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Award

## **DSD Medical Support Services**

Department for Communities formerly the Department for Social Development DSD

F15: Voluntary ex ante transparency notice

Notice identifier: 2023/S 000-002963

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-03a189

Published 31 January 2023, 3:39pm

### **Section I: Contracting authority/entity**

#### **I.1) Name and addresses**

Department for Communities formerly the Department for Social Development DSD

Causeway Exchange, 1-7 Bedford Street

BELFAST

BT2 7EG

#### **Email**

[healthtransformation@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:healthtransformation@communities-ni.gov.uk)

#### **Country**

United Kingdom

#### **Region code**

UK - United Kingdom

## **Internet address(es)**

Main address

<https://communities-ni.gov.uk>

Buyer's address

<https://etendersni.gov.uk/epps>

## **I.4) Type of the contracting authority**

Body governed by public law

## **I.5) Main activity**

Health

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## **Section II: Object**

### **II.1) Scope of the procurement**

#### **II.1.1) Title**

DSD Medical Support Services

Reference number

Project 71

#### **II.1.2) Main CPV code**

- 85000000 - Health and social work services

#### **II.1.3) Type of contract**

Services

#### **II.1.4) Short description**

DfC shall enter into a Contract Variation of the Medical Support Services (MSS) Agreement with the incumbent supplier following a period of 10 days from the date of publication of this notice. The Contract Variation provides for an extension of seven (7) months from 01.08.2023 to 01.03.2024.

#### **II.1.6) Information about lots**

This contract is divided into lots: No

#### **II.1.7) Total value of the procurement (excluding VAT)**

Value excluding VAT: £115,409,411

### **II.2) Description**

#### **II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)**

- 72000000 - IT services: consulting, software development, Internet and support
- 75000000 - Administration, defence and social security services

- 75311000 - Sickness benefits
- 75313000 - Disability benefits
- 75313100 - Temporary disablement benefits

### **II.2.3) Place of performance**

NUTS codes

- UKN - Northern Ireland

### **II.2.4) Description of the procurement**

Continuation of the provision of work capability assessment services in Northern Ireland.

For full details of the nature of the services please see OJEU 2007/S 063-077231.

### **II.2.5) Award criteria**

Criterion: Medical Personnel 15

Criterion: Service Quality 25

Criterion: Transition and Service 10

Criterion: IS/IT Solutions 10

Criterion: Legal and contractual 10

Criterion: Properties 5

Criterion: Financial 25

### **II.2.11) Information about options**

Options: No

### **II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds**

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

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## Section IV. Procedure

### IV.1) Description

#### IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Award of a contract without prior publication of a call for competition in the cases listed below

- The procurement falls outside the scope of application of the regulations

Explanation:

On 5 March 2020, DWP published a PIN 2020/S 046-109668 signalling its intent to re-procure its Work Capability Assessment contracts for assessment services in GB in accordance with Section 7, PCR as part of a larger procurement for other types of assessment services (FAS Procurement). The Department for Communities agreed to join the procurement with Northern Ireland constituting a separate geographic Lot. Due to the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the new procurement was delayed and as a result, the WCA contract in NI was extended for the reasons set out in Voluntary Ex Ante Transparency Notice 2020/S 135-333759.

The FAS procurement was launched on 12 November 2021 and, although a light touch regime procurement, was based on a competitive dialogue procedure, the commencement of which included the submission of indicative bids.

During dialogue it became apparent that the contract value envelope for the FAS procurement needed to be revised in order to provide these key public services effectively. The procurement was therefore halted temporarily with a view to re-engaging with stakeholders.

It had also become clear that the ratio of face to face assessments versus remote assessments needed to be reviewed given the continuation of the Pandemic and further time was spent ensuring the contractual arrangements had built-in flexibility to deal with changing circumstances and impact the above changes. DWP and DfC also considered that a further round of commercial dialogue (not originally planned) was necessary to ensure the quality of BAFO submissions in the face of the revised contractual framework. Due to these various activity streams, it was therefore impossible for DWP and DfC to avoid a negative impact on its original procurement timetable.

The procurement is now well underway. DWP do not envisage there will be cause for further delay. However, due to the additional activities and subsequent delay (see above) in order to

ensure an efficient and smooth handover between the MSS and the new FAS providers during an appropriate implementation period, DfC consider an extension of 7 months to the existing MSS contract term is necessary. Without an extension there could be a delay to provision of assessments for the critical statutory welfare benefit which MSS services encompass. As the recipients of these welfare benefits constitute a vulnerable section of society, DfC are of the view such an extension is necessary to ensure they are not disadvantaged further.

DfC considers Regulation 72(1)(b) PCR is applicable. For the reasons set out above, the provision of additional services until 1 March 2024 has become necessary and:

(i) interchangeability issues with a new supplier means these key services could be negatively impacted for technical and economic reasons. The implementation of the contract currently being procured necessitates a lengthy handover period therefore it is not possible to introduce a new provider for the additional 7 months. A change in supplier without a full handover programme (which includes transition to a new managed IT service necessitating dual running of systems) would risk delivery of these services which provide critical statutory benefits to vulnerable people;

(ii) appointing a new supplier to cover the extra 7 months (which DfC do not consider a viable option) at the same time as the incumbent was engaged in handover to the new FAS supplier means significant duplication of costs particularly as DfC would be paying additional costs already during the implementation period;

(iii) the value of the contract for the extended period does not exceed 50% of value of original contract; and

(iv) DfC will publish a modification notice pursuant to Regulation 72(3) of PCR.

#### **IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)**

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

### **IV.2) Administrative information**

#### **IV.2.1) Previous publication concerning this procedure**

Notice number: [2007/S 063-077231](#)

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## **Section V. Award of contract/concession**

### **Contract No**

Project 71

### **Title**

DSD Medical Support Services

A contract/lot is awarded: Yes

### **V.2) Award of contract/concession**

#### **V.2.1) Date of conclusion of the contract**

31 December 2010

#### **V.2.2) Information about tenders**

The contract has been awarded to a group of economic operators: No

#### **V.2.3) Name and address of the contractor/concessionaire**

Atos Origin IT Services Ltd

London

Email

[robert.gidney@atos.net](mailto:robert.gidney@atos.net)

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UK - United Kingdom

Internet address

<https://atos.net/en/>

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

No

#### **V.2.4) Information on value of contract/lot/concession (excluding VAT)**

Total value of the contract/lot/concession: £7,480,000

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## **Section VI. Complementary information**

### **VI.4) Procedures for review**

#### **VI.4.1) Review body**

The UK does not have any such bodies with responsibility for appeal/mediation procedures

Belfast

Country

United Kingdom