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## Dudley Council opts for Schmidt Swingo 200+ sweepers after top mark tender

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council has added eight Swingo 200+ from Aebi Schmidt to its fleet of street cleaning vehicles following a thorough and extensive tender process at which the compact sweeper scored top marks.

The procurement team, led by Contract and Development Officer Peter Cooper, went out to tender via the Hertfordshire County Council Purchase Framework Agreement, organised by The Procurement Partnership Limited (TPPL), and had expressions of interest from four sweeper manufacturers.

Models from all four were then thoroughly tested and evaluated for their suitability, using a team of three drivers to test drive the sweepers and three mechanics to look at all mechanical and working aspects of the sweepers.

From that analysis, the procurement team drew up a specification for the machine they would require, and through the TPPL portal, went back to the four manufacturers for quotes, ranking their response against five criteria: price competitiveness, aftersales service, warranty, delivery, and social value.

The Swingo scored very highly on all five criteria, said Peter Cooper, but on several it was outstanding.

“Price competitiveness, which was 60% of the marks, was very important to the Council officers as we are a heavily industrialised, underfunded, and heavily populated local authority – so the price was important and the Swingos were well priced.

“No other supplier came close and the Schmidt tender response really stood out from the crowd. We are now using their tender response as an example of what the perfect tender reply should look like,” he added.

Operating the Swingos falls under the remit of Simon Bedford, Senior Operations Officer, Street, Green Care and Amenity Services – Street Cleansing, who is responsible for the Council’s fleet of 11 mechanical sweepers and ensuring that the Council’s highways

and byways are kept in a clean and litter-free state and with a high amenity value.

“We were looking for compact sweepers that gave us greater flexibility and manoeuvrability and the Swingos have certainly fitted the bill,” he said.

The Dudley Metropolitan Borough, at the heart of the Black Country and sandwiched between Birmingham to the east and Wolverhampton to the north, has a number of major towns in its catchment, including Dudley itself, Stourbridge, Halesowen and Brierley Hill with the renowned Merry Hill shopping centre, one of the largest in the UK.

Densely populated, the area requires round the clock street cleaning, so the new Swingos operate seven days a week, with eight hour shifts on weekdays and five hour shifts at the weekend.

To tackle the whole area, the Borough is split into three: primary retail centres, smaller retail centres and residential estates, with the first two cleaned every day starting at 6.00am, and the residential estates on five days a week.

At the same time, one Swingo is permanently sited at the Borough’s waste services recycling plant at Blowers Green to keep the site in a clean and tidy condition.



Dudley Council sweeper driver Matt Wakeman with two of the new Schmidt Swingo 200+

“Feedback from the drivers has been very positive and they like the fact that the Swingos are more comfortable, more flexible and more manoeuvrable than the machines they were using before, and that they are ideal for cleaning in awkward tight areas where they had not been able to reach before,” said Simon Bedford, who has seven footway drivers and five channel drivers on his street cleaning workforce.

Aebi Schmidt areas sales manager, Matthew Elderkin, who is responsible for the relationship with Dudley Council, said that the Swingos had been supplied with several extras to meet the Dudley specification.

“We added additional weigh systems to the vehicle to provide overload protection and to avoid overloading the hopper. And, to meet environmental concerns, the Euro 6 compliant diesel engine can be easily modified to run on hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) if required in the future which reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 90%.

“We also put in place a detailed training schedule for the Dudley drivers who were transitioning from the larger sweepers they had before to the Swingos. And we have just held our first review meeting with the Council officers and received very positive feedback on the performance of the Swingos to date,” he added.

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