate your complaint to the Head of the relevant Branch who will arrange to have the matter investigated and will respond. The Head of Branch will aim to send you a full response **within 10 working days** of receiving your complaint. If our investigation is likely to take longer than this then we will let you know when you can expect a full reply. If your complaint is upheld the Head of Branch will ensure the lessons learnt are recorded and communicated to staff as appropriate. The Head of Branch will also ensure any improvements identified are actioned as soon as possible.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the response and the contract has not been awarded you should inform CPD through the [eTendersNI](#) portal. If the contract has been awarded you should contact the appropriate Director. Contact details are provided in [Annex D](#).

The Director will arrange to have your complaint investigated and will respond within **15 working days** of receiving your complaint. If the second stage investigation takes longer than this, the Director will let you know when you can expect a full reply. If your complaint is upheld the lessons learnt will be recorded and communicated to staff as appropriate. The Director will ensure any improvements are identified and actioned as soon as possible.

Stage 3

If you are not satisfied with the response you should contact the CPD Chief Executive. Contact details are provided in [Annex D](#). The Chief Executive will arrange to have the matter investigated and will respond within **15 working days** of receiving your complaint. If the third stage investigation takes longer than this, the Chief Executive's office will let you know when you can expect a full reply. As part of his investigation, the Chief Executive may refer the matter to the Cabinet Office Mystery Shopper service for independent advice. If your complaint is upheld the lessons learnt will be recorded and communicated to staff as appropriate. The Chief Executive will ensure any improvements are identified and actioned as soon as possible.

PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH A COMPLAINT REGARDING CPD's SERVICE STANDARDS

This is the process to follow if you feel CPD has fallen short in achieving its service standards. The process for dealing with any complaints you may have regarding the procurement process is set out in [Annex B](#).

Stage 1

You should raise your concerns with the staff involved in the first instance. If you are still not satisfied you should contact the CPD Co-ordination Team. Contact details are provided in [Annex D](#).

Your complaint will be referred to the relevant Director, who will arrange for it to be investigated. The Director will aim to send you a full response **within 10 working days** of receiving your complaint. If our investigation is likely to take longer than this then we will let you know when you can expect a full reply.

If your complaint is upheld the Director will ensure the lessons learnt are recorded and communicated to staff as appropriate. The Director will also ensure any improvements identified are actioned as soon as possible.

Stage 2

If you remain dissatisfied following this response you should write to the CPD Chief Executive. Contact details are provided in [Annex D](#). The Chief Executive will arrange to have the matter investigated and will respond **within 15 working days** of receiving your complaint. If the second stage investigation takes longer than this, the Chief Executive office will let you know when you can expect a full reply.

If your complaint is upheld the Chief Executive will ensure the lessons learnt are recorded and communicated to staff as appropriate. The Chief Executive will also ensure any improvements identified are actioned as soon as possible.

If you continue to be dissatisfied you may ask a Member of the Assembly (MLA) to refer your complaint to the Office of the Northern Ireland Ombudsman. **You will be expected to have exhausted the CPD complaints procedure before requesting your MLA to take the matter up with the Ombudsman.** The Office of the Ombudsman will consider the facts of your case and decide if the complaint falls within the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman. This is a matter which lies solely with the Ombudsman, not CPD. We therefore can give no undertaking that the complaint will be within his or her jurisdiction.

If your complaint is upheld CPD will consider any lessons learnt and consider whether it is necessary to change its processes to avoid a recurrence of the issue.

CONTACT POINTS

General enquiries, comments and suggestions

Telephone: 028 9081 6445

Email: co-ordinationteam@finance-ni.gov.uk

Complaints regarding the procurement process

Stage 1

All complaints in relation to the procurement process should be raised through the [eTendersNI](#) portal.

Stage 2

If the contract has not been awarded you should inform CPD through the [eTendersNI](#) portal.

If the contract has been awarded you should contact:

Director

Supplies and Services Division

Central Procurement Directorate

1st Floor West

Clare House

303 Airport Road West

BELFAST

BT3 9ED

Telephone: 028 9081 6031

Email: SSDAdmin.CPD@finance-ni.gov.uk

Director
Construction Division
Central Procurement Directorate
1st Floor East
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
BELFAST
BT3 9ED
Telephone: 028 9081 6555
Email: Construct.Info@finance-ni.gov.uk

Director
Construction Division – Health Projects
Central Procurement Directorate
Annex 7 B3
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST
BT4 3SL
Telephone: 028 9052 3981
Email: hpadmin.cpd@finance-ni.gov.uk

Stage 3

CPD Chief Executive
Central Procurement Directorate
2nd Floor East
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
BELFAST
BT3 9ED
Telephone: 028 9081 6445
Email: co-ordinationteam.cpd@finance-ni.gov.uk

Complaints regarding CPD's service standards

Stage 1

Co-ordination Team
Policy and Performance Division
Central Procurement Directorate
2nd Floor East
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
BELFAST
BT3 9ED
Telephone: 028 9081 6445
Email: co-ordinationteam.cpd@finance-ni.gov.uk

Stage 2

CPD Chief Executive
Central Procurement Directorate
2nd Floor East
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
BELFAST
BT3 9ED
Telephone: 028 9081 6445
Email: co-ordinationteam.cpd@finance-ni.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Ombudsman

You may contact the Northern Ireland Ombudsman at:

The Ombudsman
Progressive House
33 Wellington Place
BELFAST
BT1 6BR

Tel: 028 9023 3821 or Freephone: 0800 343 424

e-mail: ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk

You may also write to the Ombudsman at:

The Ombudsman

Freepost RTKS-BAJU-ALEZ

Belfast

BT1 6BR