

Bill Payment Services

Why use SwipeCards?

Traditionally, Local Authorities, Housing Associations and Arms Length Management Organisations have collected rent, council tax and other payments made to them via their main cash desk at the town hall/council offices; through a network of area housing offices, and in many cases, through door-to-door collection services. All of these methods of collection can limit the opportunities available to tenants to make payments as the main period of collection falls between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

It is important for organisations collecting monies to maximise opportunities for payment by offering more flexible opening times and an increased number of payment outlets to enhance customer convenience.

Plastic payment cards are becoming an increasingly popular method of payment and provide a cost-effective and secure replacement for traditional payment books, reducing the risk of data entry errors.

Using plastic swipeCards for bill payments also offers a number of benefits to the tenant:

- **the cards are small and easy to fit into a pocket or wallet and can be kept on the person at all times**
- **many tenants already use the Post Office® and other networks for services and are familiar with the brands and how to make payments**
- **the various outlets offer easy access due to their location and opening hours allowing tenants to make more regular payments and budget more effectively**

Following best value reviews on access to services, a number of organisations have implemented plastic payment cards to reduce administration and collection

costs when receiving monies from rents, council tax and other payments. These cost analyses calculated very positive cost savings.

The Partnership

Consortium Procurement is working in partnership with allpay.net for the provision of bill payment services.

allpay.net is the UK's only dedicated payment solution specialist, providing revenue collection systems and consolidating payments for hundreds of public and private sector organisations to make bill payments easier for everyone.

Whether paying rent, council tax or any other bill, allpay.net's range of products and solutions are designed to provide the maximum convenience and choice for people in how they can pay their bills.

Consortium members who take advantage of the services allpay.net provide can offer their customers a whole range of bill payment methods including swipeCards, internet payments, telephone payments, SMS text message payments, payment kiosks, payment terminal, barcoding, paperless direct debits, payments via digital television and access to the largest number of outlets in the UK.

Access to payment outlets offers customers the ability to make cash payments. Electronic payment methods are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

As with all Consortium partnerships, it was developed through consultation with the membership and is fully Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) compliant. The procurement was undertaken in line with The Public Contracts Regulations 2006 and European Union Procurement Directive, as an Accelerated Restricted procedure.

The contract notice was published in September 2006 and stated the Consortium's aim to let an agreement with a single partner for the provision of bill payment services to run for a period of four years.

How to Access this Agreement

Through this agreement, Consortium members can procure the services they require from allpay.net without the need for any further formal competition, secure in the knowledge that the Consortium has followed all necessary steps to provide an efficient, cost effective, accessible and OJEU compliant solution. Additional benefits to Consortium members include:

- **preferential transaction rates**
- **reduced encoding and embossing costs**
- **reduced stationery costs**
- **reduced Webconnect training fee**

For further information regarding this agreement, please contact the Business Development Team on: 0191 566 1000 or email: solutions@consortiumprocurement.org.uk

