



Ease of Procurement - Enabling economies and efficiencies within Local Government



THE CHALLENGE

Local government is consistently working towards efficiency and savings targets as detailed in the Gershon Report (a review of public sector efficiency). In response to these targets, Bracknell Forest Borough Council (BFBC) was looking for a means to rationalise the procurement of telephony and to meet government value for money criteria. Led by BFBC, several local authorities within the southeast of England came together to form a consortium called Southeast Network for Telecommunications (SENT).

The aim was to create a competitive bid and e-auction for the provision of fixed lined telephony, primarily covering voice telephone lines and calls. To rationalise the process and realise savings more quickly, it was decided to use the existing OGC (Office of Government Commerce) Buying Solutions Telecoms Service Framework Agreements. This avoided the need to go through a full European Commission procurement. A broadcast was issued to all framework suppliers and interested parties were subsequently invited to tender and participate in the e-Auction.

THE SOLUTION

Global Crossing, the successful provider, has many years experience of working with UK government and maintains a comprehensive understanding of the issues and challenges faced by central and local government. Global Crossing's government account team worked diligently to understand the requirements of the invitation to tender and to address the efficiency and savings targets of the SENT consortium.

Tenders received were assessed by the SENT evaluation team. The evaluation methodology took account of a range of service quality issues, including technical capacity, transition and billing services as well as price and cost of change. Based on the results of this evaluation exercise, Global Crossing was chosen as the preferred supplier.

The tendering process has produced discounts for the consortium members. The process also enabled the shortening of timescales and the quicker realisation of savings.

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

Timothy Wheadon, Chief Executive of BFBC, described the outcome as "... an excellent result for us and for other southeast authorities."

BFBC in partnership with Global Crossing has been able to realise a number of key benefits for the members of SENT consortium.

- › The value for money savings realised by BFBC are estimated to be around 30%. For the SENT consortium as a whole the figure could reach £500,000 per annum.
- › By using the GTC framework suppliers, EC Directive requirements were met.
- › Global Crossing has enabled the restructuring of internal BFBC invoice processes to accommodate consolidated monthly invoices, removing more than 500 invoices annually from the system. This could generate process savings of approximately £10,000 over a year.
- › Several non-participating councils and schools have expressed interest in the initiative and are likely to join the scheme – further improving the savings that can be achieved.

THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

As previously mentioned, key factors in the selection process were coverage, flexible reporting and billing processes. In addition to these, the Global Crossing account management team provided, and continue to provide, "...excellent service and confidence in Global Crossing's ability to deliver the required service and support, whilst ensuring the consortium members deliver against efficiency and savings targets" - Jo Alderson, Principal Procurement Officer at Bracknell Forest Borough Council.

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