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William Humphrey
Chairperson
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BT4 3XX
Via email to committee.publicaccounts@niassembly.gov.uk;

Our Ref: SINV/398/2021

7 December 2021

Dear Mr Humphrey

I refer to my attendance at the Committee meeting on 25 November 2021 and wanted to follow up on the question you asked about CPD and the procurement practices for Schools.

You had mentioned that you sit on a number of school boards of governors and advised there was a huge frustration about CPD in relation to having to get tenders and quotations. You also asked how do companies that are not on the official list get on to that list.

In relation to the requirement to seek quotes or tenders, this is NI Executive Policy and is contained in the recently published [PPN 04/21 Procurement Control Limits](#).

The Policy is designed to ensure that public procurement contributes to a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy by:

- stimulating effective competition (competition is the best way of achieving and demonstrating Best Value for Money);
- achieving a balance between the value of the contract and the transactional cost of undertaking the procurement procedures; and
- ensuring a proportionate approach is taken to procurement for low value requirements.

The Policy is effective for procurements over £5k. For any purchases below £5k, Departments and their sponsored bodies are asked to demonstrate that value for money has been secured, this can be achieved by evidence of simple price checks.

Education Authority is responsible for the procurement of goods and services for schools. In relation to contracts/lists, Education Authority (EA) has advised DoF that they seek quotations for all requirements over £5k. Where these requirements are for schools, EA has advised that they will take recommendations from schools as to which companies to seek quotations from and include these suppliers in the competition (in addition to a number of suppliers who have registered their business on eTendersNI). EA has confirmed that tenders for goods or services over £30k are advertised on eTendersNI and are open to all suppliers to bid.

I hope this answers the questions raised at the session on 25 November 2021.

Please feel free to contact myself or Sharon Smyth who is the new CPD Chief Executive if you have any further questions in relation to public procurement.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Colum Boyle', with a horizontal line underneath.

COLUM BOYLE

cc: Sharon Smyth