

# An Advice Cloud case study

CLIENT: DLUHC

SERVICE: Public Sector Procurement Support



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is a UK Government department that supports communities, housing and local government's in the UK. As well as delivering the levelling up policy.

Formerly called, Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), since 2021 the department has shifted focus. With aims to invest in towns, cities and rural communities. Giving them more power into how to utilise their investment and to support deprived communities. This is why Advice Cloud were eager to support DLUHC with their procurement needs.

## HOW IT ALL STARTED

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) planned to award several grants to local authorities under their "PropTech Engagement Fund" scheme. These grants would allow local authorities to develop better digital engagement with citizens and stakeholders with regards to planning. All of which are in support of the government's Levelling Up initiative.

The PropTech scheme was run over two phases: Phase 1 starting in September 2021, and Phase 2 in March 2022. Both phases were being run at a fast pace leaving the local authorities with limited time for extensive procurement activities.

During DLUHC's early engagement with local authorities, many raised concerns about the procurement of digital solutions. These included a lack of:

- Internal procurement support,
- Experience with digital procurement,
- Knowledge in using suitable frameworks,
- Understanding how to do the procurements in the very short timescales the scheme allowed.

Using a call off from CCS' G-Cloud 12 framework, DLUHC brought in Advice Cloud at this point. Our team worked to provide commercial/procurement training, guidance and ongoing support in procuring cloud-based solutions to the local authorities participating in both phases of the PropTech Engagement Fund.

## HOW WE HELPED

During Phase 1 of the project, many local authority project managers expressed a need for support with procurement, particularly cloud-based digital procurement through frameworks. Advice Cloud was brought in to provide training and ongoing support to these groups.

Advice Cloud activities involved:

- Formal training on how to use government procurement frameworks such as G-Cloud and the Spark Dynamic Purchasing System. These were held in both group and individually tailored sessions where needed.
- Procurement assurance services, making sure that the processes followed were robust, compliant, and fair to all bidders.
- Practical assistance in creating call-off contracts.
- Supporting the project managers when dealing with their internal procurement and legal teams.
- On-going support and guidance as each authority undertook their procurement, for example, answering queries. Often, these queries would branch out further from the PropTech project. However, we gave advice when needed and where we could be helpful.
- All of our services were provided under our unique Procurement on-demand service, where authorities just pay for time used rather than a per day / per project fixed price.

During this time, Advice Cloud provided DLUHC with a tracker showing activities with each local authority and RAG status on their procurement activities. This was supplemented with a weekly DLUHC meeting on local authority progress and agreeing actions.



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## OUTCOME

Many local authority planners are now experienced in using digital frameworks, thanks to our training (as well as ongoing advice and guidance).

As well as this, further local authority procurement teams were also trained in using the G-Cloud framework and the Spark Dynamic Purchasing System.

All local authorities included in the project managed to conclude their procurements at the fast pace required for the project. Based on the feedback from the various local authorities involved, the commercial support provided by Advice-Cloud was well received, as it saved internal teams lots of time.

Advice Cloud had initially priced only for Round 1. Due to our efficiency in getting the authorities through their procurements in time, and delivering largely under budget, Advice Cloud were able to offer assistance for Round 2 of the fund. For Round 2 DLUHC have scaled the fund, doubling the number of schemes to 28 under 5 different themes. The funding also allowed for joint authority bids, which meant that there were 38 local authorities to assist to obtain their digital engagement solutions.

The procurements for these were all completed successfully, on time and to budget and are currently in the delivery phase.



## Public Sector Procurement Support

We provide Public Sector procurement advice and services to all parts of the UK Government including Central and Local Government as well as Health, Emergency (Blue Light) services, Education, and also Housing Associations, Charities, and Not-For-Profits. We have a reputation for providing honest, pragmatic and speedy advice.

Advice Cloud provide organisations across the public sector with either support for specific parts of the process, or an end-to-end service.

Having a wealth of experience as buyers ourselves, we can utilise frameworks such as G-Cloud to help you achieve hassle-free, compliant, and cost-effective procurement processes.



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