Ceredigion County Council implements AWARD® to overcome procurement challenges

The complex procurement for the Ceredigion minor works framework project provided the perfect opportunity for the Ceredigion County Council to realise the benefits to be gained from the use of the eProcurement Service (ePS) electronic tools and services. As a direct result of using the electronic tendering tool (eTenderWales) and the evaluation tool (AWARD® eEvaluation) the Council and its partners have saved significant time, money and effort in comparison to using traditional methods for running procurements of this nature.

Ceredigion County Council
Ceredigion County Council is the local governing authority for Ceredigion and is now home to over 76,000 people. The council itself currently employs 3,700 people and has 42 Councillors.

Ceredigion is largely a rural county and therefore, in many parts, is dominated by agricultural industry. However, the county is also home to many large towns and vibrant cities such as Aberystwyth and Aberaeron.

Over the past few years, the Council has been keen to develop the local area with various rural development plans and minor works projects across the county. Specifically, many of these projects are aimed towards construction and restoration across the county, with the specific aim of engaging local people and businesses to develop the local area.

The Project Overview

In July 2015, Ceredigion County Council published an OJEU Contract Notice for a framework contract for 'Construction work for multi-dwelling buildings and individual houses'. Ceredigion worked to put this framework in place in collaboration with six partners:

- Tai Ceredigion
- Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service
- Aberystwyth University
- Tai Cantref
- National Library of Wales
- The Police & Crime Commissioner for Dyfed Powys

The project was valued at £15m over a two-year duration, with an option to extend for a further two years. The contract was split in to 33 separate lots; based on location (North, Mid, South and All County), Type of Works (Minor Works, Decorating, Disability Adaptions, Mechanical, Electrical, Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping, General Building) and the total
value of the works (£0-2,999, £3k - £24,999, £25k – £99,999, £100k-£500k). In total, 285 individual bids were received across the respective lots from 59 suppliers.

The council and its partners were keen to engage local suppliers wherever possible for this project.

> "It's been great to engage local suppliers and SMEs, ensuring that the community can be involved in their county's development. I would recommend AWARD® to anyone running a project with significant focus on social involvement."
>
> George Ryley, Head of Procurement CCC

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For this, they sought the guidance of 'Business Wales', which aims to support the sustainable growth of small and medium-size enterprises across Wales. This proved very successful, with significant engagement from local suppliers and larger firms bidding into the project to ensure additional social value.

The Procurement Challenges

As one might expect, in any project involving seven collaborating authorities, 33 lots and 285 submissions, there will be many levels of complexity and a series of administrative hurdles to manage during the procurement process. However, in this case, the Council was also facing a number of additional challenges to the project:

- The Council and its partners had recently introduced mandatory requirements for all contractors involved in Council-funded projects. These requirements meant the project itself would become increasingly drawn out and complex;

- eTendering and AWARD® eEvaluation were totally new to many members of the team and therefore effective training, support and guidance was crucial;
- With such a large number of individual bids against the 33 lots, the evaluation was extremely complex for the project team. On top of this, 16 evaluators were engaged from across the seven collaborating partners, many of whom were geographically spread across the county.

Role and value of Commerce Decisions and AWARD®

Ceredigion County Council implemented AWARD® eEvaluation in conjunction with eTenderWales to ensure a seamless transfer of documentation from the bidders from submission through to the evaluation. Traditionally, Ceredigion Council used spreadsheets for their procurement projects. On a project of this complexity it was quickly determined that eTenderWales and AWARD® would take away much of the administrative burden; significantly simplifying the management of large volumes of information and documentation.

The Commerce Decisions team were on hand to set up the project in AWARD®, train administrators and brief evaluators. This one-to-one service provided by Commerce Decisions helped to ensure a smooth and effective procurement process as well as giving the project manager the tools to successfully manage the evaluation.

The Ceredigion Minor Works team has been delighted with the savings they have made for this procurement –particularly in areas where costs are historically high during the evaluation phase. For example, through the use of AWARD®, evaluators were able to access bids from their offices or home offices, largely eliminating the need for regular central meetings. When evaluators did meet to form consensus scores, AWARD® reports rendered the process much more targeted and rigorous. These features provided fairly significant cost savings from reduced travel and subsistence expenses, and also savings in time spent on the evaluation (circa 40%). Use of AWARD® also made the process of evaluation much simpler, more convenient (fitting around other business and personal commitments) and robust.

> "I found the Commerce Decisions consultants to be very proactive and helpful; they worked hard to ensure the systems were configured in the most effective way to support our project."
>
> George Ryley, Head of Procurement CCC

About the Value Wales and the eProcurement Service (ePS)

"Value Wales is the division within Welsh Government that is responsible for driving procurement policy and best practice across the Welsh public sector. Value Wales is committed to deliver and encourage procurement efficiencies through the principles set out in the Wales Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS).

The ePS team is responsible for developing, encouraging and delivering the long-term electronic procurement strategy and service across the Welsh public sector. ePS is split into three areas:

- eSourcing – this enables buyers and suppliers to conduct their sourcing activities through the online tool, eTenderWales. This activity is often facilitated by the online procurement portal Sell2Wales;
- eTrading – this is the online service that allows public sector buyers to view and order goods and services through electronic catalogues;
- ePayments - includes purchase cards such as Barclaycard as well as other electronic payment solutions.

eProcurementservice@wales.gsi.gov.uk

> "I wouldn't hesitate to recommend AWARD® and eTenderWales to other Welsh public sector organisations, this project would have been a much more challenging exercise without them. The fact that they are centrally funded by Value Wales and available via the eProcurement Service makes it easy to justify using them!"
>
> George Ryley, Head of Procurement CCC

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Cyngor Sir Ceredigion yn defnyddio AWARD® i drechu heriau caffael

Roedd y caffael cymhleth ar gyfer prosiect fframwaith mân waith Ceredigion yn gyfle perffaith i Gyngor Sir Ceredigion wireddu manteision offer a gwasanaethau electronig y Gwasanaeth eGaffael. O ganlyniad uniongyrchol i ddefnyddio'r teclyn tendro electronig (eDendro Cymru) a'r teclyn gwerthuso (eWerthuso Award®) llwyddodd y Cyngor a'i bartneriaid i arbed amser, arian ac ymdrech sylweddol o gymharu â defnyddio'r dulliau traddodiadol o redeg y math hwn o gaffael.

Cyngor Sir Ceredigion

Cyngor Sir Ceredigion yw'r awdurdod lleol sy'n llywodraethu Ceredigion lle mae 76,000 o bobl yn byw erbyn hyn. Mae'r Cyngor ei hunan yn cyflogi 3,700 o bobl ac mae ganddo 42 o Gynghorwyr ar hyn o bryd.

Sir wledig yn bennaf yw Ceredigion gydag amaethyddiaeth y prif ddiwydiant. Fodd bynnag, mae sawl tref fawr a bywiog hefyd yn y sir, megis Aberystwyth ac Aberaeron.

Mae'r Cyngor, ers sawl blwyddyn, yn awyddus i ddatblygu'r ardal gyda sawl cynllun datblygu gwledig a phrosiectau mân waith ledled y sir. Yn benodol, roedd llawer o'r prosiectau hyn yn cynnwys gwaith adeiladu ac adfer ar draws y sir gyda'r diben o gysylltu â phobl a busnesau lleol i ddatblygu'r ardal.

Trosolwg o'r Prosiect

Fis Gorffennaf 2015, cyhoeddodd Cyngor Sir Ceredigion Hysbysiad Contract yng Nghyfnodolyn Swyddogol yr Undeb Ewropeaidd ar gyfer contract fframwaith 'Gwaith adeiladu ar gyfer adeiladau a thai unigol mewn amlfeddiannaeth'. Bu Ceredigion yn gweithio gyda chwe phartner i baratoi'r fframwaith:

- Tai Ceredigion
- Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru
- Prifysgol Aberystwyth
- Tai Cantref
- Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru
- Comisiynydd Heddlu a Throsedd Dyfed Powys

Prisiwyd y prosiect yn £15 miliwn dros gyfnod o ddwy flynedd gyda'r dewis o ymestyn am ddwy flynedd arall. Rhannwyd y contract yn 33 o lotiau gwahanol yn ôl lleoliadau (Gogledd, Canol, De a'r Sir Gyfan), Math o Waith (Mân waith, Addurno, Addasiadau Anabledd, Mecanyddol, Trydanol, Cynnal a Chadw a Thirlunio Tiroedd, Adeiladu Cyffredinol) ac yn ôl cyfanswm gwerth y gwaith (£0-£2,999, £3k - £24,999, £25k – £99,999, £100k- £500k). I gyd, cafwyd 285 o wahanol fidiau ar gyfer y lotiau gan 59 o wahanol gyflenwyr.

Roedd y cyngor a'i bartneriaid yn awyddus i ddefnyddio cyflenwyr lleol os yn bosibl ar gyfer y prosiect hwn.

> "Mae wedi bod yn wych gweithio gyda chyflenwyr a busnesau bach a chanolig lleol a sicrhau fod y gymuned yn gallu cymryd rhan yn natblygiad ei sir. Byddwn yn argymell AWARD® i unrhyw un sy'n rhedeg prosiect yn canolbwyntio'n sylweddol ar gyfranogiad cymdeithasol."
>
> George Ryley,
> Pennaeth Caffael

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I sicrhau hynny, gofynnwyd am arweiniad 'Busnes Cymru' sy'n cefnogi twf cynaliadwy busnesau bach a chanolig ledled Cymru. Bu hyn yn hynod lwyddiannus gyda chyflenwyr lleol a chwmnïau mwy yn bidio ar gyfer gwaith y prosiect, gan sicrhau gwerth cymdeithasol ychwanegol.

Heriau Caffael

Fel y gellid disgwyl, gydag unrhyw brosiect sy'n cynnwys saith awdurdod yn cydweithio, 33 o lotiau a 285 o gyflwyniadau, roedd yna sawl haen o gymhlethdod a chyfres o faglau gweinyddol i'w rheoli yn ystod y broses caffael. Ond, yn yr achos hwn, roedd y Cyngor hefyd yn wynebu nifer o heriau ychwanegol i'r prosiect:

- Roedd y Cyngor a'i bartneriaid yn ddiweddar wedi cyflwyno gofynion mandadol ar gyfer pob contractwr sydd â rhan mewn prosiectau'n cael eu hariannu gan y Cyngor. Golygai'r gofynion hyn y byddai'r prosiect ei hunan yn dod yn gynyddol estynedig a chymhleth;

- Roedd eDendro ac eWerthuso AWARD® yn hollol ddiarth i sawl aelod o'r tîm ac felly roedd yn rhaid cael hyfforddiant, cefnogaeth a chanllawiau effeithiol;
- Gyda chymaint o fidiau unigol ar gyfer y 33 o lotiau, roedd y gwerthusiad yn un hynod o gymhleth i'r tîm prosiect. Ar ben hynny, roedd 16 o werthuswyr o'r saith partner oedd yn cydweithio, llawer ymhell yn ddaearyddol oddi wrth ei gilydd ar draws y sir.

Swyddogaeth a Gwerth Penderfyniadau Masnachol ac AWARD®

Gweithredodd Cyngor Sir Ceredigion eWerthusiad AWARD® ar y cyd ag eDendro Cymru i sicrhau bod y dogfennau oddi wrth fidwyr yn cael eu trosglwyddo'n llyfn o gyfnod eu cyflwyno hyd at y gwerthusiad. Yn draddodiadol, bu Cyngor Ceredigion yn defnyddio taenlenni ar gyfer eu prosiectau caffael. Penderfynwyd yn gynnar iawn, gyda phrosiect mor gymhleth, y byddai eDendro Cymru ac AWARD® yn ysgwyddo llawer o'r baich gweinyddol, gan symleiddio'n sylweddol waith rheoli cymaint o wybodaeth a dogfennau.
Roedd aelodau'r tîm Commerce Decisions wrth law i sefydlu'r prosiect yn AWARD®, hyfforddi gweinyddwyr a briffio gwerthuswyr. Bu'r gwasanaeth un i un gan Commerce Decisions o gymorth i sicrhau proses gaffael lyfn ac effeithiol yn ogystal â rhoi'r offer i'r rheolwr prosiect i reoli'r gwerthusiad yn llwyddiannus.

> "Roeddwn i'n gweld ymgynghorwyr Commerce Decisions yn hynod o ragweithiol a chymwynasgar, roedden nhw'n gweithio'n galed i sicrhau fod y systemau wedi'i mireinio yn y ffordd fwyaf effeithiol i gefnogi ein prosiect".
>
> George Ryley,
> Pennaeth Caffael

Roedd tîm Mân Waith Ceredigion wrth eu bodd gyda'r arbedion a wnaed gyda'r caffael – yn enwedig mewn meysydd lle'r oedd y cyfnod gwerthuso wedi costio'n ddrud yn y gorffennol. Er enghraifft, drwy ddefnyddio AWARD®, gallai gwerthuswyr gael at y bidiau o'u swyddfeydd neu o gartref fel nad oedd angen, fel arfer, cynnal cyfarfodydd canolog rheolaidd. Pan fyddai'r gwerthuswyr yn cyfarfod i ffurfio sgoriau consensws, roedd adroddiadau AWARD® yn golygu fod y broses wedi'i thargedu'n well ac yn fwy cadarn. Arweiniodd hyn at arbed cryn dipyn ar dreuliau teithio a chynhaliaeth a hefyd arbed amser wrth werthuso (tua 40%). Drwy ddefnyddio AWARD® roedd y broses yn llawer symlach, yn fwy cyfleus (yn addasu ar gyfer ymrwymiadau busnes a phersonol) ac yn gadarnach.

Ynghylch Gwerth Cymru a'r Gwasanaeth eGaffael

Is-adran Llywodraeth Cymru yw Gwerth Cymru sy'n gyfrifol am yrru polisi caffael ac ymarfer gorau ledled sector cyhoeddus Cymru. Mae Gwerth Cymru wedi ymrwymo i ddarparu ac annog arbedion effeithiolrwydd mewn caffael drwy ei egwyddorion sydd i'w gweld yn Natganiad Polisi Caffael Cymru.

Y tîm Gwasanaeth eGaffael sy'n gyfrifol am ddatblygu, annog a darparu'r strategaeth a'r gwasanaeth caffael electronig yn y tymor hir ledled sector cyhoeddus Cymru. Mae tri maes i'r Gwasanaeth eGaffael:

- eGyrchu – sy'n galluogi prynwyr a chyflenwyr i gynnal eu gweithgareddau cyrchu drwy un teclyn ar lein - eDendro Cymru. Mae hyn yn cael ei hyrwyddo'n aml drwy'r porth caffael ar lein GwerthwchiGymru;
- eFasnachu – y gwasanaeth ar lein sy'n galluogi prynwyr yn y sector cyhoeddus i weld ac archebu nwyddau a gwasanaethau drwy gatalogau electronig;
- eDaliadau – sy'n cynnwys cardiau prynu megis Barclaycard yn ogystal â dulliau electronig eraill o dalu.

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> "Fyddwn i ddim yn petruso dim wrth argymell AWARD® ac eDendro Cymru i sefydliadau eraill yn y sector cyhoeddus yng Nghymru, byddai'r prosiect hwn wedi bod yn llawer mwy trafferthus hebddyn nhw. Mae'r ffaith eu bod nhw'n cael eu hariannu'n ganolog gan Gwerth Cymru ac ar gael drwy'r Gwasanaeth eGaffael yn ei gwneud yn hawdd cyfiawnhau eu defnyddio."
>
> George Ryley,
> Pennaeth Caffael

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