

Council becomes a tower of strength

Tower Hamlets is one of the 33 boroughs of London, home to the famous landmarks of Tower Bridge and the Tower of London. After several years of concerted effort to ensure a high quality, effective procurement function, the Council recently achieved a CIPS Procurement Excellence Standard award, providing independent validation of their efforts.



About CIPS

CIPS, the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply, is the world's largest organisation dedicated to the profession of procurement and supply, with a voice that is recognised across the globe. CIPS works in partnership with governments, businesses, public sector entities and international development agencies to support organisations to achieve sustainable value.

“ This has been a valuable exercise in benchmarking the Council's procurement function. Achievement of the CIPS Procurement Excellence award demonstrates that the Council is progressive and sees procurement as a key enabler. It also evidences the significant amount of work undertaken by the Head of Procurement and his team to transform and improve the service. Certification clearly shows there are robust, best practice systems in place with areas for further improvements also identified.

ZENA COOKE,
CORPORATE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES, TOWER HAMLETS COUNCIL

Why CIPS Procurement Excellence?

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets is rapidly expanding – with a population of over 300,000 residents which is expected to grow to around 400,000 by 2027. And yet, the Council has a £52m cost cutting target over the next three years. Maintaining a high standard of service against a backdrop of funding reductions is one of the key challenges that many public bodies today face.

The Council's procurement team has done a considerable amount of work to ensure a high quality, effective procurement function that proactively supports the Council to achieve its objectives. CIPS Corporate Certification provided an external assessment of the function and independently confirmed the improvements made.

The benefits for the Council

As well as providing evidence of robust governance, the Procurement Excellence award will raise the profile and credibility of the function with partners, suppliers and residents. The programme also identified areas for further improvement, which will now form part of a broader transformation programme.

The Council expects to see a number of other outcomes of the programme – cost savings and process efficiencies which will in turn benefit residents, better working methods, improved staff morale, and added value to the business. The process has also helped the procurement team to review their current approach to cost savings and ensure it is better aligned with the organisation's broader savings programme.

About Tower Hamlets

The Tower Hamlets area is one of stark contrasts in wealth and poverty – home to the financial centre of Canary Wharf, whilst the population experiences the highest rate of poverty in England.

The population is also extremely diverse, as seen in places like Brick Lane which provides the largest range of Bengali cuisine, carpets and clothes in Europe.

Tower Hamlets Council spends £400m a year with around 3,500 suppliers, to provide over 200 different services for its residents and businesses. These services are hugely varied, ranging from social housing and schools, to public transport and parks.

There are 15 staff in the Council's central procurement team, who lead on all contracts worth over £100,000. The shortage of suitably skilled procurement professionals is an issue across the UK public sector but the Council has invested well in their people development, something which helped them gain their award.

About the CIPS Procurement Excellence Programme

Globally recognised, the CIPS Procurement Excellence Programme (formerly known as Corporate Certification) is the only independent, comprehensive, procurement-specific assessment of its kind. Examining your organisation's procedures in targeted detail, it highlights where improvements and efficiencies can be made, ensuring that procurement becomes an essential value driver and organisational influencer.

- Helps you to deliver savings and value and drive change
- Supports you to demonstrate your value to senior management
- Ensures effective supply assurance and compliance through robust governance
- Identifies better, more efficient, and more cost effective ways of working
- Engages and empowers your team, building morale
- Strengthens your relationships with key stakeholders

CONTACT US

Europe: +44 (0)1780 756777 • Africa: +27 (0)12 345 6177 • Asia Pac: +65 6403 3940
Australasia: +61 (0)3 9629 6000 • MENA: +971 (0)4 311 6505
Email: corporate.solutions@cips.org • www.cips.org/procurement-excellence