

# 1. Step One - Getting Registered on The Chest

## Supplier Guidance for The Chest: [www.the-chest.org.uk](http://www.the-chest.org.uk)

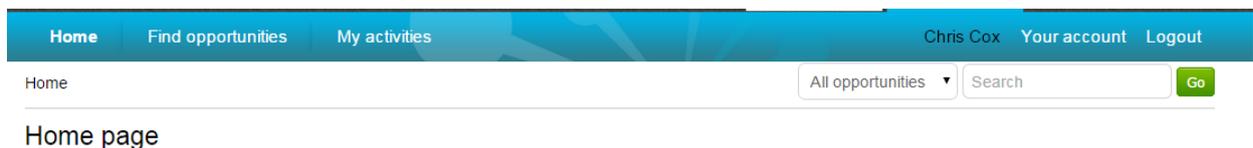
e-portal for tenders across the North West and beyond.

Registration is Free. Follow the steps from the registration link.



## Searching Opportunities

To search for new opportunities from the supplier home page click on **Find Opportunities** located across the top of the page.



This will then open the Opportunities screen which includes a full list of all current opportunities. You can specify search criteria to **narrow your results** in the left hand panel, or just do a key word search (on Title, Buyer or All Data) within the **Search** area in the top right of the page.

## Opportunities

**Narrow your results**

Portals

All

North West Portal

Categories

There are 0 categories selected

[+ Add new category](#)

Regions

There are 0 regions selected

[+ Add new region](#)

Include Closed

Yes  No

Interest Date

Start date  End date

[Update](#)

Opportunities

Title	Buyer	Expression Start	Expression End	Estimated Value
<a href="#">(a) Accommodation for Service User(s)</a>	Cheshire	05/02/2015	04/02/2019	£5,000,000.00

**Narrow your results on:**

**Portals:** This setting allows the Portal you are searching on to be chosen.

**Categories:** This field allows you to choose the category classification to which the opportunities you wish to search for are associated. To select a category, click on the *Add new category* and search for the relevant entry.

**Regions:** This field allows you to choose the region to which the opportunities you wish to search for are associated. To select a region, click on the *Add new region* and search for the relevant entry.

**Include Closed:** This defaults to No which will show only opportunities that you can currently express your interest in - so the expression of interest window is open. To view all current opportunities, and also all past and future opportunities that are on the portal but have closed, mark Yes.

**Interest Date:** Refine your results based on the Expression of Interest date.

Once the search has been set up in the desired way then click on Update and the opportunity results in the middle of the page will refresh.

To view the further details of the opportunity, click the corresponding **title**.

Opportunities

Title	Buyer	Expression Start	Expression End	Estimated Value
<a href="#">(a) Accommodation for Service User(s)</a>	Cheshire	05/02/2015	04/02/2019	£5,000,000.00

The opportunity details will look as shown, with all the relevant opportunity/contract details.

## (a) Accommodation for Service User(s)

[Return to find opportunities](#)

### Main contract details

**Title** (a) Accommodation for Service User(s)  
**Categories** 03000000 - Supplies and Services  
**Description** This is for the provision of Accommodation for Service User(s) coming via our Care Brokerage team. We are running this exercise as an Open DPS Framework. This means that as a potential provider you can apply to be added to this framework as anytime throughout it's 4 year duration. If you don't succeed with your first attempt you can try again at a latter stage. Please also find attached a contract overview and a summary of how the DPS works and the advantages for you as the provider.

[Register interest in this opportunity](#)

### Contact details

**Buyer** Cheshire  
**Contact** Buyer One  
**Email** [buyer1@example.com](mailto:buyer1@example.com)  
**Telephone** 56446565  
**Fax** 654546546  
**Address** Enterprise Court  
Cramlington  
Northumberland  
NE23 1LZ  
United Kingdom

### Key dates

**Estimated contract dates**  
**Start date** 30/01/2015      **End date** 30/01/2016

**Expression of interest dates**  
**Start date** 05/02/2015 08:00:00      **End date** 04/02/2019 08:39:00

**Current Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) round information**  
**End date** 30/01/2016 00:00:00

### Attachments

Public attachments can be viewed by all procurers and suppliers involved in this project

No attachments

## Main Contract Details

This shows key details of the contract including the title, categories and description.

### Key Dates

This section shows the estimated contract dates, the expression of interest dates and any other important information (i.e. Current DPS Round end date, for example.) The expression of interest dates determine the options that will be available regarding the opportunity, as the date must fall within these two dates in order to express an interest.

### Contact Details

This shows details of the Buyer and Main Contact.

### Attachments

Any attachments or links relevant will appear in the bottom right, where they can be viewed/downloaded by clicking on the title.

In the top right there are 2 options – either register an interest in the opportunity, or return to the find opportunities page.

Selecting company preferences when registering will enable suppliers to receive the most relevant email alerts from the system.

## Opportunities - Category/Region Selection

This is the category and region selection stage of the supplier registration, which will look as shown below.

To select your chosen categories click the **Select Categories** button.

#### Categories

Have opportunities in the following categories emailed to you.

Select categories

### **Categories List**

This section is where you can register your company to receive automatic e-mail notifications of new opportunities that have been published that may be of interest to your company. This will greatly assist you when using the portal and means that relevant opportunities are not missed. At least one category must be selected.

### Category selection

#### Search categories

  Exact match  Fuzzy search

#### Categories list

- 01000000 - Food
- 02000000 - Supply Chain
- 03000000 - Supplies and Services
- 04000000 - Drink

**Category:** The top level categories that you can register to receive updates under are all listed.

To select a top level category, mark the box to the left of the category by clicking it. You can select multiple categories if required. Ensure that you click on **Select Categories** to add this to the list.

If you are not sure, or if you want to put your company against lower level classifications, you may use the search facility at the top of the page to search for specific words to help you narrow down the categories to add to your account.

This can also be done by clicking on the blue diamond to the left of the category which will take you down to the next level. This can then be repeated to go down further levels in some categories.

**Note:** When selecting categories, only categories relevant to the goods or services you can offer as a supplier should be selected. Category selection can be revisited at any time to carry out required amendments, and searches of advertised opportunities for all categories can also be carried out at any time.

**Search categories**

Enter the search criteria...   Exact match  Fuzzy search

**Categories list**

- 01000000 - Food
- 02000000 - Supply Chain
  - 02010000 - Waste
  - 02020000 - Energy
    - 02020100 - Utilities
    - 02020200 - Equipment

When all required categories have been chosen, click **Select Categories** from the options at the bottom of the page.

Requirements Contact info Company info **4** Description 5 Opportunities 6 T&Cs 7 Confirmation

Please correct the 2 errors on the form to continue

We require all this information to create your account unless marked as optional.

Categories  
*Have opportunities in the following categories emailed to you.*

02020200 - Equipment

Please select at least one category.

Selected categories are now shown as above.

**Note:** If a category has been added in error this can be removed by clicking the  button.

### Regions

At least one *Region* must now be selected. These will limit the opportunities that you are emailed to only regions that you supply to. Regions are selected in the same way as categories.

Invitation to Tender

**Register**

**Region selection**

Search regions

Enter the search criteria... **Search**  Exact match  Fuzzy search

**Regions list**

- UK - UNITED KINGDOM
  - UKC - NORTH EAST (ENGLAND)
    - UKC1 - Tees Valley and Durham
    - UKC2 - Northumberland and Tyne and Wear
    - UKD - NORTH WEST (ENGLAND)
    - UKE - YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER
    - UKF - EAST MIDLANDS (ENGLAND)
    - UKG - WEST MIDLANDS (ENGLAND)

**Selected regions**

UKC2 - Northumberland and Tyne and Wear

**Select regions** [Remove all](#) [Cancel](#)

### **Additional Classifications/Categories**

Also further lists/categories may now also be found (if the procuring organisation/portal have used these) This allows you to register against further supplier lists, as set up by the procuring organisation(s) to allow you to be further categorised and found more easily by procurers.

**Note:** This is totally independent of the Contract Category Interest that is chosen and this will NOT generate any email notifications.

Each list will show up with the title, followed by a classification structure, which you can register your company against. Tick the options that are applicable from this list, this may be done for several lists.

When the details are complete then please click on the **Continue** button to proceed, the **Back** button to go back to the previous stage, or the **Cancel** button to cancel the registration.

## **Step 2 Invitation To Tender**

### **(Also see ITT template)**

Purchasing decisions are complex and not confined only to price, the lowest price is not always the most suitable and may not provide the goods and services the Council would want. Examples of issues the Council would consider before awarding a contract are:

- Fitness for purpose (quality, suitability, for the task undertaken etc)
- Delivery and availability against price
- Cost of ownership
- Whole lifecycle costs including spare parts, maintenance costs and projected down time
- On costs (transport and storage)
- Sustainability, environmental and social responsibilities of the Council.

### **Quotations to Tender**

Potential suppliers are either invited to tender as either a shortlisting procedure or it might be an open procedure. Assessment criteria – stated in the ITT, allows contractors to define their offer accurately and to see exactly how this will be assessed and against what criteria. Each tender will contain a

detailed 'specification' which will provide the main element of what will be assessed. However, assuming the tender meets the specification, other aspects will also be evaluated these include:

**Status of the Company** including but not limited to; company profile, Financial viability, Quality assurance procedures and status , purchasing card capability, technical ability, health and safety, equal opportunity for staff

**Operational Considerations** including but not limited to, delivery times, environmental consideration, sales and marketing support, management information,

**Goods Services Offered,** including but not limited to, extent to which they meet the minimum standard, quantities above the minimum standard that offer Value for Money

**Costs,** including but not limited to, initial price, any conditions, warranties and guarantees offered, support costs.

## **Method Statement**

These are usually asked for and give the contractor an opportunity to show how they will provide the goods or services. They give the Council an insight into the contractor's methods of operation. Areas that can be included in a method statement are;

- Their method of working
- How they intend to deliver the contract what timescales
- How it will be resourced
- Their definition of quality
- Company policies ( environmental, health and safety, energy efficiency)
- Proposed sub- contractors
- Transition/ start up arrangements
- Training
- Proposals for continuous improvement

## **Decision Making**

Most economically advantageous tender, this is where we look at cost and price are brought into consideration. Lowest price may not be the 'Most Economically Advantageous Tender'. The decisions on scoring are usually made by a panel. There will be an initial sift to remove applications that fail basic criteria. The remaining applications are passed on to the panel who, follow the scoring criteria laid out in the tender. Then the lowest scoring ones are rejected and the highest scoring ones are accepted. All panels spend most of their time talking about the ones in the middle

## **Scoring Matrix**

Tenders are scored comparatively against each other and a weighted score matrix is devised for each tender exercise which will show how each offer compares against the specification and assessment criteria. Consequently, this will also show relative comparisons between tenders.

## **Interviews/presentations**

Tenders are frequently invited for interviews at which they are encouraged to make presentations in support of their bids. This gives the contractor and the council the opportunity to ensure that every aspect of the tender has been understood and allows the contractor to ask further questions.

## **Reporting Mechanism**

The decision to award a contract does not rest solely with the officers involved in the evaluation of the tender. Some high value or especially significant contracts, the decision will included elected members. At any stage the tender process is open to scrutiny by the Councils Internal Audit Section.

### **Debrief**

All unsuccessful tenderers will be advised as to why their bid was unsuccessful. It is useful way of finding out how a company can improve its business opportunities.

### **How you can enhance your Business Opportunities**

#### **Listed below are a few simple tips on how you can support your company;**

**Be on Time! (Tender returned right place, right time)**

**Read the specification** – make sure what you are offering meets the specification

**Identify Aspects of added value-** give thought to what you can provide that can add value (including value to the community)

**Provide the information as requested** – return what was asked for in the format requested