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Contract

External Assurance Reviews of Local Authorities

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

UK7: Contract details notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-079356

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0551fe ([view related notices](#))

Published 3 December 2025, 1:21pm

Scope

Reference

CPD4128021

Description

To appoint an external Supplier that can quickly mobilise resources to coordinate and conduct external assurance reviews of local authorities where those local authorities are identified as carrying significant risk and / or exhibiting evidence of failure. The reviews may cover a range of subject areas that include but are not limited to: governance processes, financial management, financial sustainability, commercial and companies, and procurement and contract management. Reviews will include recommendations on appropriate steps local authorities could take to address the issues / risks identified.

It is expected that the areas of focus for each review will not be mutually exclusive, and the Supplier is expected to consider the interdependencies across the different areas as required. There may be additional focuses for specific local authorities that may be included in review scopes, for instance, specific demand pressures or investments / companies that are driving financial pressures.

External Assurance Reviews will be categorised as either (but not limited to)

"in depth assessment (finance and governance)" - will encompass a wide scope across a range of subject areas

"in depth assessment (finance)" - scopes which are principally focused on financial management & sustainability and/ or capital / debt & investments / assets, and improvement only

"in depth assessment (governance)" - reviews focused on the governance, culture and leadership of organisation or service delivery (and improvement) - with only limited focus on financial elements of the authority under view

"rapid review" (which could be financial or governance focused in nature)

Under this contract the Supplier will be expected to deliver against the following objectives:

Objective 1 - Delivering Reviews: To deliver to MHCLG completed external assurance reviews of local authorities to an agreed timeframe to enable timely actions to be taken in response to their findings;

Objective 2 - Consistency and Quality: To ensure consistency of quality, depth, and presentation of external assurance reviews, and that all reviews meet a good standard of written English;

Objective 3 - Constructive Working Relationships: To work constructively with local authorities subject to an external assurance review to ensure review analysis and findings are robust, and maintain as far as possible a collaborative working relationship between local authority, Supplier and MHCLG;

Objective 4 - Due Diligence to Reduce Legal Risk: To ensure that conflicts of interest are managed appropriately, and that the Supplier undertakes due diligence to reduce legal risk in all respects, this includes ensuring appropriate due diligence where a review implicates an identifiable individual.

Objective 5 - Resource Capacity: To ensure resource capacity and flexibility is provided so that reviews can continue to be delivered to the agreed timeframes, particularly where reviews are occurring concurrently.

Objective 6 - Expertise: To ensure Supplier reviewers / review teams have the necessary experience, expertise, qualifications and understanding of the local authority sector, reflecting the review scope may flex subject to the issues identified in individual local authorities.

Contract 1. External Assurance Reviews of Local Authorities

Supplier

- CIPFA BUSINESS LIMITED

Contract value

- £4,500,000 excluding VAT
- £5,400,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Date signed

25 November 2025

Contract dates

- 28 November 2025 to 1 December 2026
- Possible extension to 1 December 2028
- 3 years, 4 days

Description of possible extension:

There is an optional extension period of two years (+1+1).

The financial cap for the initial 12 months will be a maximum of £1,500,000 ex VAT.

Any extension period would be subject to requirements, a variation process, funding approval and performance of the supplier up to a maximum value of £3,000,000 ex VAT (for the optional extension years).

The maximum value of the contract including any extension years is £4,500,000 ex VAT.

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 66171000 - Financial consultancy services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Key performance indicators

Name	Description
Cost	Supplier Cost remains within agreed parameters - frequency will be per commission/invoice
Quality	Quality of reviews must provide assurance and expert analysis to support robust credible decisions by the authority on Exceptional Financial Support taking interventionist steps to ensure VfM/reduce Council's risk. Frequency will be per review/commission.

Name	Description
Time - In Depth Assessment	A draft of each in-depth assessment must be submitted within 5 weeks of commissioning (unless agreed by exception) Frequency will be per assessment.
Time - Rapid Reviews	A draft of each rapid review must be submitted by the end of week 2 from commissioning. Frequency will be per review.
Time - Final Reviews	Final reviews must be delivered within 6 - 8 weeks of commissioning (unless agreed by exception). Frequency will be per review.
Progress Reports	The supplier must provide fortnightly updates for each ongoing review to keep the authority informed of progress to include progress to date, risks / issues encountered and mitigations, and forecast delivery date. A project management template will be provided. Frequency will be fortnightly.
Social Value Commitment 1 - Workshops	Social Value Theme 3: Resilient, innovative and flexible supply chains: Support economic growth through enabling resilient businesses, opportunities for small businesses and voluntary, community and social enterprises. 3b. Collaborate in co-design and delivery with communities and anchor partners. 3bi. Number of engagement activities with the community, community representatives and or anchor institutions. Deliver a minimum of 8 workshops across CV writing, job readiness, grant applications, and Procurement Act 2023 awareness, co-designed with local authorities, anchor partners, and community groups to address local skills and organisational needs.

Name	Description
Social Value Commitment 2 - Participant Engagement & Outcomes	Social Value Theme 3: Resilient, innovative and flexible supply chains: Support economic growth through enabling resilient businesses, opportunities for small businesses and voluntary, community and social enterprises. 3b. Collaborate in co-design and delivery with communities and anchor partners. 3bi. Number of engagement activities with the community, community representatives and or anchor institutions. Achieve 128 hours of social value activity through workshops, ensuring that 80% of participants report increased confidence or skills and 50% take practical steps towards employment, grant applications, or community engagement

Other information

Applicable trade agreements

- Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Open procedure

Supplier

CIPFA BUSINESS LIMITED

- Companies House: 02376684
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PDXT-3827-YNGN

77 Mansell Street

London

E1 8AN

United Kingdom

Email: trackernotices@cipfa.org

Website: <http://www.cipfa.org>

Region: UKI42 - Tower Hamlets

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): Yes

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Supported employment provider: No

Public service mutual: No

Contract 1. External Assurance Reviews of Local Authorities

Contracting authority

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PWCX-8281-CLPR

2 Marsham Street

London United Kingdom

SW1P 4DF

United Kingdom

Email: commercial@communities.gov.uk

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government