Case study

BARKERS COMMERCIAL CONSULTANCY

BOLTON AT HOME

Delivering a Future-Ready IT Procurement Strategy for Bolton at Home

Sector: Social Housing. Contract period: February'19 – April'20

With a major IT contract approaching expiry, Bolton at Home needed a clear, compliant, and future-focused procurement strategy. Barkers provided the strategic direction, structure, and delivery support required to ensure a successful transition.

Summary

Bolton at Home's IT contract was due to expire in 2020, creating the need for a robust and well-planned procurement strategy to replace the existing agreement. To support this, Bolton at Home engaged Barkers' IT strategic and delivery consultancy services to design and deliver a compliant, effective procurement approach aligned to their organisational objectives.

Working to a defined timeframe, Barkers enabled Bolton at Home to develop a clear sourcing strategy, manage stakeholder expectations, and prepare for a successful transition to a new IT service arrangement.

Business Challenge

Bolton at Home had been operating under a seven-year IT contract that was nearing its end in 2020. With the expiry approaching, the organisation needed to replace the existing service while ensuring continuity, compliance, and value for money.

In addition to developing a new procurement strategy and delivery plan, Bolton at Home required the right level of support and training to confidently manage the procurement programme. This included ensuring internal teams were equipped with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to lead the process and engage effectively with suppliers.

Our solution

Due to the scale and complexity of the project, the work was delivered in two structured phases.

Phase One focused on establishing the most appropriate sourcing strategy. Barkers carried out a detailed review of the existing suite of contract documents, assessing their alignment with market norms and their suitability for future use. This ensured the new procurement approach was both commercially sound and fit for purpose.

Phase Two concentrated on delivering the full procurement programme. This included:

- Stakeholder engagement to understand expectations and define tender requirements.
- Creation of a structured programme of procurement activity, including the selection process.
- Preparation of comprehensive tender documentation, including full terms and conditions.
- Knowledge transfer to the Bolton at Home team to support long-term contract management.
- Engagement of business change partner 'Step 5' to validate organisational readiness for the planned IT programme.

Barkers also supported the formal sign-off process with key stakeholders through:

- Weekly guidance on the PCR2015 regulated tender process.
- Knowledge-sharing sessions with the procurement team.
- Formal coaching for the tendering team.
- Leading all aspects of the tender process using Barkers' 9-step delivery methodology.
- Reviewing tender responses and carrying out due diligence.
- Producing a tender outcome report with clear recommendations for contract award.

Following contract award, Barkers supported the implementation of the new agreements by:

- Establishing governance and reporting frameworks.
- Managing new suppliers against the agreed implementation plan.
- Providing behavioural change support through SDI-certified facilitators.
- Producing a close-out report highlighting successes, challenges, lessons learned, and future opportunities.

The results

Barkers successfully delivered an end-to-end procurement strategy that enabled Bolton at Home to clearly assess business requirements, understand industry benchmarks, and implement a structured procurement plan. This supported the organisation through every stage of the process, from tendering and stakeholder approval to contract implementation.

In addition, Barkers trained Bolton at Home team members and suppliers in behavioural and value awareness, helping them navigate a period of transition more effectively. A comprehensive close-out report was also delivered, capturing lessons learned and identifying future opportunities to strengthen Bolton at Home's ongoing procurement activities.

> An inspiring partnership, recognising and developing creative solutions to local social issues in the most effective way. Barkers and Bolton Family are a compelling example of people coming together from right across the community, with passion, authenticity and trust.
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> Lisa Charles, Director Of Business Services, Bolton at Home