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Planning

Dorset Strategic Digital Infrastructure

Dorset Council

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-017124

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0507e0

Published 25 April 2025, 4:06pm

Scope

Reference

DN772600

Description

This Preliminary Market Engagement Notice is not a call for competition. It is being published to consult the market on a proposal under consideration for Dorset Council to achieve co-investment in construction of digital infrastructure - specifically duct and dark fibre - over which wholesale access services may be provided for third party utilisation, as a long-term revenue generating asset. The long-term revenues (based on current and future potential demand) are yet to be fully quantified but are estimated to be between c.£90m to c.£300m (depending on the realisation of the project over a 30-year period.)

Dorset Council is seeking to engage with prospective partners or organisations with potential interest in this proposal as an investor, delivery partner, operator / wholesaler or built network customer. Such interest may comprise:

- Investing in the design and build of the entire route and refresh and/or upgrade

technology assets during the term of any Agreement

- Operation and maintenance of a wholesale open access backhaul network
- Providing commercial access to both passive (dark fibre and other structural assets) and active (high-capacity wavelengths or Ethernet) connectivity services
- Managing all future potential extensions to the spine
- Using the network and services to provide digital connectivity

Further information on this proposal is available to interested parties registering an interest.

To register your interest please follow the links for this opportunity on the Council's e-tendering portal Supplying the South West Portal - <https://procontract.due-north.com/Advert?advertId=f87bc948-b921-f011-8136-005056b64545&p=696a9836-1895-e511-8105-000c29c9ba21>

GENERAL NOTES

No information provided in response to this market engagement exercise will be used by the Council in assessing providers in the event of any subsequent procurement process, should this follow this market engagement exercise.

Interested parties are encouraged to register on the Central Digital Platform.

Dorset Council reserves the right not to pursue any procurement to which this notice relates.

Dorset Council shall not be liable for any costs or losses incurred by any party as a result of reliance on the information contained/linked herein.

The information contained in this Preliminary Market Engagement Notice is either preliminary in nature or estimated and may be subject to further amendment and revision. Contract start/end dates, financial values and options are therefore provisional only for the purposes of this Preliminary Market Engagement Notice and may be subject to revision. Accordingly, no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, is being made and no liability is or will be accepted by the Council at any time as to the adequacy, accuracy or completeness of the contents of this notice or any document referred to in this notice. Any liability however arising is expressly disclaimed.

No expenses incurred in responding to this soft market testing will be reimbursed by the Council.

Total value (estimated)

- £300,000,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2057
- 30 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 32424000 - Network infrastructure
- 32571000 - Communications infrastructure
- 50332000 - Telecommunications-infrastructure maintenance services
- 71311300 - Infrastructure works consultancy services

Contract locations

- UKK25 - Dorset
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Engagement

Engagement deadline

17 May 2025

Engagement process description

Dorset Council is inviting prospective partners and organisations who are interested in this opportunity to participate in market engagement discussions.

Additional information will be available to parties registering interest which can be done by following the links for this opportunity on the Council's e-tendering portal Supplying the South West Portal - <https://procontract.due-north.com/Advert?advertId=f87bc948-b921-f011-8136-005056b64545&p=696a9836-1895-e511-8105-000c29c9ba21>

Parties registering will have the opportunity to submit any clarification queries via our e-tendering system. The deadline for clarification questions is 13th May 2025. Questions and their responses will be shared with other registered parties as appropriate.

Interested parties will be emailed post closure of the Pre Market Engagement notice period with an invitation to attend individual discussion meetings to discuss further detail. We will also provide a questionnaire to capture detailed feedback and will request return of this on conclusion of individual discussions.

Dorset Council is being advised by the Hubbub Group Ltd under this market engagement exercise to evaluate market responses. The Hubbub Group Ltd will participate in individual discussion meetings and undertake the compilation and evaluation of all information obtained as a result of this Pre Market Engagement exercise.

Please note any information supplied and the outcomes of discussions will be used for the purposes of this Pre Market Engagement exercise and will not be treated as confidential or commercially sensitive unless this is agreed in advance.

Output obtained from this market engagement exercise will be used to inform forward planning.

Procedure

Special regime

Concession

Contracting authority

Dorset Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PHCY-8926-WVVM

Dorset Council, County Hall, Colliton Park

Dorchester

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Contact name: Mr Adam Langston

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Region: UKK25 - Dorset

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government