



South Yorkshire  
Fire & Rescue

WORKING FOR A SAFER  
SOUTH YORKSHIRE

# **How to do Business with South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue**

**2019**

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## 1. Introduction

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue (SYFR) purchases services, supplies and works that range in value from several hundred pounds to many hundreds of thousands. We have 22 fire stations throughout the County including a Training & Development Centre, Central Stores and Headquarters at Sheffield. This provides companies of all sizes with a wide range of commercial opportunities. Your company could potentially benefit from these opportunities.

The Procurement Section of Support Services has a responsibility to ensure that all procurement projects are undertaken within the Fire Authorities Contract Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and EU legislation.

The Service's aim with procurement is to use a variety of methods and contractual arrangements to help deliver the Service's Objectives, Vision and Values and to deliver high quality service and in line with its Corporate strategy.

Our aim is to provide value for money on supplies and services bought and leased by the Brigade. This does not mean the cheapest but a balance between cost, quality and performance.

## 2. Contract Standing Orders & Procedures

What are Contract Standing Orders?

The Service's purchasing decisions and processes are important because they involve the use of public money. The purpose of Contract standing Orders is to provide a structure within which purchasing decisions are made and implemented. These regulate how we conduct our business and anyone employed by SYFR must conform to them. They set out the procedures for advertising, evaluating and letting contracts of different values.

Contract Standing Order Procedures are designed to ensure that we achieve best value from all of the money we spend. The procedures are intended to ensure that when procuring SYFR complies with the law, maintains strict impartiality and protects the Service's interests.

### 2.1 Our Contracts Register

This list includes contracts and framework agreements over the value of £5,000 for Goods and Services that we purchase regularly. The list will be updated frequently and will include any new contracts that have been agreed.

The list is intended to give potential suppliers a greater understanding of what we buy and when contracts are scheduled to be reviewed, and where appropriate when they will go out to tender.

Our Contracts Register can be found here: [Contracts Register](#)

### 2.2 Spending over £500

In summer 2010 the Government announced its intention that all public bodies should publish details of all its expenditure over £500. Please use the link below to view invoices paid by South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue on a [monthly basis](#).

### 3. South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Financial Thresholds

£ Nil - £1,000	Competitive quotations are not required for contracts or orders with an estimated value of below £1,000. A written quotation shall be obtained from the Supplier before a formal purchase order can be issued.
£1,001 - £5,000	The appropriate Authorised Officer shall obtain three or more written quotations from persons believed to be suitably experienced in the supply of the required works.
£5,001 – £25,000	The Central Buyer shall obtain three or more written quotations from persons believed to be suitably experienced in the supply of the required works.
£25,001 and above	The relevant Category Manager or Procurement Manager shall conduct a tender exercise, call-off from a framework or EU tender according to the value and risk.
Above OJEU Thresholds	Contracts above the OJEU Thresholds in force at the time of need for Supplies, Services and Works are classified as an EU Tender. Tenders will be advertised within the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU), and the resulting awards must be published in OJEU. All orders above £25,000 whether a 3 quotes, call-off from a framework or above OJEU threshold be published via Contracts Finder.

### 4. Terms & Conditions of Contracts

SYFR has a set of Standard Conditions of Contract that are used for goods and services. It is our policy to contract under our own terms and conditions of contract. An electronic version of the [General Conditions of Contract](#) can be found on our Authorities website.

### 5. Advertising our Contracts

SYFR do not have or maintain an approved supplier database but we do advertise all of our works, service and supply contracts on the YorTender contract Management system and also give brief details of current tenders on our web site.

We use the YorTender system to increase the fairness & transparency of our electronic tendering processes and to also give businesses confidence in doing business with us and that they are all treated equally and with the utmost confidentiality.

Registering and using Yortender is easy and free to use. You can self register and maintain your own data, downloaded documents and submit tender responses electronically 24hrs a day, 7 days a week. Tenders lodged electronically do not incur postage or courier costs and you receive automatic confirmation that your response has been received. You can search the database for awarded contracts throughout the regions as a means of identifying potential business leads. You can also tailor the system to see only those tenders you are interested in ,for example only tenders posted on the website by a specific member public sector body or tenders based on the type of work appropriate to your business.

Our Tender opportunities are advertised on the following Websites:

YorTender  
South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue  
Opportunities over £5,000 are advertised on

[YorTender](#)  
[SYFR Webpages](#)  
[Contracts Finder](#)

Goods, Services and Works contracts over the European Union Threshold have to be purchased in line with the EU Procurement Directives and are advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).

For Tenders equal or above European Procurement directive limits, an advertisement will be placed at <http://ted.europa.eu>.

## 6. **Our Tendering Procedures**

Where the value of the contract exceeds the EC threshold there are 4 main ways of tendering:-

<p><u>Open procedure</u> - Under an open tender procedure all suppliers who respond to an advertisement have access to the tender documentation which they can return electronically as appropriate.</p>
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<p><u>Restricted Procedure</u> - The restricted procedure can best be described as a two-stage approach in which the Authority invites interested suppliers to undergo a pre-qualification assessment to draw up a shortlist before inviting those on the list to tender.</p>
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<p><u>Competitive Dialogue</u> - This involves the authority entering into dialogue with bidders, following an OJEU notice and a selection process to develop one or more suitable solutions for its requirements and on which bidders will be invited to tender.</p>
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<p><u>Negotiated Procedure</u> - This is when the Authority, under certain limited circumstances, negotiates with one or more suppliers of our choice. For Example it may be used in cases of extreme urgency that could not be foreseen by the Authority or where irregular or unsuitable tenders were received under the open or restricted procedures.</p>
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## 7. **Tender Submissions**

### 7.1 Tender submission (Below OJEU)

Companies can either be invited to tender directly, through responding to an advert on our web pages or via a Contracts Finder notice.

### 7.2 Above OJEU Threshold Procurements

#### Selection Questionnaire (SQ)

Pre-qualification (SQ) are only used for above threshold tenders on Supplies and Services and above the threshold for Supplies and Services for Works Tenders and is an additional step in the supplier selection process, but can be helpful where large numbers of responses to a tender are expected, or where there is a requirement on suppliers to deliver creative solutions to satisfy the requirements.

The SQ requires the applicant to provide evidence of its financial standing and technical expertise including professional or other relevant qualifications and references from similar works being undertaken with other bodies. The information received will be evaluated against predetermined Award criteria and those applicants considered most suitable to undertake the contract will be invited to tender.

The sort of criteria considered includes:

- Financial standing
- Technical capabilities including membership of appropriate bodies
- Professional capabilities including membership of appropriate bodies
- Previous experiences in the areas of contracting you are undertaking
- Environmental & Sustainability policies
- Health and Safety Policy and track record
- The standard of Equality and Diversity Policies in place and how they are monitored and communicated to its staff
- Design and innovation

Invitation to Tender (ITT)

This stage is where suppliers who were successful at the SQ stage detail their specific offer to provide the goods or services we are looking to buy and their prices. The Tender is focused upon examining Suppliers capability to deliver Services or Goods which meet our needs.

Suppliers will be asked to provide evidence, answer questions and method statements that help us identify which suppliers provide the most economically advantageous offer by considering, price, technical and quality aspects.

Whichever procedure is followed, you should nevertheless read the advertisement or tender documents carefully and submit or request the information required by the dates stipulated by SYFR.

SYFR requires your tender application to detail how your goods or services meet the specification required in the format in which SYFR requests. The documents may also cover information about when you started business or your organisation/company was formed. What experiences you have on providing the goods/services/works being tendered for in terms of other public sector organisations and details of where SYFR may obtain references and details of your company's finances.

To ensure your bid is considered, you must:

- Provide all the information requested
- Make sure that you answer all questions accurately
- Return the information by the closing date specified in the format request.

Applicants are advised how each of the selection criteria will be evaluated and the tender documents we publish on YorTender contain details of our requirements. The documents, particularly the specification, should be read carefully and all the information completed fully and accurately. If you do not understand any part of the tender documents you should contact the procurement team who will help assist you through the process.

## 8. **Evaluation of Tenders**

SYFR is required to undertake different procurement processes determined by the potential value of any contract. SYFR promotes competitive purchasing in line with all public procurement. If the potential value of a contract justifies competitive procurement then tenders or quotations will be sought. As a public sector organisation SYFR is required to comply with the [Procurement Contracts Regulations 2015 \(PCR's\)](#).

In order to preserve the integrity of the competitive process, it is imperative that the evaluation of proposals is taken objectively, consistently and without bias towards particular suppliers. Accordingly evaluation of tenders is undertaken by an evaluation panel to ensure a fair and objective decision is reached.

Because of the nature of our contracts it is unlikely that they will be awarded on the basis of price alone. SYFR will award the contract to the supplier it considers offers value for money. For this reason our main evaluation criterion will be the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT). The award criteria will vary depending on the type of contract. Examples of award criteria are experience, ability to conform to specification, quality assurance, warranty and cost. We also want to encourage and ensure that our contractors and suppliers are working towards practices that are equal to our own policies and are embracing diversity.

Please note this is by no means exhaustive and the evaluation criteria will differ from purchase to purchase.

Above OJEU tenders require us to utilise the [Alcatel](#) period during which time we will issue Intention to Award letters and if no challenge received will be confirmed as actual awards.

## **9. Debrief and Feedback**

Suppliers who bid for Public sector contracts are entitled to feedback on why their bid was, or was not successful. We are committed to offering bidders meaningful feedback on their tender submissions and recognise that by doing so:

- It helps suppliers to know in which areas they may need to improve in future to help them become more competitive.
- It helps us to improve and develop our processes, and to become more familiar with the market.
- It is good practice and helps to improve our relationships with suppliers.

We will notify all suppliers who are unsuccessful in bidding for a contract (via YorTender dialogue) following the selection process. All suppliers will be offered feedback if requested including the offer of a face to face meeting where appropriate, within 10 days of a award decision being made.

If a supplier/contractor requests feedback, this will be offered within 15 days of the request being received. Meetings will be arranged for the earliest mutually convenient time possible.

All feedback offered will be detailed and meaningful, however commercially sensitive information about other bidders will not be disclosed.

We will offer feedback in a way that is constructive and open, based on the principle of continuous improvement.

## **10. Framework Agreements**

SYFR currently also use Framework Agreements awarded by various agencies established on behalf of public sector organisations.

Frameworks are agreements to provide both goods and services on pre-defined and specified terms. They may be with a single firm or a group of them. There is no commitment on either side to buy or provide the goods or service – although the arrangement will usually specify the terms that would apply if and when they are provided.

The benefit to SYFR is the reduction in process costs of initiating and completing procurement processes.

Actual orders from either the framework agreements or framework arrangements are usually referred to as “call-off contracts”.

Frameworks offer distinct advantages in providing value for money amongst these being:

- Speed and simplicity – the work has already been tendered if necessary across Europe
- Price – economies of scale allow Framework managers to secure competitive prices
- Process cost saving
- Safety – the framework will already comply with all necessary regulations

SYFR currently use national contracts awarded and advertised by the [Crown Commercial Services \(CCS\)](#), [YPO](#), [ESPO](#) and sector initiatives led by [NFCC](#).

## **11. Health & Safety within our Procurement**

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of their employees and that of all other affected by their undertakings. Contracts to supply goods or services will only be awarded to contractors who can satisfy SYFR requirements in terms of resources required and their health and safety competence.

Successful contractors and suppliers are expected to demonstrate compliance with current health and safety legislation including:

- Commitment to health and safety of its employees, client and others
- Up to date health and safety policies and procedures
- Adequate risk assessment procedures
- Adequate system of monitoring and reporting accidents, incidents and ill health
- Access to competent health and safety advice

Contracts are monitored to ensure compliance with contract standards and health and safety requirements.

## **12. Equality and Diversity**

SYFR is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to promoting equality and recognising the protected characteristics contained within the [Equality Act 2010](#). As part of SYFR approach to Equal Opportunities and statutory responsibilities SYFR is keen to ensure that our approach to procuring goods, works and services is in a manner which :-

- Encourages and promotes equal opportunity
- Promotes good relations
- Eliminates discrimination (either direct or indirect)

In our approach to contracting with suppliers, we look to build business relationships with those suppliers who support and apply similar principles of equal opportunities to ours and within their own businesses. SYFR will take into account within tender evaluations and contracting processes a potential contractors approach to Equality & Diversity in terms of its employment practices and service delivery, which will also be monitored and managed during the life of each contract.

## 12.1 Equality Analysis

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue (SYFR) undertaking comprehensive Equality Analysis when undertaking significant procurements (previously referred to as Equality Impact Assessments or EIA's), to identify impacts and opportunities for promoting equality across all the protected characteristics.

Equality Analysis is the process by which organisations examine their activities in order to minimise the potential for discrimination and looks at the likely impact of all strategies, policies and projects on people who possess one or more of the protected characteristics.

If there is adverse impact identified, action must be taken to eliminate or reduce this.

EAs are a means of ensuring that we improve **access**, **experience** and **outcomes** for everyone.

Equality Assessments help us comply with the law and to reduce inequalities for:

- People with disabilities
- People from different racial backgrounds & cultures
- Men and women
- Transgendered people
- People with different sexual orientations
- People in different age groups
- People with different religions or beliefs
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

## 13. **Sustainability & Environmental Policies**

Sustainability can be incorporated into the whole procurement process: defining the need, evaluating options, design and specifying, supplier selection, tender evaluation, post-contract management and supplier development.

It's about taking environmental and social factors into account when making purchasing decisions with the aim of minimising the environmental and social impacts of the purchases we make.

By undertaking and promoting green/environmental/sustainable procurement SYFR and the environment achieve many benefits, these include:-

- Cost savings
- Enhancing corporate image
- Ensuring compliance with legislation
- Conserves natural resources
- Reduces pollution
- Reduces the amount of waste sent to landfill

We are committed to using the resources entrusted to us to ensure best value for money at the least possible cost to the environment. As part of this commitment to the environment, our procurement policy will, wherever practicable, focus on:

- Specifying less environmentally damaging products

- Promoting greater use of renewable sources
- Encouraging suppliers to use environmentally friendly practices

When applying for certain Service contracts, we may ask you to supply evidence of your practices and procedures as they relate to the environment.

Details of our environmental and sustainable policy can be found on our website.

#### **14. How to contact us**

The Procurement Section deals with the procurement of a wide range of general and operational goods and services for South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue:-

Tel: 0114 253 2391  
[procurement@syfire.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@syfire.gov.uk)

or write to:

Procurement Services  
South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue  
197 Eyre Street  
Sheffield  
S1 3FG