



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Case Study

**Savings made to the Nottinghamshire Fire and
Rescue Service Stationery Budget**

March 2018

The stationery budget, in Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) is highly decentralised, allowing each department a broad degree of autonomy in buying stationery.

In 2011 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service undertook a stationery review due to the high levels of expenditure, which, was in the region of £75,000 in 2010/2011. The review set out to evaluate the existing product range with both operational and support staff stakeholders, how the products were purchased and the approval route through the NFRS Finance Management System (FMS).

The product range in 2011 was over 350 items covering the full range of stationery, this ranged from paper, pens, and paper clips to China graph pencils, folders and white boards and everything in between.

Once a report had been completed it identified the stationery items that had been purchased and in what volumes. This report covered the previous three years allowing the data to be interrogated and analysed. This analysis identified there were many variations of the same products i.e. 32 different types of pens being purchased.

A small project team was assembled involving operational personnel and support staff from varying departments to go through the product range to identify what was required and what was not needed by departments. This resulted in the production of a schedule of core items of stationery; these were the stationery items commonly needed and used.

NFRS went out to competitive tender for the core items using scoring criteria of:

Price element – 70%

Quality – 30%

Delivery – Pass/Fail

Once this process had been completed a core product list was created; an example is from the 32 versions of pens were reduced to 4 standard pens in Black, Blue, Red and Green. All brands/branded products were removed from the list and replaced with generic descriptions to enable suppliers to provide a fit for purpose product.

Only these products were available to be requisitioned by NFRS staff through the FMS. In the event a non-core product was required the requesting department would contact procurement to identify if there was a core product already available or if not what the justification for buying the non-core item was.

NFRS implemented a number of controls within the FMS to prevent non-core item spending. NFRS Procurement Team control the Product Masterfile within the FMS and as such all core items were set up in line with the stationery supplier. All products requisitioned go through a workflow approval process, technical approval if required and budget holder approval prior to be converted into an official purchase order. These controls have significantly helped to control the levels of spend.

The contract delivery requirement is, all orders delivered direct to site carriage paid, removing the need for NFRS Stores to handle, process and deliver any stationery items.

As a condition of the contract the supplier was instructed to only accept official purchase orders via the FMS and not from individual email instructions or verbal orders.

The Procurement Section is responsible for the management of the stationery contract and its active management.

Below is a list of an actual spend on stationery items for NFRS over the past 7 years which demonstrates the savings made against NFRS 2010/11 spending levels:

£75,000 in 2010/2011 to

£44,500 in 2012, reduction of £30,500 compared to 2010/11 - 40% saving

£30,000 in 2013, reduction of £45,000 compared to 2010/11 - 60% saving

£22,500 in 2014, reduction of £52,500 compared to 2010/11 - 70% saving

£24,200 in 2015, reduction of £50,800 compared to 2010/11 - 68% saving

£21,700 in 2016, reduction of £53,300 compared to 2010/11 - 71% saving

£18,000 in 2017, reduction of £57,000 compared to 2010/11 - 76% saving

Over the last 6 years NFRS has saved £289,000 when compared to the spending levels of 2010/11 with all deliveries being free of charge and delivered directly to stations/ NFRS site as required.

In 2015 NFRS collaborated with a neighbouring fire service and retendered the stationery requirement using the following scoring criteria:

Price element – 40%

Quality of product – 20%

Method Statement -non-core pricing – 15%

Method Statement - pricing – 10%

Method Statement - cost savings – 5%

Environmental Policy – 5%

Sustainability / Ethical – 5%

Delivery – Pass/Fail

This created additional savings and efficiencies for both fire services.

Throughout this process we've gained the following learning points:

- Understand what your core list should be, based on historical data and future use
- Use a smaller catalogue and control non-core items being purchased
- Delivers to be made direct from contractor to end user
- Appoint a member of staff to actively contract manage the contract
- Collaborate with others to obtain aggregated pricing

This is an example of how standardisation, rationalisation and aggregation even on a small scale can provide significant savings.

If you would like any further information regarding the procurement process or outcomes of this case study, please contact NFRS Procurement Manager Richard Henshaw at richard.henshaw@notts-fire.gov.uk