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Planning

Witness Service (2024-2028)

Ministry of Justice

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2023/S 000-003102

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-03a1f5

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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

Ministry of Justice

102 Petty France

London

SW1H 9AJ

Contact

Daren Mills

Email

Daren.Mills@justice.gov.uk

Telephone

+44 02033343555

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UK - United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

Main address

www.justice.gov.uk

I.2) Information about joint procurement

The contract is awarded by a central purchasing body

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Ministry or any other national or federal authority

I.5) Main activity

Social protection

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Witness Service (2024-2028)

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 75230000 - Justice services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

The purpose of this Prior Information Notice (PIN) is to:

- i) inform the market of a prospective contract opportunity in connection with the procurement for the Future Witness Service;
- ii) give notice of the MoJ's intention to issue an Invitation to Tender during March 2023.

Please note this potential procurement exercise is still subject to approvals and therefore the MoJ reserves the right not to go ahead with the procurement as it is currently planned and will not accept any liability for any time and resources incurred by potential bidders responding to this notice.

To express an interest in participating in this competition please email: daren.mills@justice.gov.uk by Thursday 9th March 2023, whereby your email will be acknowledged upon receipt.

The form of response should be limited to the provision of a single point of contact (full company name, contact name, job title, e-mail address and telephone number).

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £45,000,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 75231100 - Law-courts-related administrative services
- 79140000 - Legal advisory and information services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKC - North East (England)
- UKD - North West (England)
- UKF - East Midlands (England)
- UKG - West Midlands (England)
- UKH - East of England
- UKJ - South East (England)
- UKK - South West (England)
- UKL - Wales

Main site or place of performance

United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The Ministry of Justice will shortly commence the procurement of a new contract for the Witness Service.

The Witness Service is an existing service, which has operated in all Criminal Courts in England and Wales for the last 25 years. The service is highly valued by stakeholders and partners for the independent, emotional and practical support it has provided witnesses over the last two decades to enable them to give their best evidence. Over the life of the new contract, it will deliver critical benefits including:

Delivering on the rights and standards of care for victims and witnesses set out in the Victims Code and Witness Charter.

To significantly increase the proportion of victims and witnesses who receive support when they want it.

Enabling this government's plans for court recovery to be realised.

The future service will be materially similar to the current model of support. However, we will also prioritise delivering essential improvements in value-for-money and quality of service, as well as testing ambitious options to future-proof the design of the service based on lessons learned in recent years.

The Ministry of Justice is seeking a provider to provide support to witnesses, guided by the following principles:

To continue to deliver a service for witnesses attending court - building on the existing model for support and the significant benefits it provides to witnesses.

To improve the service at a detailed level, learning lessons from victim policy in recent years. This will include working to create a more trauma-informed approach, improving the accessibility of the service and improving partnership working with victim advocates.

To learn lessons from delivery of the support for victims and witnesses during the COVID-19 pandemic and test ways to build additional flexibility and resilience into the model for support. This would aim to ensure the service can respond with confidence to future pandemic-like scenarios, use of Nightingale courts, extended operating hours and supporting witnesses in giving remote and pre-recorded evidence.

Indicative project milestones include:

Competition goes live - March 2023

Contract award confirmed and transition commenced - October 2023

Launch of the Future Witness Service (latest) - 1st April 2024

The scope of the service is being finalised and will be confirmed in the Contracts Notice.

This notice is for information only. Its publication does not oblige the MoJ to commence a competitive process. All information, including but not limited to descriptions and classifications of the requirements, procedure, Common Procurement Vocabulary codes and estimated date of publication of the contract notice, is indicative. The MoJ reserves the right to amend information at any time without prior notice

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

22 March 2023

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

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and

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