



# Barclaycard Business makes purchasing easier for Telford & Wrekin Council

Telford & Wrekin Council is a unitary authority responsible for the environment and regeneration, social care, community services and children and young people across the borough. The Council employs over 4,000 employees and has a budget of £90 million for goods and services.

The Council faces many challenges on a day to day basis and the Government Procurement Card (GPC Visa) has played an essential role in dealing with some of these challenges effectively.

There are currently five Visa Corporate cards, provided by Barclaycard Business, in use by Directors at the Council and 16 GPCs being trialled across the organisation. The GPCs were issued in May as part of a short pilot and Telford & Wrekin Council staff have nothing but praise for Barclaycard Business and the services it provides.

*“The cards have fundamentally changed the way we operate. Our GPC users no longer need to raise a paper purchase order when buying goods and services, meaning that time is saved in sometimes crucial situations.”*

This was highlighted during the summer of 2007 when Telford and Wrekin suffered badly in the drastic floods that swept across Shropshire. The GPC Visa enabled the Council to buy urgent supplies to keep roadways open and help prevent damage to homes quickly, efficiently and without the bureaucracy of raising a formal purchase order.

*“At short notice, the Council received flood warnings and urgently needed to buy sandbags from Jewson. The GPC enabled us to quickly purchase supplies to minimise the damage predicted to residents’ homes. Our environmental unit were loading their lorry with sandbags at the Jewson site while the GPC user was purchasing and paying for the supplies from their office across the borough.”*



By implementing the GPC Visa scheme, Barclaycard Business has empowered Council staff by giving them the opportunity to make quick and easy purchases. An example is the HomeFix maintenance officer, whose job is to carry out DIY tasks for older people across the borough. He is regularly required to buy screws, taps, washers and wood etc. Prior to the GPC Visa scheme being implemented he would have needed to raise a paper purchase order which would then have to be approved by management, causing excess paper work and delays. Now he can use the GPC Visa to buy his stock from local suppliers, thus supporting local businesses, or via internet sites allowing him more time to get on with the job in hand.

Another area where Barclaycard Business service is benefiting Telford & Wrekin Council has set up processes and controls for GPC use. They also provided guidance on the use of Merchant Category Codes (MCC) for the project. The robust procedures, along with control of MCCs, allow the Council to monitor and control staff expenditure and to ensure that spending policies are implemented. However, if this system needs to be adapted the quick service and flexibility of Barclaycard Business means that the categories and spending limits can be quickly and easily adjusted.

*“When the Council first rolled out the scheme it was agreed that the cards would not be used for vehicle maintenance and support; however we changed our minds when a local school needed to pay quickly for the school minibus MOT. The merchant codes were changed by Barclaycard Business enabling payment, saving time, stress and petty cash.”*

Telford & Wrekin Council is impressed both with the financial benefits of the cards and also the level of customer service received from Barclaycard Business. Due to the projects success there are plans to roll out the cards to all business units within the Council.

*“The customer service is excellent; Barclaycard Business is always keeping us updated with fresh ideas and management information to benefit our team. We have worked with GPC users to capture the efficiencies the card has brought and all areas have had increased cashable and non cashable benefits – one area in particular reported this increase to be four-fold!”*