



**No birds,
No bees,
No flowers
No leaves
No.....vember**

Okay, okay so it's only October, but it is as close as we can get. It is the time of year when traditionally people harvest and take stock of things before the coming winter months. The seasons "are a' changing" and the nights are "fair drawin in", the mornings are a little colder and the first signs of the odd frost or misty/foggy dawns are upon us, and we can all look forward to months of Seasonal Affective Disorder.

On the theme of taking stock, this is the third issue of the slightly more informal Purchasing Power, with its mix of light-hearted articles and serious procurement messages. So, we would like to know what you think? Do you like the mag? Is it a good read, do you like the competitions and prizes and the wider look at other aspects of procurement as well as the news items? We would really be grateful for your comments and feedback (*keep it clean though - Ed*). So, please take a little time to let us know what you think by sending an e-mail to cpu@norfolk.gov.uk

Thank you

Support Services Review Impressions from a "Newbie"

A few weeks ago if you had asked me what SSR stands for I would have said Standard System Reboot or Service Standard Regulation. Procurement? That's just a business term for buying things – isn't it? I now know better. Having been in my new post for 6 weeks, I know SSR means Support Services Review and Procurement is about a lot more than just shopping. So here I am – Sarah Foster, the new Communications Officer for the Support Services Review (SSR).

So what has a Communications Officer got to do with Procurement? You only have to see the first few lines of the Two Ronnies famous Fork Handles sketch to witness the confusion poor communications can cause.

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This newsletter is also available on the intranet. If you have any interesting articles or news items that could be included in future issues please let us know.

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Contract News

ESPO Contract 49N

– Removal Services Norfolk

At the time of going to press the requirement for the above contract has been tendered and the Focus Group is now at the short listing stage.



It is expected that we will have a framework with up to four suppliers in place by 1st November 2009.

Please contact CPU for further details.

ESPO Contract 379

– Waste Collection and Disposal Services

The recent tender for the above contract proved inconclusive. ESPO are devising a new Invitation to Tender and will be looking to re-issue this towards the end of

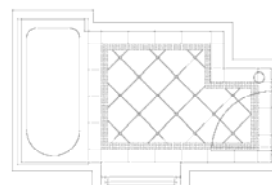


2009. Hopefully, next time we will have better luck with the market.

ESPO Contract 16

– Floor Coverings

The new start date for the above contract is 1 January 2010. This is to allow another member authority more time for consultation.



Details of all ESPO contracts can be downloaded from the ESPO website www.espodealingdirect.org/index.aspx or by contacting CPU on 01603 222820.

Tim Howard
Corporate Procurement Unit

Support Services Review continued ...

BARKER: Four Candles!

CORBETT: Four Candles?

BARKER: Four Candles.

(Ronnie Corbett makes for a box, and gets out four candles. He places them on the counter)

BARKER: No, four candles!

CORBETT (confused): Well there you are, four candles!

BARKER: No, fork 'andles! 'Andles for forks!

Usually followed by gales of laughter....



I can't promise that the rest of this article will be as funny as that, but I hope it will communicate clearly what SSR is about - especially the Procurement project - and specifically what my role is within it all.

I have had lots of different jobs in my career. I have worked for agencies, in financial services and, for the last seven years, I have worked in arts marketing. Suffice to say the County Council has been a culture shock! I've never worked at an organisation that procures buses and buildings and provides such a huge range of services to so many people. Being a communications professional I think it's fair to say I am a "people person" and I am enjoying this job because it's about people – both those who are making the changes and those who will implement the changes on the front line.

Understanding what Procurement is, and how it works in such a large organisation, has been my biggest challenge. I must have asked every question from the Giant Book of Daft Questions About Procurement and am now hard at work on the sequel – Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Procurement And Were Afraid To Ask!

SSR, including the Procurement project, is one of the many programmes of change that are currently running through Norfolk County Council. SSR changes are affecting the way the Council works, the way teams and departments are structured and the kind of jobs people are required to do.

The project is designed to make sure that Procurement is carried out as efficiently and cost effectively as possible. If you are involved in simple procurement, purchasing things like stationery, or furniture, the project aims that you will be better supported with an improved website and helpdesk. If you are involved in complex procurement, from PFIs to large contracts, the project is designed to give you access to expert support, contracting and negotiating. All things people need to know and, more importantly, understand - which is where I come in. It is my job to make sure that as decisions are made, and changes are brought in, everyone, particularly those directly affected by SSR, knows what is happening and why.

Tim Ford, the new Procurement Project manager started just after I did. We are working together to make sure that communications is part of the plan. Our first few weeks have involved going to lots of meetings, asking lots of questions and getting to know the organisation and understanding how things work.

I started with a joke and so I'll end with one...

"I went window shopping today! I bought four windows." - Tommy Cooper

Sarah Foster
Communications Officer
Support Services Review Team

That's a penalty! ...or is it?

When is a penalty not a penalty? Every time it goes against your favourite team, I guess. No, this isn't an argument in favour of the introduction of video technology to football. We are talking here about penalty clauses within contracts. There is sometimes confusion amongst staff as to what constitutes a penalty clause and what is a liquidated damages clause. People often refer to a penalty clause when, in fact, they mean liquidated damages.



They may appear to be aimed at achieving similar outcomes, but they have two very different legal standings and only one of them is enforceable by law, should a dispute arise.

A penalty clause is, effectively, a fine imposed on a supplier by the client. They are often an attempt to coerce (or apply pressure to) the supplier into not defaulting on the contract by, for example, late delivery or late completion of the required service. Penalty clauses are usually arbitrary figures that bear no relation to any costs incurred by the client/contracting organisation.

Conversely, a liquidated damages clause is based on a genuine pre-estimate of the additional costs that would be incurred by the client if, for some reason, the supplier was unable to fulfil the contract. For example, this could include an estimate of obtaining the goods or service from another supplier, or any additional costs incurred through late completion. The specific monetary amounts included in a liquidated damages clause are pre-agreed by both parties. If it is not possible to estimate losses in advance, a more general liquidated damages clause can be included, which stipulates the rights of the client to recover (from the supplier) any *actual* additional costs they may incur through non-performance of the contract. Guess which type of clause is legally enforceable.....anybody who said penalty clauses is just not paying attention.

If a compensatory monetary amount was pre-agreed, as part of a liquidated damages clause, then the courts would allow recovery of that sum, regardless of whether the sum represented the *actual* cost incurred by the client when the supplier was unable to fulfil the contract.



However, the courts would not allow recovery of any amount deemed to be a penalty – i.e. not related to any genuine estimate of loss, and would in fact attempt to fix damages based on the actual loss incurred; thus turning a penalty clause into liquidated damages. This is true even in cases where the contract clearly defined a penalty for non-completion and the penalty clause was understood by both parties.

If it is unclear as to the intent of the contract clause, the courts will ultimately decide on whether the wording of the clause constitutes a penalty or liquidated damages. Nevertheless, they will only allow recovery of sums based on liquidated damages, either the pre-agreed estimate figure or the actual loss incurred.

So, the upshot is that we should not be using penalty clauses in any NCC contracts as they are not legally enforceable, instead we should use liquidated damages clauses...or face the penalty (groan)! However, if delivery dates or completion times are vital to your procurement project you can, as an alternative to penalty clauses, incentivise suppliers by, for example, adding bonus payments for timely delivery.

Museum Competition

You will find a wealth of collections in our museums illustrating all aspects of Norfolk life, heritage and environment. They make a great day out for families, schools or anyone wishing to find out about our county.

What can I see in Norfolk Museums?

Fine and Decorative Art; Archaeology; Natural History; Geology; Social History

This issue's competition prize has been kindly provided by our colleagues in Cultural Services and is a voucher (for up to 5 people) to visit any of the museums listed below.

Dereham - Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse Museum

Great Yarmouth - Tide & Time Museum

Cromer Museum

Norwich - Castle, Bridewell, Regimental or Strangers Hall Museums

Kings Lynn - Town House, Lynn Museum

Thetford - Ancient House

There is no time or date limit on the voucher, so you can choose when you want to visit. Many of the museums hold special events throughout the year, for example Gressenhall has a Christmas event that takes place from early December. To see details of the special events held at the various museums, please visit www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk

To be in with a chance of winning the prize you need to answer the following local museum related questions: -

Q1: What kind of horses can often be seen pulling the plough at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse?

Q2: The oldest known car (still running) in Norfolk, is an 1899 Panhard et Levassor, which can be seen at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse. Who was its famous first owner?



If you need some assistance with the questions, the answers can be found on the Gressenhall Museum section of the above website, you may need to do some detective work for the second answer. Clue: Village Row.

Competition entries should be emailed to cpu@norfolk.gov.uk, with a subject line of "Museum Competition" and should include your answers, your department address and telephone contact details.

Closing date for entries will be **Friday 6th November**. First correct answer drawn randomly out of the hat (*what hat? - Ed*) wins the prize.

...Newsflash!..Newsflash!..

ESPO lends helping hand to local school

The gist of the article below was submitted in response to one of our previous competitions but, unfortunately, it arrived after the closing date. However, it does illustrate an important point in relation to how ESPO can help schools to save money.

So, on that basis, we have decided to publish the story anyway and although we couldn't include it in the previous competition, we will forward a small token of our appreciation to the author of the piece - Ed.

On a recent visit to our school, Peter Legind (ESPO Norfolk Account Manager) and I discussed our school service contracts. I would like to share with other Purchasing Power readers the outcome of his visit, and to thank Peter for such a prompt and excellent level of service.



It is our usual practice to use ESPO contracts whenever possible. Peter noticed that our annual contract with PHS for hazardous waste disposal was not through ESPO. By transferring to an ESPO contract, using the same company, the saving we made was £255.98 per year! He also noticed that we had been charged an Environmental Recycling Levy fee on our

Greencare H2O Water Cooler contract, and arranged a credit for this charge which was received within days. Peter also gave us details of a better value telephone contract for our Governors to consider.

We are currently in the process of planning a building refurbishment project in school. Peter was able to put us in touch with Millar West and Norwich Office Furniture to provide a free plan and quote for our furniture requirements (they rang the day following his visit). He also told us about the ESPO contract for purchasing white goods for commercial premises, as it is possible that domestic appliance guarantees will be invalid in a school environment.

The added benefit is that you will also have provided evidence for the FMSiS question: "How can your school demonstrate that best value practices have been applied in your school regarding contracts?" - with the answer - "we use contracts whenever possible and the contracts have been subject to an EU compliant competitive tendering process".

As pupil numbers fall, it becomes ever more of a juggling act to balance the budget. My advice to all admin/finance staff is to find your ESPO Dealing Direct catalogue, compare what's offered

with a list of your existing contracts, then give Peter a call to see how much money you can save. It's really easy to do – he will tell you of any notice periods you need to give to avoid extra charges. His phone number is in the ESPO catalogue (07787-128778).

I know how many demands there are on our time, so you may groan and think “not another job to do!” But, for the sake of a few moments of your time, you could save hundreds of pounds to spend on resources for the benefit of the children. And at the end of the day, that should be the aim for all of us.

Sue Emerson
School Support Officer
North Walsham Junior School

Magic in the Dragons' Den...

An appearance on BBC series Dragons' Den secured a £100,000 investment in Magic Whiteboard

This innovative environmentally-friendly product offers a real alternative to flipcharts allowing you to create a whiteboard from a roll anywhere in seconds. Magic Whiteboard uses static to stick to most hard flat surfaces including walls, doors, glass and wallpaper without leaving any marks – something that is particularly important in schools where you cannot fix anything on walls. Also, being statically charged, you can place notes, photos and paper straight onto it. Using standard dry whiteboard marker pens, Magic Whiteboard is completely erasable, even if left for days, and the sheets can be reused more than 20 times.



At just £19.95 for a roll of 25 perforated A1 (60x80cm) sheets, Magic Whiteboard can help your budgets go further.

147117	Roll	£19.95
14711P	Case of 9 rolls	£163.00

In fact, according to the manufacturer, a single roll can save you over £90 compared with using flipcharts.

See page 449 of the ESPO catalogue for full details

FREE
Soap Dispenser

The range of Hyfoam Dispensers now includes the new “Wash Your Hands” dispenser.

These have proved particularly popular in schools, and can currently be provided FREE to any ESPO customers. They are featured on Page 806 of the ESPO Catalogue, or for more information please call Peter Legind – ESPO Norfolk Account Manager on 07787 128778



Up to my ears init!



Having spent the first 8 years of my career with British Aerospace, procuring state of the art electronics and software for an R&D facility working on MOD projects, and managing budgets in excess of £20million, I experienced significant contrasts with the new job that I secured in 1993, following a period of Maternity Leave and our move to Norfolk.

The £70 million turnover company had purportedly recruited me to bring a measure of professionalism to their purchasing operations and secure efficiencies from the increased buying power generated by the rapid growth of their business over the previous 5 years.

Amongst other projects, I duly established a number of deals with local suppliers, including one with...let's call them Supplier X...for general building and maintenance supplies, which guaranteed us significant discounts on all products as well as proportional rebates against our monthly spend. This was on the understanding that the

majority of our Company spend in that sector would be directed their way.

It just so happened that the two owners of the business that I worked for were brothers, who each lived in a Hall on a vast estate - as opposed to houses with gardens like the rest of us lesser mortals. Apparently they viewed their newly-acquired "Purchasing Professional" as their own personal shopper (an aspect of the role conveniently glossed-over at interview). Accordingly, I soon found myself investigating markets for weird and wonderful items such as tennis court floodlights, Victorian cast iron radiators and a huge American style fridge that one of their wives had seen in Harrods but was sure I could obtain at a better price. Oh such faith!

The day came when one of the owners "urgently needed" 72 bags of compost for his newly created flower beds. However, despite my reminding him of the discount and rebate structure agreed with Supplier X, he insisted that I secure quotes from EVERY potential supplier in Norfolk and Suffolk, mistakenly believing that his name alone would secure significant discount. So, I spent half a day ringing and faxing to get a range of prices, eventually securing a saving of a whole 4p per bag against the Supplier X price (*whoop-dee-woo! - Ed*). The downside was it meant a 3 day longer delivery period, but, for reasons I will never entirely comprehend, my employer was very satisfied with this result.

Needless to say, I never did get him to see that he had lost money on the deal: the rebate element that would have come from Supplier X; the administration cost of paying an additional invoice; and the cost to the business of 4 hours of my time, significantly outweighed the £2.88 "saving".



So much for injecting professionalism!

Just goes to show that the "cheapest price" is not always best value for money when all other factors are taken into consideration. I also learnt to ask more searching questions at future job interviews, so that you know what you are getting into.

Debra Dennis
Corporate Procurement Unit

Supply Chain Management NVQs

So, the usual email came around informing us of the NVQ in Supply Chain Management and would we like to take part. "Why not?" I thought, not really knowing what I was letting myself in for. "I can do this easily."

It is strange how we do this so very often, the mouth opens and words appear long before the brain has a chance to consider the matter. Mine does this so many times, "Can you help me with this?"..."Why yes of course." Then as the smiling recipient of my answer disappears hurriedly down the corridor my brain clicks in. What? What was it I just said I could do? And so it was with the NVQ.



Induction day, for the NVQ in Supply Chain Management loomed very suddenly and my brain came into action. Every question suddenly overburdening my little-grey-cells: What? How? Can I? etc. Vivid flashbacks of previous exams, with that eerie silence that always followed the phrase..."You may now turn your exam papers over." I was half-expecting to hear the heavy footfall and the rustle of sensible stockings against tweed skirt of a Miss Marple-like exam attendant. Was this what I had let myself in for? I was too old for this and now had a headache before we had even started.

"Welcome to the Clarity Supply Chain Academy"...said one of the trainers. This brought all in the room to attention, but my brain still carried on looking for a reason to escape. Each smiling person I looked at was confident and excited about the prospect of learning, or so it seemed.

They proceeded to inform us about the academy and the many forms of support available. They were there to support the training and development programmes we were currently studying. We would also be able to enter into discussions with others studying toward their NVQ. We would be able to freely browse in the on-line library, sit in on a presentation, or use any of the models and examples.

NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications) are a significant part of the UK training and development landscape. Introduced first in 1986 by the specially formed National Council for Vocational Qualifications, NVQs have enabled millions of people of all ages in an infinite number of trades and professions to achieve formal qualifications.

The reassurances of support that the enthusiastic trainer provided finally made my brain begin to relax. All these people in the room were the same as me. They had the same hopes of passing and the same apprehension that they would not be able to complete any of the units. However, after the introductory day we were assured that support would be provided when needed. The other comforting factor was the obvious empathy and camaraderie of the student group.

Four of my immediate work colleagues are also taking the course, so we will keep you posted of how it is going in future editions of Purchasing Power.

Louise Mijatovic
e-Procurement Team - Corporate Procurement Unit

If any NCC staff, would be interested in taking the Supply Chain Management NVQ please contact Colin Bottjer on 01603 222025.

Procurement in History

– or “How not to supply an Army”



The conduct of the Crimean War (1854 - 56) could serve as a perfect example of how not to undertake Supply Chain Management. The logistics of supply have an immediate effect on any army's ability to conduct an effective campaign and in the Crimean War both sides suffered through poor supply chains.

Just as a reminder, the Crimean War was fought between Russia and the allied forces of the Ottoman Empire (Turkey), France and Britain.

From the very start, issues of supply would impact on the future conduct of the war. The combined

Anglo-French fleet set sail for the Crimea before they had decided on where they wanted to land when they got there. When they did decide where to land, they couldn't have chosen a more inappropriate spot, in terms of establishing a well-placed, defensible supply base. After initially docking at Eupatoria, (see map) the site they chose for full disembarkation was an open beach known as “Old Fort” by the British, in Kalamita Bay. A surprising choice, considering the main target for the Allies was Sevastopol - the principle Russian Naval base and a strategically important Black Sea port - some 30 miles away. Although 30 miles would probably be considered local for a modern mechanised army, for a 19th century army reliant on foot soldiers, horses and wagons for the movement of all equipment, that was a considerable distance from your main objective. Plus, of course, extending your supply lines along such a long march south would make them more vulnerable to attack.

The Anglo-French troops took five days to land and unload their supplies on an unprotected beach. If the Russian Commander, Menshikov, had been a little more ambitious, he could have attacked the British and French while they were disembarking and, no doubt inflicted heavy casualties. Nevertheless, the more the allied troops advanced towards Sevastopol the more stretched their supply line became. By the time they reached the outskirts of Sevastopol their supplies were running low and in order to re-supply themselves in preparation for laying siege to the town, the Allies needed to have access to their fleet. This meant either a long march back to their original landing point, or (the option they took) marching around Sevastopol and heading further south, so that the fleet could liaise with the land army.

While the British were establishing a new base further south at Balaklava – and we all know what happened there (*...they held a winter hat knitting contest? – Ed*), and the French were setting up their own southern base, the Russians were able to add to the defences and fortifications at Sevastopol.

But the Russians had supply problems of their own; the problem of transportation of both men and equipment. Because there were no Russian railway lines south of Moscow, it could take up to three months for men and supplies to reach the Crimea via a land route from the home country; as opposed to 3 weeks by sea for the French and British.¹ Both armies were equipped with outdated weaponry and uniforms. The Russian troops mostly carried muskets whereas the British and French used more accurate rifles. However, much of the British general army equipment was left over from the Peninsular War and was in bad condition. Similarly, the

British uniforms were outdated and not designed to withstand the rigours of a Crimean winter. The British were able to receive further supplies via Balaklava and that is why the Russians attacked their supply line and took control of the only road between Sevastopol and Balaklava for much of the war.

The British Army also suffered at the hands of local contractors supplying food etc. - in the Kalamita Bay area of Eupatoria and later at Balaklava - who were able to charge high and varying prices, a situation made worse by the fact that the army did not negotiate as a single unit; each regiment was responsible for obtaining their own supplies. In that situation, multiple buyers all wanting the same sort of produce, the vagaries of supply and demand tend to favour the supplier.

As is often the case in modern organisations - where many teams/departments are involved - people see things from their particular team's viewpoint, rather than taking a central view of what is required and what the overall objectives are. For the British Army in the Crimea this situation was further exacerbated by the fact that officer commissions could be purchased by those with little army or active service experience and (as with disparate teams) senior officers also tended to view things in terms of the own regiment, rather than the entire campaign army.

Nevertheless, some of the supply problems experienced by the British Army in the Crimea were more fundamental and down to the way the army was organised at that time. There was no central army unit responsible for supply and logistics. In fact there were seven different authorities that covered supply of the army: - the Commander in Chief based in London, the Master General of Ordnance (equipment fortifications and barracks), the Board of General Officers (uniforms) The Commissariat (supplies and transport), the Medical Department, the Secretary-at-War (who was responsible for the army's dealings with civilian contractors) and the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In the words of one historian... "the complication, the muddle, the duplication, the mutual jealousies, the labyrinthine processes of supply and control were astounding"²...does that sound like a familiar scenario?

Army supply problems were not new even then. What was different about the Crimean War (for Britain) was that it was the first war in which the shortcomings of supply and the terrible conditions faced by the troops were reported back to the civilian population on a regular basis, as the war unfolded. William Russell of the Times sent regular despatches from the Crimean front describing conditions and British Army failings, and is usually regarded as the first on-the-scene "War Correspondent" as we now understand the term. The conditions the troops had to endure were also illustrated by cartoons like the one on the right, by John Leech, from 1856.



There were numerous reports of supplies failing to reach troops due to bad organisation and bureaucratic ineptitude within the British Army³. Russell reported one instance where Army staff had failed to deliver food to starving soldiers a mere 6 miles away. But

it was his reports on the lack of medical supplies and lack of facilities for the wounded that roused and angered the British public and would eventually lead to the downfall of Lord Aberdeen's government and reform of the British Army⁴.

"Well Jack, here's good news from Home. We're to have a Medal."
"That's very kind. Maybe one day we'll have a coat to stick it on."

After, the major battles of the war - Alma (Sept 1854), Balaklava (Oct 1854)⁵ Inkerman (Nov 1854), Eupatoria (Feb 1855), Traktir (Aug 1855) - Sevastopol was eventually captured by the Allies and the Russians sued for peace, the terms of which were agreed and ratified within the Treaty of Paris 1856.

Some lessons take a long time to learn. Supply problems similar to those experienced in the Crimea were repeated during the Boer War (1899-1902). Nevertheless, reform did come and would eventually lead to specialist supply army regiments such as The Royal Transport Corps, Army Catering Corps, The Royal Ordnance Corps etc. In the modern British Army these various corps have been combined into one regiment – The Royal Logistic Corps.

Although the technology behind supply and logistics has changed, the importance of supply to an army is just as crucial today as it was in 19th Century and in all wars. Problems of supply can still endanger a modernised mechanical army. If you need proof of the importance of supply in the modern army, you need look no further than the recent criticism in the press and media about the supply and equipment issues facing British troops in Afghanistan.

Stuart Hutchinson
Corporate Procurement Unit

¹ Source: “The Crimean War” – John Sweetman, Osprey, 2001

² Source: “The Destruction of Lord Raglan” - Christopher Hibbert (Longmans 1961)

³ There is a well known story, probably apocryphal, about a consignment of army boots being supplied to the Crimean troops that consisted entirely of boots for the left foot (or it may have been the right). However, I have been unable to find a reliable historic source to verify that story.

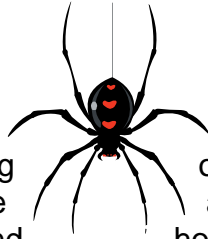
⁴ It is estimated that around 250,000 troops, on all sides, died from diseases such as cholera and dysentery during the two year period of the Crimean War. Until recently, one of the most overlooked chapters of the Crimean War was the part played by the Jamaican/Creole Nurse, Mary Seacole. Unlike Florence Nightingale, whose nurses in the hospital at Scutari were miles from the front, Mary Seacole treated the wounded on the battlefields. She had been refused entry into Nightingales nursing corps and had paid for her own transport to Turkey, and financed her own health provisions to the troops. Unfortunately, due to the racism of the time, Mary did not garner the same level of publicity as Nightingale who (through family connections) had access to the Secretary of War and the Royal Household. However, Mary Seacole remained a firm favourite for veterans of the Crimean and, after many years of neglect of her true role in the modernisation of Nursing, a statue commemorating Mary was finally erected in central London in 2004.

⁵ Although heavily criticised back in Britain (mainly due to the doomed Charge of the Light Brigade, which was only one small part of the battle) Balaklava was in fact a victory for the Allies. Historians have acknowledged the resolve and bravery of the Turkish Army, the British Infantry and Heavy Brigade and the French Cavalry. Perhaps the best comment on the folly of the Charge of the Light Brigade came from the French General Pierre Bosquet, who witnessed the event:- “***C’est magnifique, mais ce n’est pas la guerre.***” – It is magnificent, but it is not war.

Why We Wanted to We-Do our Website

(...you can overdo the alliteration thing you know – Ed)

Oh what a tangled web we weave...



If you have visited us on the fourth floor recently, you can't have failed to notice the new "wallpaper" decorating an overhaul of the Procurement website find our way into the depths (and reproduce it on the wall to demonstrate the mass of links with string joining one page to another, to another, to another ...

one of the walls. We have dared to begin and the best way that we could think of to hopefully get out again in one piece) was to

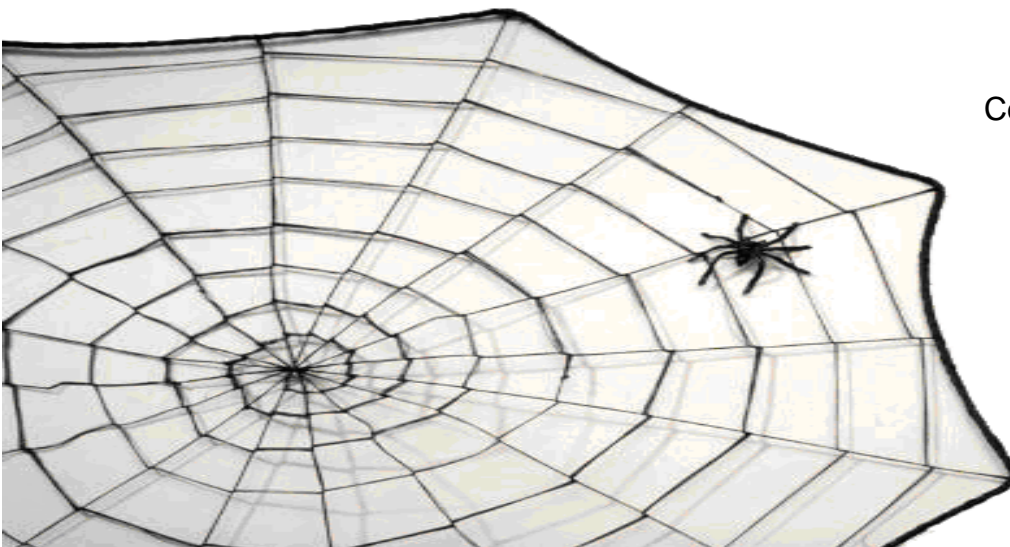
Unfortunately, like many websites the Procurement website has grown exponentially over the years. The problem, as with most sites, is that sometimes things get added without regard to the overall structure of the site and how one subject links to another.

Due to the complex nature of Procurement, and the legal implications that apply, we need to share a lot of information. However, the tangled mess that has evolved over time is not always very helpful, and it can be far from obvious where you need to go to find the help you require. Furthermore, as regulations change there is the problem of ensuring that outdated guidance is removed or amended.

Our aim in re-organising the website is to simplify and consolidate the information and reduce the overall number of pages and links. We also aim to make guidance pathways through the website that will relate to the type, or level of procurement being undertaken. Hopefully these measures will make it easier for users to find the answers and guidance they need.

Procurement is a very large subject and, currently, has a very large website to go with it, but over time we will pull it apart and reconstruct it, trim and tidy it, redesign and reshape it...then take away the number we first thought of and...

Needless to say, Corporate Procurement would appreciate it if users could bear with us during the course of these changes. Hopefully, the improvements will benefit everybody in the long-run, but obviously there will be some disruption during the process. So, we thank you in advance for your patience. Once the initial changes have been completed, there will be an opportunity for users to give feedback and contribute to further improvements.



Sarah Lawrence
Corporate Procurement Unit

Celebrity Interview - Sharon Stone

We are very fortunate in this issue, to have secured an interview with the legendary and, let's not be afraid to say it, glamorous Hollywood actress Sharon Stone. The huge variety of film roles that Sharon has played are too numerous to mention (*...and, for all those male readers who are now thinking of one particular film/scene, can I hastily remind them that this is not that sort of publication – Ed*) but a particular highlight of a memorable career was her superb performance in “Casino” where, as many film critics commented, she acted the “great” De Niro off the screen.



Many of you may not be aware that Sharon has also had a second career in Norfolk County Council - in fact we currently have a brace of Sharon Stones working for the council; one of whom (the subject of this article) is now employed as the PA to the Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk.....lucky old Lord Lieutenant eh!

Seriously though, Sharon agreed to take time out from her busy schedule to tell us about the various aspects of procurement she has been involved in, during her career at NCC.

Sharon's career in NCC started in the Children's Services where she was heavily involved in the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) procurement exercise for the refurbishment and improvement of Norfolk Schools. She was also involved in other aspects of procurement involving the use of corporate contracts and arrangements, such as those for hotel and travel booking and some of the ESPO contracts let on behalf of NCC and the other local authorities in the ESPO group. But, undoubtedly, the main procurement focus of her role was the PFI schools projects.

Sharon then successfully applied for a vacant post in Planning & Transport, which was related to the Street lighting PFI project. However, this allowed Sharon to see PFI projects from a different department's viewpoint, and to combine this with the knowledge she already possessed from the Children's Services aspect of the PFIs. This is always good experience for any member of staff involved in procurement, as it is very easy to (inadvertently) see things only from the point of view of the interests and concerns of the particular department you work for whereas, if you can take a broader view of the requirements from all departments concerned in a project it helps to create cohesion, enhances good inter-departmental communications and helps to give a clear direction within the project. (*Thus endeth today's sermon – Ed*).

Unfortunately, Sharon has been lost to the procurement community as her latest role, as PA to the Lord Lieutenant, doesn't really have many procurement aspects, apart from ordering refreshments for the odd meeting and quality washing up liquid for the 'good' china. However, procurement experience is very rarely wasted altogether as sooner or later most people's jobs will involve some aspect of procurement.

Interestingly, Sharon informs us that she has been contacted many times in the past by national newspapers, magazines, television and radio stations who were preparing what is known in the trade as “colour pieces” on people with celebrity monikers. However, although Sharon has numerous initial contacts along those lines, there have been no instances where the media organisation concerned has followed through with the proposed project. So, the production staff (*Ha! Staff...there are only two of us – Ed*) of Purchasing Power are very pleased to have been the first to conduct a full interview with our own celebrity Sharon Stone.

HEALTH & SAFETY

ESPO helping the fight against infection



11027P

Did you know ESPO provides Alcohol Hand Gel, an anti-bacterial hand sanitiser recommended to fight against many different types of micro-organisms? These products meet the increasing need for quick hand disinfection in schools and colleges. It is available in a 100ml 'handy' size bottle or a 500ml dispenser for use with a wall fixing bracket.

122599	100ml	£1.77
12259P	Case of 12 x 100ml	£20.36
110272	500ml	£2.80
	Case of 12 x 500ml	£32.23
122580	Wall fixing bracket for 500ml dispenser	£6.90

For further details see pages 805 and 1036 of the ESPO catalogue.

A SmartOne in the washroom...

SmartOne is a new high performance single sheet bathroom dispenser from Lotus Professional that will reduce consumption and wastage of toilet tissue as well as reducing the incidence of blockages, vandalism and litter pollution.

Ideal for school washrooms and cubicles, this system will reduce maintenance and, because it lasts significantly longer between refills, will deliver significant cost savings on cleaning and re-stocking.



Manufacturer trials have shown that SmartOne can reduce tissue consumption by up to 42% compared with other toilet tissue systems by dispensing just a single sheet of 2 ply tissue every time. It is also more hygienic and reduces cross-contamination as users only touch the sheet taken.

ESPO has negotiated a FREE 'try before you buy' scheme with Lotus Professional who will demonstrate the system, supply and install dispensers in up to 25% of a school's toilets and provide a two week supply of tissue **ALL FREE OF CHARGE.**

To see SmartOne, or for more information, please speak with your ESPO Account Manager or email: p.legind@espo.org

New Corporate Courier Contract

The new Norfolk County Council (NCC) Corporate Courier contract has recently been re-tendered and started at the beginning of September 2009. The contract will run for 3 years, with an option to extend for a further 2 years by mutual agreement with the suppliers.

There are 3 suppliers on the new contract, 2 of which will be familiar to regular courier contract users: CitySprint (who took over "24/7 Dispatch") and East Express. Both these companies have given very good service to NCC on previous contracts, and will, no doubt, continue to do so. A name that may be a little less familiar to courier users is a new supplier to the contract: Rico Logistics.

All of these companies submitted very competitive tenders for the elements of the contract that they were awarded. All the tender responses from potential suppliers were analysed on the same basis of price, quality and service offered. While price was not the overriding factor, in these challenging times, the new contract gives NCC the opportunity to make savings of around £30k per annum, presuming the amount of courier usage remains similar to that of previous years.



The contract was divided into 8 separate schedules and awarded as follows: -

Schedule 1	Children's Services	City Sprint
Schedule 2	School Library Service	City Sprint
Schedule 3	Professional Development Centre	City Sprint
Schedule 4	Bookstart (Cultural Services)	City Sprint
Schedule 5	Chief Executives	City Sprint
Schedule 6	Child Protection Team (Legal Services)	East Express
Schedule 7	Planning & Transport	East Express
Schedule 8	Ad hoc, as required service	Rico Logistics

The full details of the scheduled runs (1-7) will be familiar to the departments concerned. However, if you work within those teams/departments and have some material that may be able to be legitimately delivered as part of these scheduled runs, you should speak to the relevant departmental contact as below: -

Schedule 1 & 3	Kathleen Leeds (01603 222382) Or Allison MacSephney (01603 222673)
Schedule 2	Jackie Moore (01603 222265)
Schedule 4	Pauline Montgomery (01603 222881)
Schedule 5	Claire Taylor (01603 222953)
Schedule 6	Lorna Russell (01603 223312)
Schedule 7	Sylvia Hughes (01603 222622)
Schedule 8	Open for all departments to use.

Although Rico Logistics (Schedule 8) may be a new name to NCC, they do have 16 years experience of running a national courier service and we have every confidence that they will provide a professional, flexible and helpful service to NCC.

Rico offer a same-day, next day, and three day service to NCC, covering both Norfolk and courier deliveries across the UK, as required. All delivery deadlines are agreed at the time of booking. All their drivers are in real-time communications link with their control centre and will endeavour to communicate with us in the event of any delays experienced on route. Staff using these services should quote ESPO Courier Contract 654N. For details of prices for ad hoc courier requirements please see the NCC Intranet A-Z under Courier Contracts.

Other than the regular deliveries and collections to/from schools via existing scheduled runs, individual schools are not able to take advantage of the contract prices for any "ad hoc" courier requirements they may have. This is because the possible distances that a courier would have to travel to certain schools in the county would mean that they would be operating at a loss if they offered corporate prices for ad-hoc courier requirements to all 435 schools in Norfolk.



However, being a new incumbent on the contract and wishing to be as helpful as possible, Rico Logistics will happily provide an individual and competitive quote to any school that has an "ad hoc" courier requirement outside of the NCC scheduled runs. Schools can contact:

Andy Baker of Rico Logistics (01603 271184)...if they have any ad hoc courier requirements.

Should you require any further general advice or assistance with this contract please contact me on the number below.

Graham Abbott - Corporate Procurement Unit
01603 222740

iProc Update

The rollout and use of iProc continues to grow. At mid point for 09/10 (Sept) the value of requisitions raised through iProc has reached £91.7m, which is exciting compared to the total throughput in 2008-09 reaching £103.95m. However, our target for 09/10 is £135 so there is still some way to go. The coding grid policy is one of many steps in the right direction.

Other improvements include seven generic smart forms being created from the Dealing Direct catalogues. Smart Forms are a halfway house between catalogue & non-catalogue (free text) ordering. Smart Forms are personalised forms within iProc which allow us certain flexibility to create or lock down specific fields. For example suppliers can be locked down if they are a sole provider on a contract, or lists of approved suppliers can be made available as part of that form, improving the sourcing options to the user & speeding up input. Oracle contracts can also be applied so that Buyers do not need to autocreate requisitions into purchase orders. Contracts 45/97/98/375/376E & 695 are being worked on. Photocopiers, car hire, and courier services are also being looked at.

Finally, we are continuing to target additional price lists and catalogues to be added to iProc. All departments are welcome to identify items to be put on catalogues.

Alan Chappell
e-Procurement Team - Corporate Procurement Unit

Previous Competition Winners



Day at the Races Competition

The winner of the racing competition from the last issue was John Holland of the Strategic Funding & Technical Team.

John won four Premier Enclosure tickets for Yarmouth races, and chose to use them on the "Family Day" on the August Bank Holiday, which meant two complete families could enjoy the event.

"You will be pleased to hear that we enjoyed our day out at Yarmouth races, courtesy of your competition. We chose the

family day on August Bank Holiday, which meant that I could go with my wife, my children, my friend and his family with those tickets. The extras for the family day out included fun rides, a mascot race and races on the track for under 5s and 5 to 10 year olds, which all the children took part in. There was also a good, safe play area for the kids.

With regard to the more serious business, we quickly found the bars and the bookies. Overall we were up nearly £30 by the end of the day. It was a bonus that the tickets enabled us to go into the Premier Enclosure, as the extra facilities such as seeing the Parade Ring and a good trackside seat near to the finishing line were much appreciated. I'd recommend it as a good family day out and we are looking to return next year. We found our knowledge of the Yarmouth road system pretty useful too!"



Jane Waring, Head of CPU, presents John Holland with his winning tickets.



Lights! Cameras!...Action! Quiz



The winners of the vaguely procurement related film quiz were the Casualty Reduction Team, led by Stuart Hallett who (rather cagily) kept himself out of the photo. However, the rest of the team are pictured left with their prize of 2 tins of choccy biscuits. Also to the fore in the photograph (the little guy with the blue head) is the mascot of the motorcycle casualty reduction campaign: "Hugger".

County Council Spreads Its Influence



On 23rd July 2009, Norfolk County Council were very pleased to act as host to a delegation from the African country of Malawi. The visitors were members of the Malawi Institute of Procurement & Supply (MIPS), and had come to see how a UK local government procurement section worked and to discuss the procurement efficiencies achieved by NCC. The contingent was completed by a representative of the UK Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply (CIPS), who had organised the visit.

Pictured on the County Hall steps are (L-R); **Ella Banda**, MIPS Education Office, **Paula Steele** CIPS (UK), **Maggie Mambiya** (MIPS CEO), and **Colin Bottjer** of NCC Corporate Procurement Unit.

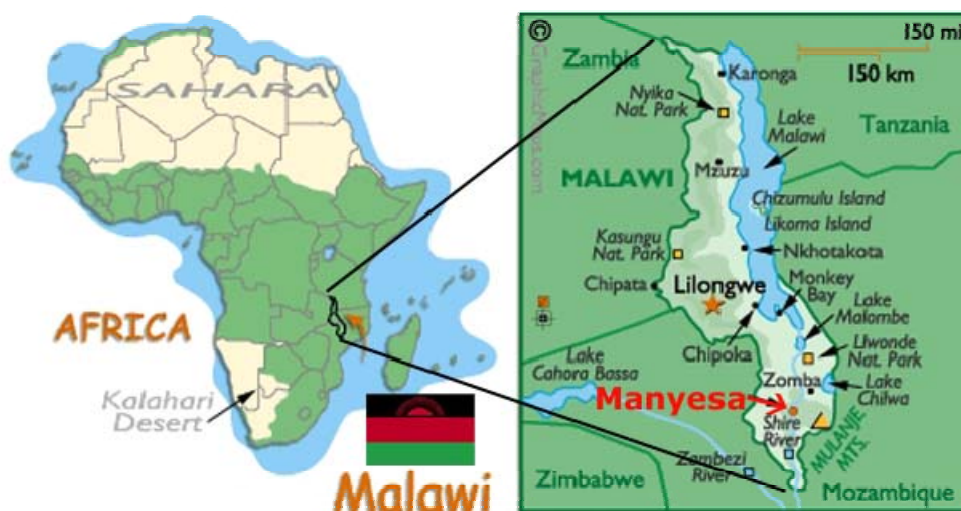
The Malawi contingent were also, indirectly, representing the Malawi Government, who were interested in the UK and EU rules covering local government procurement, and also how the council engaged with the local business community.

Colin explained how procurement in Norfolk has worked with local business support agencies and the Chamber of Commerce, to help businesses understand the procurement rules that apply to public sector bodies, and how businesses can develop their potential, so that they are well placed to bid for local government contracts, as tender opportunities arise.



Maggie Mambiya said that she ...“found the visit very informative and useful in helping to develop procurement strategies for the future.”

Colin Bottjer
Corporate Procurement Unit





Ever More Vaguely Procurement Related Quiz

"For of fortune's sharp adversitee
The worst kind of infortune is this
A man to have been in prosperitee
And it rembre[n] when it passed is."

Geoffrey Chaucer 1340-1400

*(Not bad for 20 minutes work. Shame he
couldn't spell though! – Ed)*

Okay, here's the thing; we have previously done music and films, so books seem to be the next logical step in our endless quest to find vaguely procurement related quiz subjects. If you think we are scraping the barrel now, wait until you see the next issue and the Sculpture and Works of Art Procurement Quiz. Now that will be a challenge!

The abbreviations below represent well known books, both fiction and non-fiction, that have titles connected (sometimes rather obscurely, but connected all the same) to the subject of procurement. In some cases the titles may also refer to plays, but since play scripts are usually also available in book form, we have allowed ourselves that leeway. Do you get the feeling that we are clutching at straws now? To help you come up with the answers we have given you a clue by indicating the author.

For example: NAPM Jeffrey Archer - would be "Not a Penny More". Just to reiterate, the answers do not, necessarily, reflect the reading tastes of the compilers.

Sure you all know the format by now, but entries should be from a working group, team or section. There is a prize of two large tin of chocs (or biscuits as the season dictates) for the winning team or section. Your list of answers should be e-mailed to cpu@norfolk.gov.uk by 6/11/09, with "Procurement Book Quiz" in the subject line. Your e-mail should also state which working group/team you represent and the staff members involved in the entry. The winner will be randomly chosen from all the correct entries received by the closing date.

- 1) DOAS Arthur Miller
- 2) TOCS* Charles Dickens
- 3) TH Alfred Aloysius Horn (Bit obscure this one, but the surname is a clue)
- 4) TWON Adam Smith
- 5) MM Terry Pratchett
- 6) TMOV William ("Billy" to his mates) Shakespeare
- 7) DOH Tom Clancy
- 8) EM Dick Francis
- 9) CTD Michael Connelly
- 10) COAS Sophie Kinsella

* Although we don't usually give additional clues, this quote is too good to miss. Oscar Wilde once scathingly said of this novel that..."*One must have a heart of stone to read the death of Little Nell without laughing*"



If you need this newsletter in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact the Department of Finance on 01603 223488 (minicom 223833) and we will do our best to help.

