



Commercial Services Group Collaborative Working



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Case Study: Commercial Services Group Collaborative Working

Introduction

Cantium Business Solutions (Cantium) works in partnership with our Public Sector customers to identify opportunities for improving service and reducing costs wherever possible.

As a divisional business within Commercial Services Group (CSG), we utilise our relationships with our sister companies and third party suppliers, continually seeking to drive innovation and value across the Public Sector. A recent example of this commitment was highlighted through our partnership with one of our current IT Managed Services customers.

Adopting an agile and collaborative approach, we worked collectively with the Customer, our sister company, KCS Procurement Services (part of CSG) and a third party supplier to deliver benefits for all.



Background

Cantium Business Solutions

As a Local Authority owned trading organisation (LATCo), Cantium has over 35 years' experience supplying IT services to the Public Sector. As such, we have developed a comprehensive managed service portfolio, built alongside a strong partner network, to support and complement the services we deliver ourselves.

Our highly experienced and dedicated teams, consisting of over 300 ICT specialists, provide advice, guidance and support to over 33,000 users. With a customer base of over 700 organisations across the Public, Private and Education sectors, Cantium offers a range of ICT services tailored to our customers' individual needs.

Commercial Services Group

Cantium benefits from being part of a wider group of subsidiaries under the umbrella of Commercial Services Group (CSG). Since its inception over 70 years ago as a division within Kent County Council, CSG has grown to become a leading supplier of products and services to the public sector. This unique heritage provides the Group with a rare blend of commerciality, backed by social conscience and integrity. Social value is at the core of all our businesses, with our profits flowing back into re-investment within front-line services. Our success is achieved through:

- Delivering a wide range of services, including a product range of over 20,000 lines, with a supply chain of over 400 organisations and a worldwide educational supplies business.
- Offering a comprehensive portfolio of support services, with a proven track record of sustainable solutions.

KCS Procurement Services - Transforming the Public Sector, for the better, together

As another divisional business within CSG, KCS Procurement Services offers a wide range of fully compliant, national frameworks, providing a secure route to market for Public Sector organisations, with a mission to always provide:

- Choice for buyers.
- Direct award options for a simple procurement route, with due diligence on suppliers already completed.
- Further competition options to test the market and discover the right solution to suit the organisation's needs.
- A customer-first approach.
- Expert framework and procurement support.
- Cost-effective solutions to drive organisational improvements.
- Social and added value, supporting local communities.

Frameworks are open to all public bodies with the agreement of the contracting authority and are free to access.

Objectives

The key objectives for the project were to deliver a tailored solution to an identified service improvement area, in a quick and agile manner. There was an emphasis on the chosen solution needing to be procured:

- Quickly – Speed was of paramount importance.
- Compliantly – It was vital for the Customer's due diligence for the solution to be bought using a compliant route to market.
- Cost-effectively – The route used needed to provide maximum benefits whilst remaining an affordable option.

Solution

A Partnership Approach

Adopting a proactive approach, Cantium focuses on continuous improvement for our customers, regularly seeking opportunities to increase service quality. During this

consultative process with the Customer, we identified an area well positioned for improvement, and created a tailored service offering, quickly and efficiently.

The suggested route for the Customer to take to procure the chosen solution in a compliant manner was the KCS Procurement Services Framework Y23038 – ICT Managed Services and Consultancy, consisting of 2 lots covering:

- **Lot 1 ICT Managed Services** - Fully managed ICT services including support and maintenance, both on-site and remote, security, training, strategy and planning, data storage, backup, networking and infrastructure.
- **Lot 2 ICT Consultancy Services** - Covering an extensive range of consultancy services, from audits, assessments, planning and project scoping all the way to security, disaster recovery, risk management and testing.

Framework Benefits

Through the KCS Procurement Services Y23028 Framework, the Customer benefitted from a range of advantages, including:

- **Full compliance** with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- **Direct award** capability, providing a quick, easy and PCR-15 compliant route to procurement.
- Removing the need for a full tender exercise, including lengthy supplier evaluation time, **saving costs traditionally associated with standalone procurements**.
- Terms and conditions which are **safe and designed to protect** public sector customers.
- **Free and full support** on using the framework through the KCS Procurement Services team.
- **Aggregated spend and lower pricing** based on the value of the overall contract, even on low spend orders.
- **A low framework fee** which is charged separately to the supplier and not included within the Customer's pricing.

Social Value Benefits

The 'Public Services Act 2012' defines how public sector organisations have a duty "to have a regard to economic, social and environmental well-being in connection to public services contracts".

KCS Procurement Services frameworks are created to deliver products and services across the public sector, from hospitals to schools, local councils to care homes. Social value is now given a 10% weighting within every single new framework.

By being awarded a place on any framework managed by KCS Procurement Services, Cantium has demonstrated our commitment to social value and continuing to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits to the communities in which we serve. As an appointed provider on this framework, Cantium has provided evidence and future commitment to the following social value themes:

- **COVID-19 recovery** – Promoting local investment and growth, procuring locally

wherever possible and sourcing from SMEs (small to medium-sized enterprises) whenever feasible.

- **Tackling economic inequality** - Supporting society to improve digital skills shortages and create opportunities for all.
- **Fighting climate change** – Actively shaping our environmental impacts through energy saving initiatives and committing to achieving Net Zero by 2030.
- **Cultivating wellbeing** – Investing in the wellbeing of both our staff and customers, ensuring our people are supported, both from a physical and mental health perspective.

Giving Back

Our Corporate Social Responsibility Policy sets out our future strategic vision; ‘increasing opportunities, improving outcomes’. By partnering with Cantium, the Customer was assured of collaborating with a business which places social value at the core of our business planning, including:

- Selecting and promoting a ‘charity of the year’.
- Partnering with the Payroll Giving Scheme to allow employees to make donations to local or national charities directly from their gross pay. Throughout the months of July and August, Cantium also selects one new Payroll Giving donor’s donation at random and adds a one-off donation of £250 to supersize their generous donation.
- Organising two annual charity days to support i) national and ii) local charities, such as football tournaments, fun runs or bake sales.
- Sponsoring Golf fundraising events on a regular basis throughout the summer months.
- Supporting local charities and not-for-profit organisations, which can extend to sponsorship of events and equipment.
- Providing support to improve the IT literacy of the local community, through digital inclusion projects (e.g. by conducting online training or improving access to IT).

Equality for all

To ensure equality for all, we work in partnership with the Job Centre and have demonstrated our support by signing the Armed Forces Covenant to actively recruit in the local and wider community for those who may need additional support entering or re-entering the workplace. We are also working towards achieving the full Disability Confident status, having already achieved Level 1 Disability Confident Committed, and already mirror this ethos within our recruitment procedures.



Environmental Awareness

- As a group, we have committed to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by 2030.
- Electric car salary sacrifice scheme available to all CSG employees, allowing a cost-effective route to owning a more environmentally friendly alternative to traditional diesel/ petrol vehicles.

- Following a recent office audit across our wider estate, we are working with **SWEEEP Kuusakoski** on device recycling/ reusing schemes. By utilising their services, we also help to assist with their own charitable support programmes, such as the Shaw Trust- helping disadvantaged groups gain career development and the Homeless Care Day Centre, supporting people by providing stability and permanent employment opportunities.

Conclusion

Our customer-led ethos and focus on Public Sector improvements are the driving factors for our business. By working together, we can achieve even more. Continually looking for ways to improve our collaborations is at the centre of CSG as a whole. To find out more, please get in touch:

<https://www.commercialservices.org.uk/>

<https://cantium.solutions/>

<https://www.procurementservices.co.uk/>



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