

This is a published notice on the Find a Tender service: <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Notice/003138-2024>

Planning

## **Appointment of an Operator for the i4C Innovation and Cleantech Centre in Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland**

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-003138

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0435e2

Published 30 January 2024, 6:17pm

### **Section I: Contracting authority**

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

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Ardeevin, 80 Galmorgan Road

Ballymena

BT42 1AB

#### **Email**

[procurement@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@midandeastantrim.gov.uk)

#### **Telephone**

+44 03001245000

#### **Country**

United Kingdom

**Region code**

UKN0F - Mid and East Antrim

**Internet address(es)**

Main address

<https://e-sourcingni.bravosolution.co.uk>

**I.3) Communication**

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Electronic communication requires the use of tools and devices that are not generally available. Unrestricted and full direct access to these tools and devices is possible, free of charge, at

<https://e-sourcingni.bravosolution.co.uk>

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

Regional or local authority

**I.5) Main activity**

General public services

---

**Section II: Object**

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

**II.1.1) Title**

Appointment of an Operator for the i4C Innovation and Cleantech Centre in Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland

Reference number

T553

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

- 73000000 - Research and development services and related consultancy services

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

Services

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

Mid & East Antrim Borough Council has secured funding approval for the business case for the development of a new i4C Innovation and Cleantech Centre (herein referred to as “i4C”) located on the St Patrick’s Regeneration Site in Ballymena, Northern Ireland.

The Council is interested in appointing a suitably experienced operator to manage and operate the i4C in the medium to long term and, in the short term, to inform the design and lead the branding, marketing and fit-out of the i4C prior to its opening.

Prior to commencing the procurement of an operator for the i4C, the Council wishes to discuss with experienced operators the Council’s thinking in relation to its approach to the operator procurement, including scope of operator services, risk allocation, commercial terms and procurement process.

By undertaking this initial PME, the Council is seeking to attract strong market interest in the subsequent procurement, resulting in the appointment of an operator with the experience and capability to deliver the i4C’s long term success.

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

This contract is divided into lots: No

## **II.2) Description**

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

- 55250000 - Letting services of short-stay furnished accommodation
- 79000000 - Business services: law, marketing, consulting, recruitment, printing and security
- 79340000 - Advertising and marketing services
- 79342000 - Marketing services
- 79342200 - Promotional services
- 79400000 - Business and management consultancy and related services

- 79410000 - Business and management consultancy services
- 79900000 - Miscellaneous business and business-related services
- 79996000 - Business organisation services
- 79998000 - Coaching services
- 98340000 - Accommodation and office services
- 98341000 - Accommodation services
- 98342000 - Work environment services

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

NUTS codes

- UKN0F - Mid and East Antrim

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

This is a Prior Information Notice to notify suitably experienced operators in relation to a Pre-Market Engagement Exercise (PME) that the Council is now undertaking to inform a future procurement that the Council intends to shortly undertake (in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended)) to appoint an operator to manage and operate a new i4C Innovation and Cleantech Centre in Ballymena, Northern Ireland.

The purpose of this PME is to provide the opportunity for suitably experienced operators to inform the Council's thinking in relation to its approach to the procurement of a suitable operator, including the scope of operator services, risk allocation, commercial terms and procurement process.

The supporting PME document sets out the process for the PME and presents further information relating to the i4C project and the Council's requirements and proposals. The PME document can be obtained by registering your interest in this Prior Information Notice on eSourcingNI portal <https://e-sourcingni.bravosolution.co.uk>.

The Council recognises that suitably experienced operators may not wish to discuss some of these matters in an open forum with market competitors, and accordingly to secure the market insights the Council requires, the Council is proposing to hold informal online one-to-one PME meetings with suitably experienced operators in the week commencing Monday 12th February. These one-to-one PME meetings will help inform the Council's thinking in relation to its approach to the procurement of a suitable operator.

Should you wish to participate in a one-to-one meeting please email [procurement@midandeantrim.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@midandeantrim.gov.uk) titling your email "Appointment of an Operator for

the i4C” by Friday 9th February 2024, and please provide the following details:

- Name of company
- Experience of the company relevant to the i4C operator contract (maximum 400 words)
- Names of individuals to participate in an on-line meeting with the Council (maximum of three individuals)
- Email addresses for individuals participating in the on-line meeting
- Times available for a meeting in week commencing Monday 12th February 2024.

Alternatively, you can register your interest and provide the above information requirements via the secure messaging function on the eSourcingNI portal (<https://e-sourcingni.bravosolution.co.uk>). If you are having any problems registering on the portal, please contact the BravoSolution dedicated supplier helpdesk by telephoning 0800 368 4850 or emailing [help@bravosolution.co.uk](mailto:help@bravosolution.co.uk). For any reason you are unable to participate in a one-to-one meeting with the Council, the Council would be happy to receive written views on the opportunity. Such views should be submitted to the Council by 5pm on Friday 16th February by emailing the Council at [procurement@midandeantrim.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@midandeantrim.gov.uk) or by registering and messaging the Council via eSourcingNI (see weblink above).

It is important to note that: (a) this notice and the market testing exercise do/will not constitute a call for competition, a pre-qualification questionnaire, part of any pre-qualification/selection process or a current tender opportunity. All interested suppliers will need to express a formal interest in any future tender opportunity in due course once a contract notice (as appropriate) is published; and (b) the Council cannot guarantee it will incorporate all or any feedback received into any subsequent procurement.

The Council will not disclose any confidential information supplied by an interested supplier in response to this notice or during the market testing, other than: (a) to its advisors, members, servants and agents (under similar obligations of confidentiality) for the purposes of this market testing exercise and any subsequent procurement process; or (b) as required under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 or to satisfy any other legislative obligation.

### **II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice**

8 April 2024

---

## **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