



Driving compliance, efficiency and strategic value with Cheshire East Council



The Customer

Cheshire East Council is the third largest unitary authority in North West England, serving more than 420,000 residents and 20,000 businesses across towns including Crewe, Macclesfield and Nantwich. The Council is responsible for a wide range of essential local services, including education, adult and children's social care, waste collection, planning and highways.

As part of its 2025–2029 plan, the Council set out a clear vision to make the borough a brilliant place for everyone to live, work and visit. Central to this vision is enabling prosperity and wellbeing for all by building strong partnerships, unlocking health and wealth potential across the area, and ensuring positive outcomes for adults, children and families.

The Need

To support its need to be agile and work at pace to deliver key projects, the Council recognised the need to modernise and strengthen its approach to sourcing consultancy and specialist professional services. A more strategic, compliant and commercially effective model was required to ensure the Council could access high-quality expertise while delivering value for money, transparency and governance.

Drivers for Change

The Council identified a number of challenges and drivers for change in relation to its use of consultancy and specialist professional services:

- Rationalising and consolidating consultancy requirements across the organisation
- Ensuring all consultancy procurements were fully compliant
- Reducing the volume of waivers and direct award requests to consultants
- Managing and reducing scope creep
- Delivering cost reductions and achieving required savings

The Solution

Bloom provides a fully managed, end-to-end solution for procuring specialist professional services through the NEPRO Three framework, including early market engagement with suppliers and ongoing contract management support.

Key elements of the solution included:

- Full management of tendering, evaluation and contract award processes through the NEPRO Three framework



The Outcome

The partnership between Cheshire East Council and Bloom, delivered through the NEPRO Three framework, has delivered strong, sustained outcomes:

- A long-standing relationship, with Bloom in place since 2016
- A simpler, more efficient route to market for specialist professional services
- Tangible savings achieved through negotiation and mini-competitions
- A standardised and streamlined payment process
- Clear achievement and tracking of social value outcomes
- An accessible route to market for SMEs, reducing barriers to entry and eliminating the need for repeated, lengthy tender documents
- A collaborative, partnership-based approach that supports the Council's wider strategic objectives

£508k

savings delivered against a new project budget of £3.28million (15.5%)

86%

of projects awarded to SMEs (24/28 projects)

£6.54 million

invoiced to SMEs of which £1.91million went to North West based SMEs.

Statistics referenced relate to FY24/25.

See how collaborative partnerships can build sustainable public sector workforces and deliver long-term impact

020 3948 9400

<https://bloom.services/>

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Working in partnership

