65

Multi-Provider Framework Agreement for the Provision of Actuarial, Benefits and Governance Consultancy Services

NCCT43062

Invitation to Tender

**20 May 2025**

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# Context and requirement of the procurement

* 1. Context

Norfolk County Council, on its own behalf and on behalf of the Environment Agency (as Administering Authority of the Environment Agency Pension Fund), Essex County Council (as Administering Authority of the Essex Pension Fund), Hampshire County Council (as Administering Authority of the Hampshire Pension Fund), Surrey County Council (as Administering Authority of the Surrey Pension Fund) and Kent County Council (as Administering Authority of the Kent Pension Fund) wish to let a multi-provider, Framework Agreement for the provision of Actuarial, Benefits and Governance Consultancy Services primarily in support of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

* 1. Requirement

This Framework Agreement is divided into 5 Lots, bidders may bid for all or any of the following Lots:

* Lot 1 - Actuarial Services
* Lot 2 - Benefits Consultancy
* Lot 3 - Governance Consultancy
* Lot 4 - Funding Risk Advisory Services
* Lot 5 - Consultancy Services to Support Specialist Projects

Full details of the requirement can be found in the Service Specification, which forms a Schedule to the Terms and Conditions.

* 1. Overview of the Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a statutory, funded, defined benefit pension scheme established to provide pension benefits to local government and associated employees. The scheme is administered locally through 100 individual bodies, known as administering authorities (and in some contexts also known as scheme managers) across England, Wales and Scotland and NILGOSC in Northern Ireland. Each administering authority manages and administers at least one LGPS pension fund. In this specification LGPS administering authorities are referred to as the Contracting Authority.

As at 31 March 2024 the total membership of the Scheme in England and Wales was 6.68 million, spread across around 15,409 employers, and the total funds held stood at around £90 billion[[1]](#footnote-2). In the Northern Ireland LGPS at 31 March 2023, scheme membership was 169,490, spread across over 169 employers, and total funds held stood at around £10.463 billion[[2]](#footnote-3). In the Scottish LGPS at 31 March 2023, scheme membership was 657,207 and total funds held stood at around £60bn[[3]](#footnote-4).

* 1. Overview of the National LGPS Frameworks

The National LGPS Frameworks are well-established procurement vehicles for the LGPS with frameworks already in place for:

* Actuarial, Benefits and Governance Consultancy Services
* Additional Voluntary Contributions Services
* Global Custody Services
* Integrated Service Providers and Member Data Services
* Investment Management Consultancy Services
* Legal Services
* Pensions Administration Operational Support Services
* Pensions Administration Software
* Stewardship Services
* Transition Management Services

These frameworks have been designed to harness the collective purchasing power of the administering authorities that comprise the LGPS and other interested parties.

Due to the success of the previous iterations of the Actuarial, Benefits and Governance Consultancy Services Framework the authorities identified above wish to build upon this and are seeking to establish a new national framework for Actuarial, Benefits and Governance Consultancy Servies.

* 1. Strategic objectives

The Authorities named above wish to establish a multi-provider framework agreement for Actuarial, Benefits and Governance Consultancy Services to be available to all LGPS Funds and other bodies as defined in the Tender Notice, to provide national access to high quality efficient and effective services at the best possible price.

Users of the framework will appoint service providers by re-opening competition and running a further competition exercise amongst those providers identified within the relevant Lot of the framework as being capable of suppling the required services (all lots), or through direct award i.e. single tender to one provider (Lot 5 only). These competitions will be less expensive and time-consuming, for both customers and providers, than conventional procurements.

Benefits of the Framework Agreement include:

* Terms and conditions and the essence of evaluation models will have been pre-determined.
* There will be no need to repeat the qualification and selection phases.
* The Call-off process will be largely standardised.
* Framework users will be able to jointly procure under the framework by running a joint call-off.
* Framework user can appoint a single provider from multiple Lots.

## Expectations of the successful tenderers

Detailed evaluation criteria are set out in the invitation to tender document below, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they have:

* Extensive knowledge and experience of providing Actuarial, Benefits and Governance Consultancy Services to Pension Funds/Schemes/Investment Pools.
* Strong knowledge and experience of the regulatory framework and operational environment for LGPS Funds and their employer bodies.
* Excellent communication, partnership and negotiating skills.
* An innovative approach in delivering solutions to Framework users.

# Correspondence and clarifications

All correspondence and clarifications will be issued via In-Tend. Please make sure your details are correct and that you check the system regularly. We advise adding a second person or a team to your In-Tend account for contingency.

Any internal reviewers such as board members, trustees or partners who may raise issues must be engaged early to ensure points of clarification and any commercial issues that may affect your bid can be raised with us by the clarification date.

If you encounter any difficulties whilst using the system you can contact the In-Tend support team by phoning 0845 557 8079 or +44 (0) 114 407 0065 or by emailing [support@in-tend.co.uk](mailto:support@in-tend.co.uk).

# About this procurement document

* 1. The main parts of the first section of this procurement document

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Section | Purpose |
| Advice and instructions to Applicants | Tells you how to upload your application and what you must do if you wish to take part in the tender. |
| Procurement Process Information and Procurement Timeline | Sets out key details about the procurement process and the anticipated dates for key elements in the procurement process. |
| Contract Data | Tells you what the terms of any contract entered into under the tender will be. |
| Receipt and Evaluation of Applications | Tells you what we will do with applications we receive, how we will evaluate them and our rights and obligations in respect of the receipt and evaluation process. |
| Evaluation Information | Contains key information that we will use in the evaluation process, including how we will score responses. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Entering into contracts from and operation of the Framework** | Contains information about how contracts will be entered into from the Framework Agreement. |
| **Important Legal Notice** | Sets out the basis on which we will conduct the tender exercise. |

* 1. Forms for completion by Applicants

The forms that make up the parts of the document that are to be completed by Applicants are labelled A to Z. The forms that you must complete and return are contained in this document unless otherwise indicated.

**Please note that you, and any subcontractors involved in the delivery of the contract, must be registered on the Government’s Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender Service, or we will not be able to accept your bid.**

Further details about the forms are contained in sections 7 and 8, including which forms are and are not being used in this procurement. The forms labelled A to Z are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Section | Purpose |
| Form A – Details of Applicant | This tells us about you and your organisation and who is applying, including any sub-contractors supporting you. |
| Form B – Grounds for exclusion | This form tells us whether there are any grounds under which we will have to exclude you, and any sub-contractors you might rely on to deliver the contract, from bidding. |
| Form C – Compliance with minimum Standards | This form checks your experience and whether you hold the relevant experience and registrations where necessary. It includes minimum standards such as finance and Health and Safety and other checks where relevant to the contract. |
| Form D – Willingness and ability to comply with contractual requirements | This form checks whether you are prepared to enter into the contract without change and whether you hold the relevant insurances. |
| Form E – Shortlisting questions | Not used |
| Form F – Quality | This form seeks to determine how you will deliver the contract. |
| Form G – Price | This form is about the price you will charge for the service. Bidders are required to fill in the Excel spreadsheets attached and submit with their tender response. These will be the maximum prices that a bidder will be able to charge users of this Framework Agreement and they are contractually binding.  Under this Framework Agreement users of Lot 5 will be allowed to directly award to one supplier on the Framework Agreement without competing the requirement. Price will be a component when selecting the supplier to be awarded the contract. Bidders should therefore be aware that the price submitted as this stage will be used by users of the Framework in informing its decision to direct award. |
| Form Z – Applicant’s checklist and declaration | This form is your checklist to ensure that you have included everything required and your declaration that you are prepared to provide the contract as tendered, under the terms and conditions issued. |

* 1. The following documents are attached

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Purpose** |
| Framework Agreement and Call-off Terms and Conditions (Appendix 1) | **Framework Agreement** – These are the terms that govern the overarching agreement between the provider and Norfolk County Council as letting authority of the Framework.  **Call- Off Terms and Conditions** – The terms and conditions that will be used by users of the Framework Agreement when awarding a contract. This will form a Schedule of the Contract. |
| Specification and requirements | Tells you about the context for this procurement and the specification for the goods and/or services we require. This forms a Schedule of the Contract. |
| Form G Pricing Spreadsheet - Lot 1 Actuarial Services | Please enter your prices in the attached spreadsheet and return with your Invitation to Tender if you are bidding for Lot 1. |
| Form G Pricing Spreadsheet - Lot 2, Lot 3, Lot 4 and Lot 5 | Please enter your prices the attached spreadsheet and return with your Invitation to Tender if you are bidding for any or all of Lot 2, Lot 3, Lot 4 and Lot 5. |

* 1. Obligation to consider Small and Medium Enterprises

The Council has considered SMEs within the Framework Agreement:

* The procurement has been lotted; and
* Insurance requirements within the tender have been assessed as fair against the subject matter of the Framework Agreement; and
* Insurance at the levels required is not expected to be purchased until a contract is awarded; and
* Limits of liability in the Framework Agreement have been assessed as reasonable against the subject matter and value of the contract; and
* Performance management reporting is at the minimum required for the Council to be assured of effective delivery of contracts under the Framework Agreement.

# Advice and instructions to Applicants

* 1. Issues to consider before bidding

We suggest that Applicants consider the following issues before deciding whether to bid:

* 1. Have you read the Specification and the minimum requirements in Form C, and are you able to provide the service? If you are not certain, ensure you seek early clarification.
  2. If there are strict deadlines for implementation or delivery, are you able to meet them?
  3. Is there anything in the documents that you think would prevent you from bidding? If so, please request clarification to ensure there is not a miscommunication.
  4. Tender preparation

When preparing your tender, it is important to consider the following:

1. Have you read all the instructions, the documents attached and taken in to account any indicative budget provided in the documents or contract notice?
2. Are you registered on the Government’s Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender Service? [Central Digital Platform - factsheet (HTML) - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-act-2023-short-guides/central-digital-platform-factsheet-html)
3. Tenders should be clear and concise and in Form F must describe how you will provide the service being tendered rather than just stating that you will provide the service.
4. Bids that are ambiguous or generic in their response or do not describe how the service will be provided are unlikely to score well. In our experience, tailored solutions that have taken in to account the Council’s requirements in their answers usually score better than generic responses that have not.
5. If the word count is causing you significant issues with answering a question thoroughly, please raise this as a clarification.
6. Please note that the evaluation panel will be made up of people with different experiences and skills and you should take this into account when writing your response.
7. When completing the price schedule at Form G, have you ensured that your price is fully inclusive of all costs of providing the service in accordance with the contract? We cannot accept bids that have been caveated (see Instructions to Applicants below). If you are unclear about pricing, please seek clarification.
   1. Return of your application
8. If you intend to submit a Tender, please ensure that you arrange to return the documents by the date and time stated. The Council is under no obligations to accept late tenders.
9. You do not need to submit any of the first section of this Invitation to Tender: you only need to submit the Forms from page 45 onwards.
10. Please complete Part 1 and Part 4 of Form A and return it at the earliest opportunity if you intend to submit.

How to upload and submit your application

1. Log in to In-Tend and navigate to “My Tenders” under the “Tenders” tab near the top of the page. Locate the procurement that you are applying for and click “view details”.
2. Click on the tab where you found the tender documents for download. Depending on the procurement this may be labelled as “Request to Participate”, “Conditions of Participation”, “ITT” or “Invitation to Tender”.
3. Scroll down the page until you see a button in the centre of the screen entitled “Attach Documents”. Click on this and it will take you into your computer to select and attach files. Select the file you need, click “Open” and it will upload the document to the screen. Repeat these actions until everything you wish to attach as part of your application is displayed on the webpage, click on the “Submit Return” button.
4. If you have made a mistake or forgotten to upload a document, you can repeat this process. You may submit your application multiple times, but only the final submission will be evaluated.
5. We advise that you leave plenty of time for upload and submission of your documents to allow for any possible problems with internet or power.
   1. Instructions to Applicants

Applicants must follow all the numbered instructions below.

First steps

1. If you take part in this procurement exercise you will be bound by the terms stated in the Important legal notice. You should review this notice carefully.
2. Applicants should view the Procurement Privacy Notice on the Council’s website <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/open-data-fois-and-data-protection/data-protection/privacy-notices/procurement-service-privacy-notice> and must raise any concerns about the Privacy Notice and how personal information will be handled during the procurement process without delay.

Language

1. All questions, notices, tenders, supporting documents and correspondence are to be submitted in English.

The clarification process

1. If there is anything unclear or you think that you need more information, you must send in a clarification question as early as possible in the process and in any case before the final deadline given in the Procurement Process Information and Procurement Timeline. Questions must be submitted via In-Tend correspondence and must be associated with the correct project to receive a response. Clarification questions will be answered on a regular basis through the clarification facility on In-Tend. Please note, any clarifications received will be anonymised and shared with all Bidders who have expressed an interest.
2. Once the final deadline is passed, no new questions may be sent in but you will have a final chance to seek clarification of answers already given. You must submit any such request within the period stated in the Procurement Process Data.

Content of the application

1. In preparing your application you must assume that the evaluators know nothing about your organisation.
2. Throughout the application, you should reflect the Statement of Requirements or Service Specification. To assist you in achieving the highest scores, you should review the “Descriptors for the allocation of quality scores” in the Evaluation Data and write your answers accordingly.
3. You have an overriding obligation to exercise your skill and judgment, to ensure that your solution is fit for purpose and to warn us if, in your opinion, our proposed application of your solution would result in a poor or unacceptable outcome for us.
4. Different questions may be marked by different evaluators and not all evaluators will have read your entire application. The answer to each question must be self-contained. Answers such as “see answer to question x” are not acceptable. You must not include brochures, leaflets or other attachments unless specifically requested. If you do, they will not be read, except where an Applicant has submitted a completed European Single Procurement Document.
5. The forms for completion must be reproduced and completed, except where we say otherwise.
6. So that they are readable, answers must be in a minimum of 12-point font, with line spacing of 1.2 times.
7. You must keep to the given word or page limits for each question.
8. Documents must not contain any embedded objects which appear in the printed copy as icons, rather than in full.
9. It is your responsibility to make sure that your application is complete and unambiguous.
10. Bids must be your own original work and any bids that are plagiarised will be rejected. If you have collaborated with a third party to develop your response, this must be clearly explained within the response and any quoted material within a submission must be attributed. If you have used AI, Large Language Models or machine learning software to generate parts of your response, you must declare which elements of the bid were so developed, and that the bid is an accurate reflection of how you will provide the goods, services or works bid.

No caveats or qualifications

1. Your tender must not be caveated or qualified. The following are some examples of caveats or qualifications:
2. statements that you have made certain assumptions and that, if these assumptions prove incorrect, you may wish to change price, timescales, quality, terms and conditions or other aspects of your offer;
3. statements that you do not comply with any mandatory requirement of the specification;
4. statements that you do not accept, or wish to modify, any aspect of the Contract or that any variant or additional term or condition will apply.

Completion of the application

1. You should not complete and submit your application until after the clarifications have closed.
2. Your application must consist of all the documents listed in the checklist at Form Z. You must include all attachments requested but should include no other documents (and any other document will be disregarded by the Council when conducting its evaluation).
3. On finalising your application, you must complete the checklist at Form Z, and then sign the declaration, scan and upload it as part of your submission.

Submission

1. Your submission must be uploaded and submitted before the deadline specified in the Procurement Process Data. We are under no obligation to consider any application which arrives after the deadline.

Multiple bids

1. Multiple applications from a given prime contractor or consortium will not be evaluated by the Council.
2. An applicant may act as the proposed prime contractor for one bid, and a proposed sub-contractor for another.
3. However, an applicant may act as:

* the proposed prime contractor for one bid, and a proposed sub-contractor for another; or
* the proposed prime contractor for one bid, and a proposed consortium member for another; or
* a consortium member for more than one bid.

1. Where an Applicant is involved in more than one bid, all relevant forms must be completed for each bid.
2. Where they form part of more than one bid, Applicants shall pay particular attention to the need to avoid collusion in pricing and commercial terms.
3. In particular, no Applicant shall be involved in the setting of the price to be tendered to the Council for more than one bid.

Sub-contracting arrangements

1. Where the Applicant proposes to use one or more sub-contractors to deliver some or all of the contract requirements, Part 3 of Form A should be used to provide details of the proposed bidding model that includes members of the supply chain, the percentage of work being delivered by each sub-contractor and the key contract deliverables that each sub-contractor will be responsible for.
2. Where you are you are relying on a sub-contractor or sub-contractors (“relying on” for the purposes of this procurement means you are relying on the technical and professional ability of a sub-contractor(s) to meet the criteria stated in this document) then:
3. Each sub-contractor you are relying on must be registered on the Central Digital Platform or the bid cannot be accepted.
4. Each sub-contractor you are relying on should complete Forms A and B and all questions of Form C, apart from C1.
5. Question Form C1 should be completed by the lead contractor being clear about which sub-contractor or sub-contractors experience/ technical and/or professional ability they are relying on to meet that particular criteria.
6. The Council recognises that arrangements in relation to sub-contracting may be subject to future change and may not be finalised until a later date. However, Applicants should be aware that where information provided to the Council indicates that sub-contractors are to play a significant role in delivering key contract requirements, any changes to those sub-contracting arrangements may affect the ability of the Applicant to proceed with the procurement process or to provide the supplies and/or services required. Applicants should therefore notify the Council immediately of any change in the proposed sub-contractor arrangements. The Council reserves the right to deselect the Applicant prior to any award of contract, based on an assessment of the updated information.

**Offer capable of acceptance**

1. If we appoint you to the Framework all statements and commitments made by you in your tender shall be binding upon you.
2. Your tender must constitute an offer to provide the supplies, works or services specified in this Invitation to Tender in accordance with the contractual terms referred to in the Contract Data, as amended by any clarification response issued by the Council before the tender submission date. Your offer must remain open for acceptance for the period stated in the Procurement Process Data.
3. We may accept your offer by writing to you appointing you to the Framework, at which point a binding agreement will exist between you and us without any need for further formalities.
4. However, without prejudice to the enforceability of the above agreement we may require you to execute the agreement as a deed after award and you must do so promptly on request. We will not agree any modification to the agreement at this stage.

**Devolution and Local Government Review**

1. Norfolk County Council has joined the government’s Devolution Priority Programme. This process has the potential to lead to the establishment of a county combined authority for Norfolk and Suffolk, with strategic powers, headed by an elected mayor. A consultation is under way.
2. Government has also invited participation by Norfolk in the Local Government Review. This process has the potential to lead to unitary local government in Norfolk.
3. One of these changes could happen without the other. The contract may be assigned or novated to any successor authority(ies) to Norfolk County Council or to any joint body incorporating or formed by any such successor. The County Council or a successor authority or joint body may order services on behalf of other local authorities serving any area within Norfolk's current geographical boundaries.

# Procurement Process Information and Procurement Timeline

* 1. Timetable and information

The procurement timetable, outlined below, is for information and potentially subject to change. The Council reserves the right to amend any aspect of the timetable during the procurement and evaluation process.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ****Information**** | Details |
| ****Procurement reference number**** | NCCT43062 |
| ****Procurement title**** | Multi-Provider Framework Agreement for the Provision of Actuarial, Benefits and Governance Consultancy Services |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date contract notice dispatched to publisher** | Tuesday 20 May 2025 |
| **Procurement procedure** | Open procedure as defined in the in the Procurement Regulations 2024 |

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| --- | --- |
| **Final deadline for submission of clarification questions relating to ITT** | 2pm UK time on Wednesday 18 June 2025 |
| **Deadline to request further explanation about clarification answers (no new questions to be introduced)** | Midnight UK time on the third working day after the Council sends its final answers to the clarification questions received before the above deadline |
| **Deadline for submission of tender documents** | 2pm UK time on Tuesday 15 July 2025 |
| **Expected date for issuing Contract Award notice and for standstill period to commence** | Tuesday 7 October 2025 |
| **Expected date for standstill period to finish** | Midnight UK time on Monday 20 October 2025 |
| **Framework Award** | Tuesday 21 October 2025 |
| **Service Commencement** | Monday 10 November 2025 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Contracting Authority’s name and address** | | Procurement Sourcing Team  Norfolk County Council  Floor LG County Hall  Martineau Lane  Norwich NR1 2DH  United Kingdom  **DO NOT SEND ANY CORRESPONDENCE BY POST** |
| **Correspondence** | | All correspondence and clarifications regarding the procurement should go through In-Tend: <http://In-Tendhost.co.uk/norfolkcc> |
| **Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012** | The Authority has considered (pursuant to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012) whether to explicitly seek social value through this procurement, but has decided that due to the nature of the service and the subject matter, that it is not appropriate on this occasion. However, applicants should refer to 7.4.  Social Value may be considered as part of individual Call-Offs. | |
| **Address for submission of tender documents** | | All tenders must be submitted via the In-Tend portal. |
| **Period for which offers must remain open for acceptance** | | 90 days from the tender submission deadline |
| **Award decision and standstill process** | | The Council shall have no obligation to Applicants concerning debriefing beyond those contained in the Procurement Regulations 2024. The Council will observe a standstill period and will not appoint to the Framework until after midnight on the eighth working day from when the contract award notice has been published. |

# Contract Data

* 1. Lots

This procurement has been split into lots. You may bid for any or all lots. The lots are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ****Number**** | ****Lot Title**** |
| 1 | **Actuarial Services** |
| 2 | **Benefits Consultancy** |
| 3 | **Governance Consultancy** |
| 4 | **Funding Risk Advisory Services** |
| 5 | **Consultancy Services to Support Specialist Projects** |

* 1. Contract information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ****Contract information**** | Details |
| **Frameworkcontract Term** | Contracts awarded under the Framework may have a maximum total duration of 10 years. No contract awarded from the Framework will be permitted to extend beyond 9 November 2043 and must be awarded during the term of the Framework. |
| **Framework commencement date** | The Framework will commence on the day we send you our formal award letter accepting your application to the Framework |
| **Required Service Commencement Date** | Monday 10 November 2025 |
| **Term** | 96 months from the Required Service Commencement Date (subject to more than one provider being appointed to each Lot of the Framework).  In the event that only one supplier is appointed to any individual Lot during the open Framework period then the maximum term for the Framework will be 4 years. |
| **Open Framework** | This is an Open Framework Agreement and as such it is subject to section 49 of the Procurement Act 2023 with regards to reopening of the Framework, evaluation of bids, and the term of the scheme of Frameworks. |

* 1. Framework specific conditions

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ****Framework specifics**** | Details |
| **Framework contracts term** | This is an Open Framework Agreement under section 49 of the [Procurement Act 2023](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/54/section/49). Contracts awarded under the Framework may have a maximum total duration of 8 years.  No contract awarded from the Framework will be permitted to extend beyond 9 November 2043.  The Framework will be re-opened at the following points:   * Once during the period of 3 years from award of the first Framework under the scheme, and, * Within a period of 5 years beginning on the award of the second Framework scheme. * The final Framework will expire at the end of the period of eight years beginning with the day on which the first Framework under the scheme is awarded.   At the point of re-opening the Framework, the opportunity will be advertised on Find a Tender Service in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023.  You will be invited to apply to join the new Framework Agreement.  You must confirm you wish to be considered to join the new Framework Agreement in the scheme of Frameworks.  You can choose not to resubmit a tender and maintain your assessment scoring from the award of the previous Framework Agreement which will be used for evaluation purposes. There is no guarantee of reappointment to the Framework.  You can choose to submit a new tender and you will be evaluated for appointment to the new Framework Agreement in the scheme of Frameworks on that basis. There is no guarantee of reappointment to the Framework.  You can choose not to not join the new Framework.  In the event that only one supply is appointed to any individual Lot during the open Framework period then the maximum term for the Framework will be 4 years. |
| **User Organisations** | The Framework Agreement is being let by Norfolk County Council as the contracting authority, and can be used by:   * Norfolk County Council and its agents * Any successor body to the Council including any company formed by the Council to carry out its National Frameworks functions. * Any organisation the Council outsources its National Frameworks requirements to. * Any public body with which the Council enters into pooling arrangements.   The Council is working closely with the following authorities, who have expressed an intention to procure services under the Framework (including itself):   * The environment Agency (as Administering Authority of the Environment Agency Pension fund) * Essex County Council (as Administering Authority of the Essex Pension Fund) * Hampshire County Council * Kent County Council (as Administering Authority of the Kent Pension Fund) * Surrey County Council (as Administering Authority of the Surrey Pension Fund)   In addition to those listed above, the Framework may also be used by:   * any LGPS administering authorities as defined in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/2356) (as amended) including the Firefighters' Pension Scheme and Police Pension Schemes and any of their participating employing authorities, or in relation to the LGPS in Scotland, any administering authority and any of their scheme employers as defined in the Local Government Pension Scheme (Scotland) Regulations 2018 (SSI 2018/141) (as amended), * NILGOSC in Northern Ireland and employing authorities as defined in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 (SRNI 2014/188) (as amended), * the Board of the Pension Protection Fund <http://www.pensionprotectionfund.org.uk>), * Local Government Association (LGA) (https://www.local.gov.uk/) * any other administering authority or scheme manager of a public-sector pension scheme or any public-sector body that requires pensions related services, and * any LGPS Fund(s) or groups of funds, or any bodies, organisations or companies established by them for the purpose of operating on a collective basis. |
| **Duration of the agreement** | The duration of the open Framework Agreement may be affected in the event that only one supplier is appointed to any iterations of the Framework Agreement during its proposed term, in according with the Procurement Act section 49(6). |
| **Maximum number to be appointed to the Framework Agreement** | A maximum of applicants who will be admitted to the Framework.  Lot 1, Actuarial Services – 5  Lot 2, Benefits Consultancy – 6  Lot 3, Governance Consultancy – 6  Lot 4, Fund Risk Advisory Services - 6  Lot 5, Consultancy Services to Support Specialist Projects – 10 (we reserve the right to appoint sufficient providers to cover all elements of the specification of requirements for Lot 5). |

# Receipt and evaluation of Applications by the Council

General

* 1. We will admit, evaluate and where appropriate reject Applications reasonably, impartially and as set out below. We make no other commitments concerning our admission, evaluation or rejection of Applications.
  2. New and forgotten documents may not be able to be considered after the tender deadline has passed.

Clarification

* 1. It is your responsibility to make sure that your Application is clear, complete and unambiguous. We may ask you to clarify your answers provided that in our judgment this does not adversely affect the integrity and fairness of the exercise, but we are not obliged to do so and other bidders may be notified that clarifications have been sought and what it was regarding.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

* 1. The Authority is not specifically seeking to deliver social value for its area of operations via this Framework Agreement, however relevant environmental or other social considerations are included in the specification.

Compliance with Instructions to Applicants

* 1. You must comply with the Instructions to Applicants or you risk your Application being rejected.

Grounds for exclusion (Form B)

* 1. If any of the grounds for exclusion set out in Form B applies, we will normally reject your Application (and tell you that we have done so).
  2. If any bidder appears on the Government’s debarment list, that supplier will be excluded.
  3. Exceptionally, and in accordance with any relevant legislation, we may exercise our discretion and permit your Application to be considered if any of the discretionary grounds for exclusion apply.

Compliance with minimum standards (Form C)

* 1. We will check that you have provided, in your answers on Form C, evidence that you meet the minimum standards set out there. We will not be able to further consider your application if in our opinion you do not meet the minimum standards.

Willingness and ability to comply with contractual requirements (Form D)

* 1. We will check that you have confirmed that you can enter into the contract under the specified terms and conditions (without modification) and hold appropriate levels of insurance (or are willing to obtain it).

Form E (not used)

Award of Overall Quality Score (Form F)

* 1. For each question in Form F, we will award a mark based on the Descriptors stated in the Evaluation Data (unless we state, on Form F, that we are using different descriptors for that question).
  2. Each question in Form F is weighted. The weightings are set out in the Evaluation Data.
  3. The score for each question will be divided by the maximum possible score for that question and then multiplied by the individual weighting to give a weighted score.
  4. For example, if a score of 3 out of 5 is given and the question is worth 10% of total marks (3/5\*10), then the weighted score will be 6.
  5. We will sum the weighted Scores to give an Overall Quality Score.

Quality Threshold

* 1. We will reject any tender which does not achieve an Overall Quality Score greater than or equal to the Quality Threshold stated in the Evaluation Data.

Evaluation of price (Form G)

* 1. Price does not carry a separate weighting as this procurement will use the Price per Quality Point methodology to determine the winning Tenderer:

**Price per Quality Point = Total Weighted Price/Total Quality Score (PPQP)**

* 1. To give a Total Score the overall weighted price will be divided by the Overall Quality Score.

Example Outcome

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Supplier | Total Weighted Price | Total Quality Score | Price per quality Point |
| **Supplier A** | **£300** | **80** | **£3.75** |
| Supplier B | £280 | 70 | £4.00 |
| Supplier C | £350 | 80 | £4.38 |
| Supplier D | £250 | 60 | £4.17 |

Supplier A would be the winner with the lowest price per quality point score.

* 1. In the event of a tie break situation (i.e. one in which more than one Tenderer may be the winning Tenderer), the following methodology will be used to determine the overall winning Tenderer.

1. Achieved the highest Total Quality Score; if this does not define a winner then we will consider
2. The lowest Total Weighted Price.
   1. The Pricing Schedule is divided into two spreadsheets. One contains the pricing questions for Lot 1 and the other contains the pricing questions for Lot 2, Lot 3, Lot 4 and Lot 5. Please complete all sections relevant to the Lot/s you are bidding for.
   2. Pricing for Lot 1, Actuarial Services consists of 3 exercises (G1, G2 and G3) tenderers must provide prices for each activity set out therein, this price is then multiplied by the weighting shown to give a Total Weighted Price for each activity.

The Total Weighted Price for each activity will be added together to give an overall Total Weighted Price for that exercise. The Weighted Price for each exercise will be added together to give an overall Total Weighted Price for Lot 1 which will be used for evaluation.

Exercise G1.1 is worth 30% of the Total Weighted Price, Exercise G1.2 is worth 30% of the Total Weighted Price and Exercise G1.3 is worth 40%. G1.4 is for information only and will not be evaluated.

* 1. Pricing for Lot 2, Benefits Consultancy (G2.1) consists of daily rates excluding expenses for each of the roles shown (The Total Weighted Score of 100% is split across multiple roles, these will be added together to give an overall Total Weighted Price for Lot 2 which will be used for evaluation). (G2.2) Weekly and four weekly rates excluding expenses are requested for information only and will not be evaluated.
  2. Pricing for Lot 3, Governance Consultancy (G3.1) consists of daily rates excluding expenses for each of the roles shown. The Total Weighted Price of 100% is split across multiple roles, these will be added together to give an overall Total Weighted Price for lot 3 which will be used for evaluation). (G3.2) Weekly and four weekly rates excluding expenses are requested for information only and will not be evaluated.
  3. Pricing for Lot 4 Funding Risk Advisory Services (G4.1) consists of annual licencing fees Exercise. G4.1 is worth 35% of the Total Weighted Price and (G4.2) maximum daily rates excluding expenses for each of the roles shown. The Total Weighted score of 65% is split across multiple roles, these will be added together to give a Total Weighted Price for G4.2. The Total Weighted Price for G4.1 and G4.2 will be added together to give an overall Total Weighted Price which will be used for evaluation. (G4.3) Weekly and four weekly rates excluding expenses are requested for information only and will not be evaluated.
  4. Pricing for Lot 5, Consultancy Services to Support Specialist Projects (G5.1) consists of daily rates excluding expenses for each of the roles shown (The Total Weighted Price of 100% is split across multiple roles, these will be added together to give a Total Weighted Price which will be used for evaluation). (G5.2) Weekly and four weekly rates excluding expenses are requested for information only and will not be evaluated.

Abnormally low tenders

* 1. We may reject tenders which we consider to be abnormally low, having first followed any statutory process which applies.

Appointment to the Framework Agreement

* 1. We will (subject to our right not to make an award at all) first make a provisional award to the Applicants achieving the lowest Price Per Quality Point (PPQP) score to the stated maximum number as contained in the Invitation to Tender. The standstill period will commence when we publish the contract award notice.
  2. Our contract award decision is not binding on us and we may decide not to appoint to the Framework at all or, in the event of an error or misjudgement being identified, change our award decision prior to appointment to the Framework.
  3. Our appointment to the Framework, communicated to the Applicant by us in writing, will constitute acceptance of the Applicant’s offer and a deed will then exist between us and the Applicant on the terms set out in this Invitation to Tender. We may though require the successful Applicant to execute a written agreement between us.
  4. We will check whether you have signed the declaration in Form Z as part of the evaluation process. If the declaration is not signed, we will be unable to appoint you to the Framework.

# Evaluation Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ****Evaluation information**** | Where |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Grounds for exclusion** | | As set out in Form B |
| **Minimum standards including technical and professional capacity** | As set out in Form C | |
| **Willingness and ability to comply with contractual requirements** | As set out in Form D | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ****Award Criteria - Weightings for quality**** | |
| **Overall Quality weighting** | 100% |
| Total | 100% |

**Weighting of quality questions applicable to all lots (Form F1)**

For each question in Section F1, you only need to answer the question once. Your score for that answer will apply to all lots for which you are bidding.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ****Reference**** | ****Subject area**** | ****Weighting as a percentage of the marks available**** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| F1.1 | **Sharing research and added value** | 5% |
| F1.2 | Performance Management | 10% |
| F1.3 | Working with other service providers | 8% |
| F1.4 | Client Relationship Management | 9% |
| F1.5 | Environmental, Social Governance | 5% |

**Weighting of Lot specific quality questions Lot 1 Actuarial Services (Form F2)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ****Reference**** | ****Subject area**** | ****Weighting as a percentage of the marks available**** |
| **F2.1** | **Maintaining knowledge and understanding** | **12%** |
| **F2.2** | **Key Personnel** | **12%** |
| **F2.3** | **Changing shape of public service delivery** | **10%** |
| **F2.4** | **Statutory Services and Specialist Advice and Support** | **12%** |
| **F2.5** | **Future Sustainability of the LGPS** | **11%** |
| **F2.6** | **Technology** | **6%** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Total** | **Sections F1 plus F2** | 100**%** |
| **Quality threshold**  **(minimum acceptable overall quality score)** | | 60 marks out of 100 |

**Weighting of lot specific quality questions Lot 2 Benefits Consultancy (Form F3)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ****Reference**** | ****Subject area**** | ****Weighting as a percentage of the marks available**** |
| **F3.1** | **Maintaining knowledge and understanding** | **17%** |
| **F3.2** | **Key Personnel** | **16%** |
| **F3.3** | **Changing shape of public service delivery** | **14%** |
| **F3.4** | **Engagement and specialist advice and support** | **16%** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Total** | **Sections F1 plus F3** | 100% |
| **Quality threshold**  **(minimum acceptable overall quality score)** | | 60 marks out of 100 |

**Weighting of lot specific quality questions Lot 3 Governance Consultancy (Form F4)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ****Reference**** | ****Subject area**** | ****Weighting as a percentage of the marks available**** |
| **F4.1** | **Maintaining knowledge and understanding** | **16%** |
| **F4.2** | **Key Personnel** | **16%** |
| **F4.3** | **Changing shape of public service Delivery** | **15%** |
| **F4.4** | **Engagement and specialist advice and support** | **16%** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Total** | **Sections F1 plus F4** | 100% |
| **Quality threshold**  **(minimum acceptable overall quality score)** | | 60 marks out of 100 |

**Weighting of lot specific quality questions Lot 4 Funding Risk Advisory Services (Form F5)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ****Reference**** | ****Subject area**** | ****Weighting as a percentage of the marks available**** |
| **F5.1** | **Maintaining knowledge and understanding** | **15%** |
| **F5.2** | **Key Personnel** | **14%** |
| **F5.3** | **Changing shape of public service pensions governance** | **10%** |
| **F5.4** | **Tools and Approaches** | **8%** |
| **F5.5** | **Management and Mitigation of Risks** | **8%** |
| **F5.6** | **Policy Development** | **8%** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Total** | **Sections F1 plus F5** | **100%** |
| **Quality threshold**  **(minimum acceptable overall quality score)** | | 60 marks out of 100 |

**Weighting of lot specific quality questions Lot 5 Consultancy Services to Support Specialist Projects (Form F6)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ****Reference**** | ****Subject area**** | ****Weighting as a percentage of the marks available**** |
| **F6.1** | **Maintaining knowledge and understanding** | **16%** |
| **F6.2** | **Key Personnel** | **16%** |
| **F6.3** | **Changing Shape of Public Service Delivery** | **15%** |
| **F6.4** | **Project Management Methodology** | **16%** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Total** | **Sections F1 plus F6** | 100**%** |
| **Quality threshold**  **(minimum acceptable overall quality score)** | | 60 marks out of 100 |

**Descriptors for the award of quality marks**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The mark to be awarded is that for which the descriptors most closely match the tenderer’s response** | **Mark awarded** |
| An excellent response that is realistic, appropriately detailed and specific. Any weakness is immaterial and:   * the approach embodies accepted good practice in all material respects and offers excellent levels of (as appropriate) functionality, performance, environmental performance, ease of use and other relevant characteristics; * the response is tailored to the requirement wherever relevant and, where relevant, to specific circumstances; * all material aspects of the question are fully answered, and the approach described fully meets all material aspects of the requirement; * where relevant the proposal is ambitious in terms of outcomes, and sets out a convincing, coherent and evidence-based approach to achieving the outcomes claimed; and * where relevant, the organisation, capacity, qualification and experience of staff assigned to performing the contract are excellent. | 5 |
| A good response that is realistic, appropriately detailed and specific and with only minor weaknesses, where:   * the approach generally embodies accepted good practice and offers good levels of (as appropriate) functionality, performance, environmental performance, outcomes, ease of use and other relevant characteristics; * with minor or no exceptions, the response is tailored to the requirement where relevant and, where relevant, to specific circumstances; * all material aspects of the question are fully answered, and the approach described meets the material aspects of the requirement, with no or minor exceptions; * where relevant the proposal seeks to deliver a good level of outcome, and sets out a convincing, coherent and evidence-based approach to achieving the outcomes claimed; and * where relevant, the organisation, capacity, qualification and experience of staff assigned to performing the contract are good, with only minor deficiencies. | 4 |
| A satisfactory response that is realistic in all material respects, and that is at least sufficiently detailed and specific to give general clarity about what is to be delivered and how. There are some weaknesses, but all of the following requirements are met:   * the approach does not materially conflict with accepted good practice and generally offers acceptable levels of (as appropriate) functionality, performance, environmental performance, ease of use and other relevant characteristics; * all material aspects of the question are fully answered, and the approach described meets the material aspects of the requirement, with no or minor exceptions; * while the response may be somewhat generic, it is not inappropriate to the specific circumstances or too high-level to give reasonable clarity and confidence; * where relevant the proposal seeks to deliver acceptable outcomes, and sets out a reasonably convincing, coherent and evidence-based approach to achieving the outcomes claimed; and * where relevant, the organisation, capacity, qualification and experience of staff assigned to performing the contract are generally acceptable. | 3 |
| A rather deficient response that is not of a sufficient standard to meet all the bullet points set out above for a score of ‘3’ but that is not considered so unsatisfactory as to raise serious doubts as to the prudence of entering into a contract incorporating the response, as further described in the descriptor below for a score of ‘1’. | 2 |
| A response which shows **some or all** of the following characteristics such that in the round a prudent contracting authority would have serious doubts about entering into a contract incorporating the response:   * there being insufficient detail or specificity to be clear, wholly or for a material aspect of the requirement, what is to be delivered and how; * the approach materially conflicting with accepted good practice and/or failing to offer acceptable levels of (as appropriate) functionality, performance, environmental performance, ease of use or other relevant characteristics; * material parts of the question(s) not being answered or material parts of the response being unrealistic or the approach described, in some material respect, appearing not to meet the requirement or not to comply with the law; * the approach described appearing, in some material respects, not to deliver expected levels of (as appropriate) functionality, performance, environmental performance, ease of use or other relevant characteristics; * the approach conflicting with accepted good practice in some material respects; * the approach being in material part inappropriately generic or a poor fit with the specific circumstances or context; * the approach being unacceptably unambitious in terms of outcomes or the approach to achieving the claimed outcomes being materially unconvincing; and/or * where relevant, the organisation, capacity, qualifications and/or experience of staff assigned to performing the contract not reaching the expected levels in some material respects.   **If any response receives a score of ‘1’, the entire submission will be rejected.** | 1 |
| No response or a response with insufficient content to allow meaningful evaluation or a fundamentally unrealistic response or a clearly unacceptable response where the weaknesses, individually or in aggregate, are fundamental.  **If any response receives a score of ‘0’, the entire submission will be rejected.** | 0 |

**When evaluators are reviewing your response, they will be considering the following points, as relevant to the question.**

* Detail, completeness and specificity
  + How detailed is the answer about what is to be delivered and how?
  + Are all aspects of the question covered?
  + Is the answer sufficiently specific and, where relevant, tailored to the requirement and the context?
* Is the proposal realistic – for example in (as relevant) timescales, resourcing, identification and mitigation of risks and obstacles, and if relevant stakeholder engagement, cultural fit and/or technical approach?
* Does the proposal accord with good practice?
* Does the proposal meet the requirement in all material respects?
* Is the proposal suitably ambitious in terms of outcomes, and to what extent does it set out a convincing, coherent and evidence-based approach to achieving the outcomes claimed?
* As relevant, the functionality, performance, environmental performance, ease of use and other relevant characteristics provided by the proposal.
* Where relevant to the question, evaluate the organisation, qualification and experience of staff assigned to performing the task. For example:
  + Is the structure appropriate to the service to be delivered?
  + Is the balance of front-line, management and support staff appropriate?
  + Are key staff suitably qualified and experienced?

# Interviews

We may carry out interviews as part of the evaluation process if required. We will interview those Applicants who have the potential to be appointed to the Framework.

Where required, interviews will take place via Microsoft Teams on the date given in the Procurement Process Data. The dates will be confirmed as soon as possible.

Applicants should ensure that the following people are present for interviews:

* The person accountable on behalf of the Applicant for this Framework.
* One other representative who would have overall responsibility for the delivery of services for contracts let under this Framework.

The interview will be used to clarify points in your tender and check that there is a common understanding of our requirement and how your solution on will meet it. The scores for each answer will be revisited to ensure that the scores accurately reflect the quality of your proposal. Further information will be provided before the interview.

# Entering into contracts from and operation of the framework

A Framework Agreement is a contract between a contracting authority and one or more suppliers that provides for the future award of contracts by contracting authorities listed in section 6.3 above to the supplier or suppliers.

When entering into contracts from the Framework Agreement, the Council and other framework users will use the call-off terms and conditions included as a Schedule to the Terms and Conditions of Contract in accordance with the Framework Agreement.

Please note that your response to this application will form part of the supplier catalogue provided to users of the Framework.

* 1. Operation of the Open Framework Agreement

Whenever the Framework Agreement is reopened, the award of that new Framework Agreement will effectively close the existing agreement and create a new Framework Agreement.

At the point of re-opening the Framework, you will be requested to confirm that you wish to remain on the Framework, and whether you wish to maintain the assessment scoring from your previous tender or submit a new tender.

Full instructions will be provided at the point of re-opening the Framework Agreement.

* 1. Contract quantities

Please note that there is no guarantee of work.

* 1. Awarding contracts from the Framework

Each time a framework user has a requirement it will either:

* hold a competition involving all suppliers capable of performing the contract. This will involve inviting bids from Suppliers on the Framework and will be scaled to the size and complexity of the requirement (“Further Competition”) Contracting Authorities may appoint a single provider for one or more Lots.

or

* directly award a contract to one supplier from information supplied in this Invitation to Tender and from the prices submitted in the price schedule (“Direct Award”) (Lot 5 only)

The Council and any nominated users of the Framework Agreement reserve the right to conduct Further Competitions using the Competitive Flexible procedure where appropriate.

* 1. Duration of Call-Off Contracts

Contracts awarded under the Framework may have a maximum total duration of 10 years. No contract awarded from the Framework will be permitted to extend beyond 13 June 2043 and must be awarded during the term of the Framework.

* 1. Setting the evaluation criteria for Further Competitions

Users of the framework will be able to refine, but not fundamentally alter, the criteria specified below at 10.6. Each framework user will be able to decide what percentage of marks it wants to allocate to each of the evaluation criteria, within the maximum and minimum amounts allowed.

* 1. The criteria for further competitions

The award criteria for further competitions will be set within the ranges indicated in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Evaluation criteria | Minimum and maximum % | Sub-criteria | Sub-criteria % of overall score |
| Quality | Can be between 50% and 80%  ***or***  100% if using Price Per Quality Point | Actuarial Calculations and Monitoring  Providing Information and Advice  Working with Stakeholders  Reviewing Processes, Structures and Policies  Supporting Projects and Provisions of Services | To be determined at further competition |
| Social Value, climate change and carbon reduction (if required) | Can be between 0% and 60% | To be determined at further competition | To be determined at further competition |
| Cost | Can be between 50% and 20%  ***or***  not applicable if using Price Per Quality Point |  | To be determined at further competition |
| Total | 100% |  |  |

* 1. Direct contract award (Lot 5 only)

The Council reserves the right for users of the framework to conduct a Direct Award process in addition to the further competition route, where the requirement can clearly be met through information supplied in this Invitation to Tender by a single Supplier.

Direct Awards will be made based on the information supplied in Applicants’ responses to this Invitation to Tender and from the prices submitted in the price schedule, and will take into account:

* The services offered in the Invitation to Tender aligned with the specific requirement.
* The price(s) quoted in the Price Schedule
* **Any capacity constraints indicated within the Framework tender response.**

**Where a Provider is unable to fulfil the requirement at direct contract award, the next most appropriate Provider will be awarded the contract.**

# Important legal notice

**No implied contract**

* 1. Norfolk County Council (“the Council” or, where the context so requires, “We”) does not make any binding commitment to actual or potential tenderers (“Applicants” or, where the context so requires “you”) or to any other party about its conduct of this procurement exercise, other than to abide by its statutory obligations and the express terms of this Important Legal Notice.

**Acceptance of conditions**

* 1. Any Applicant who participates in this procurement exercise shall be deemed to accept the above condition and the conditions set out below. These conditions form the entire understanding between the parties about the conduct of the tender exercise.
  2. The Council will not accept any change to the terms of this legal notice and in the event that any Applicant submits any tender or notice which seeks to change these conditions the purported change shall be void, even if the Council considers the Applicant’s completed request to participate or tender.

**Communications, information and notices**

* 1. Applicants shall not, in connection with this procurement exercise, rely on any communication from the Council (including without limitation any notice published by the Council and any information published on any web site) unless it specifically states that it concerns this procurement exercise and bears the reference number stated on the front page of this document. Applicants shall not rely on any communication which is not in writing.
  2. Information supplied by the Council is subject to constant updating and amendment in the future and is necessarily selective and is supplied for general guidance in the preparation of tenders. It does not purport to contain all of the information which Applicants may require and Applicants must satisfy themselves by their own investigations about the accuracy of such information.
  3. The Council has taken reasonable steps to ensure, as at the date of each document supplied by the Council in connection with this procurement (“Procurement Document”), that the facts which are contained in or provided with each such document are true and accurate in all material respects. But the Council does not make any representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of the Procurement Documents, or the reasonableness of any assumptions on which they may be based. The Council accepts no liability to Applicants however arising, whether resulting from the use of the information provided, or from any omissions from or deficiencies in the information. As such, the Council cannot accept responsibility for any inaccurate information obtained by Applicants.
  4. Any notice from any person in connection with this procurement exercise must be sent to the Contact Name and Address stated in the Procurement Process Data below in accordance with the relevant timescales.

**Amendments to the procurement process**

* 1. The Council may at its sole discretion change any aspect of, or stop this procurement exercise at any point and if it stops the exercise (or the procurement of any lot or lots therein) need not provide any Applicant with the scores allocated in any marking exercise already undertaken or the reasons for the allocation of those scores.

**Applicants’ costs**

* 1. The Council will not under any circumstances be liable to pay Applicants for any costs incurred as a result of their participating in this procurement exercise.

**Standstill period and contract award notice**

* 1. The Council shall have no obligation to Applicants concerning debriefing beyond those contained in the Procurement Regulations 2024. The Council will observe a standstill period and will not formally appoint to the Framework until after midnight on the eighth working day beginning with the day when the contract award notice is published.
  2. Applicants hereby agree that they will not reveal the Council’s provisional award decision to any person (other than staff, Directors, trustees or professional advisers who have a need to know) until the completion of the standstill period, and that they will place a similar obligation on any person to whom they notify the Council’s provisional decision.

**Confidentiality, Freedom of Information and Intellectual Property**

* 1. The Council is subject to laws about access to information including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Procurement Act 2023. The Council may - despite any claim made by any Applicant that any information is given in confidence or is confidential in nature – be required to release any information it holds in accordance with the law, subject to the Council’s discretion concerning any applicable exemption or the application of any public interest test. It is important to note that information may be commercially sensitive for a time - for example, during a tender process - but afterwards some of that information it may not be, while other information may remain commercially sensitive for a longer period. The timing of any request for information may be extremely important in determining whether or not information is exempt. Applicants should note that no information is likely to be regarded as exempt forever.
  2. The Council does not in general consider the identities of the successful bidder or of unsuccessful bidders to be commercially confidential. It
  3. will publish the details of the successful bidder(s) as required by the Procurement Regulations 2024 and the Local Government Transparency Code;
  4. will provide unsuccessful bidders with a copy of successful bidders’ assessment summaries, redacted only to the extent that they contain information that is sensitive commercial information and where there is an overriding public interest in its being withheld from publication or other disclosure;
  5. will publish such details of unsuccessful bidders as are required by Regulation 27 of the Procurement Regulations 2024; and
  6. may release the identity of unsuccessful bidders in response to FOI requests without consultation with the bidders concerned once the contract has been awarded.
  7. Any working documents produced by the Council in the course of evaluation shall remain confidential to and the property of the Council and need not be retained by the Council.
  8. All intellectual property rights in the Procurement Documents and all materials provided by the Council or its professional advisers, consultants or information providers in connection with this tender and tender process are and shall remain the property of the Council and/or its professional advisers, consultants and/or information providers. The information they contain shall be used only for the purpose of preparing a tender and delivering any resulting contract.
  9. The contents of the Procurement Documents together with all other information, materials, specifications or other documents provided pursuant to or in the course of this procurement exercise, or prepared by the Applicants specifically for such purposes, shall be treated at all times as confidential by the Applicants unless put in the public domain by the Council. Applicants may not disclose any such information, materials, specifications or other documents to any third parties or to any other part of the Applicant´s company or group or use them for any purpose other than for the preparation and submission of responses to the Procurement Documents. Applicants may not publicise the Council’s name or the tender without the prior written consent of the Council.
  10. Applicants must seek the approval of the Council before providing to third parties any information provided in confidence by the Council and shall ensure that all third parties to whom disclosure is made shall keep any such information, materials, specifications or other documents confidential and not disclose them to any other third party except as set out above.

**Collusion, canvassing, bribery and corruption**

* 1. Applicants shall not enter into any agreement or arrangement with any other person with the intent that the other person shall refrain from responding to the procurement exercise or submit an excessively high price or an otherwise unattractive or non-compliant offer nor enter into any price-fixing agreement with any other person in respect of this procurement process.
  2. Applicants shall not, in connection with this procurement process or the proposed contract:
  3. offer any inducement, fee or reward to any officer or member of the Council;
  4. do anything which would constitute a breach of section 117(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 or of the Bribery Act 2010; or
  5. canvass any officer or member of the Council in connection with the response/tender about any aspect of the proposed contract or for soliciting information in connection therewith.
  6. If any Applicant or any employee of any Applicant or any third party acting on behalf of any Applicant commits an act detailed in clauses 11.18 or 11.19 or offers, promises or gives any bribe or inducement or makes any improper threat or colludes (or offers or agrees to collude) with any other Applicant in connection with this procurement exercise then, in addition to any criminal sanction such conduct may attract, the Council may:
  7. immediately exclude that Applicant’s offer from consideration;
  8. exclude that Applicant from future procurement exercises;
  9. terminate any contract entered into with that Applicant; and
  10. recover from that Applicant the reasonable costs of re-running this procurement exercise and any consequential losses (including loss of anticipated savings) which result from any delay in letting a contract.
  11. If any person approaches any Applicant seeking any bribe or making any offer to collude in respect of this procurement exercise, that Applicant is to contact the Council’s Head of Law immediately.



**Multi-Provider Framework Agreement for the Provision of Actuarial, Benefits and Governance Consultancy Services**

**NCCT43062**

**INVITATION TO TENDER**

**TO BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED BY APPLICANT**

Form A: Details of Applicant

**Applicants are to edit the header of this form to insert their name at the top of every page.**

**You must be registered on the government’s Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender Service, or we will not be able to accept your bid.**

**Form A is split into different parts.**

**Part 1 of Form A is information relevant to the procurement.** If you are tendering with other key suppliers that you will be reliant on to deliver the contract, please complete a copy of Part 1 for each organisation taking part, including their Central Digital Platform (Find a Tender Service) share code.

## Part 1 – basic details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of person or organisation tendering |  |
| Trading as… |  |
| Find a Tender Service share code |  |
| Are you bidding in conjunction with another supplier? | Answer ‘yes or no’ |
| If yes, who is the lead bidder? |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Person managing bid** | | |
| Ms, Mr, etc |  | |
| Name |  | |
| Address |  | |
| Postcode |  | |
| Country |  | |
| Phone |  | |
| Mobile |  | |
| **Director, partner or trustee overseeing bid** | | |
| Mr, Ms, etc |  | |
| Name |  | |
| Address |  | |
| Postcode |  | |
| Country |  | |
| Phone |  | |
| Mobile |  | |
| **Registered office address** | | |
|  | | |
|  | | |
|  | | |
| Postcode |  | |
| Country |  | |
| **Applicant’s registration number, as applicable** | | |
| Company registration no. | |  |
| Charity registration no. | |  |
| VAT registration no. | |  |
| FCA registration no. | |  |
| **Group structure (as applicable)** | |  |
| Name of immediate parent organisation | |  |
| Company registration number | |  |
| Name of ultimate UK holding company | |  |
| Company registration number | |  |
| Name of ultimate parent organisation | |  |
| Country | |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Company size** | | | |
| Are you an SME? (yes/no) | |  | |
| **Type of organisation (select one box only)** | | | |
| Sole Trader |  | Public sector |  |
| Partnership (Unincorporated) |  | Private Company |  |
| Limited Liability Partnership (‘LLP’) |  | Public Limited Company |  |
| Private Co. Limited by Guarantee |  | VCSE, please select:  Choose an item. | |

**Part 2 is information relevant to contract management if you were to be successful and is non-mandatory but useful if we have a quick award-to-contract-commencement process.**

## Part 2 – contract management

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Role | Name | Phone | Mobile | Email |
| Contract manager |  |  |  |  |
| Ordering/referral |  |  |  |  |
| Contract queries |  |  |  |  |
| Invoice queries |  |  |  |  |
| Emergency out of hours contact |  |  |  |  |

Part 3 – delivery structure

If you intend to form a consortium or sub-contract key elements of the services please provide details of the consortium members/sub-contractors who will play a significant role, by providing a brief description of your proposed business structure, including a “family tree” to illustrate the relationship between members of the consortium or prime and sub-contractors that you will be reliant on to deliver the contract, so it is clear who the lead applicant is and what role all members play and the amount of work being delivered by each sub-contractor and the key contract deliverables each sub-contractor will be responsible for.

Responses must enable the Council to assess the overall service proposed and whether the business structure proposed, and any consortium arrangement, is appropriate for this service. Please specify the roles and services to be fulfilled by the Applicant and the services to be delivered by each sub-contractor or each consortium member. We will judge the structure against the pass/fail criteria at the bottom of Form C and if we do not believe the structure to be suitable, we may reject the tender (maximum 2 pages of A4 + diagram).

**Sub-contractors that you rely on to deliver the contract must be registered on the government’s Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender Service, or we will not be able to accept your bid.**

Please note that you do not need to complete this if you are not reliant on a sub-contractor or are using a sub-contractor that would be straightforward to replace.

Part 4 is to indicate which lot(s) you are applying for.

## Part 4 – Lots

This procurement has been split into lots. You may bid for any or all lots. Please indicate below which lot or lots you are applying for.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ****No.**** | ****Lot Title**** | ****Please tick**** |
| 1 | **Actuarial Services** |  |
| 2 | **Benefits Consultancy** |  |
| 3 | **Governance Consultancy** |  |
| 4 | **Funding Risk Advisory Services** |  |
| 5 | Consultancy Services to Support Specialist Projects |  |
| Part 5 – Consultancy Service to Support Specialist Projects – Provision of Services In the table below please indicate the services you can provide for Consultancy to support specialist projects.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Reference** | **Service area** | **Yes / No** | | 5.1 | LGPS Pooling | Yes  No | | 5.2 | Change Management e.g. Outsourcing and insourcing, local government reorganisation etc. | Yes  No | | 5.3 | Project Management | Yes  No | | 5.4 | Regulatory and best practice compliance reviews (including, but not limited to, compliance with MHCLG and The Pensions Regulator requirements) | Yes  No | | 5.5 | Data Quality, Validation Audits and improvement support | Yes  No | | 5.6 | Support for/undertaking bulk exercises e.g. bulk calculation of members entitlements | Yes  No | | 5.7 | Employer covenant analysis | Yes  No | | 5.8 | Pensions taxation advice, including but not limited to support on HMRC tax calculations. | Yes  No | | 5.9 | Reviews and guidance on Fund structures and their effectiveness including reshaping service delivery and outsourcing. | Yes  No | | 5.10 | Recruitment and retention (including remuneration) and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion advice | Yes  No | | 5.11 | Review, advice and support in relation to cybersecurity | Yes  No | | | |

Form B: Grounds for exclusion

* **Applicants are to reproduce this Form B, retaining the question text and question numbering, and return it as part of their submission. Applicants are to answer all questions.**
* Applicants must edit the header of this section to insert their name at the top of every page of the forms so that it is clear to evaluators whose bid is whose.
* **Please do not append any documents unless specifically requested below.**
* If you cannot answer ‘yes’ to every question below it is very unlikely that your **Tender** will be accepted, and you should contact us for advice before completing this form.
* Please see section 4.4 of this Tender document for how this Form B should be completed if you are bidding as a lead contractor with sub-contractors or as a consortium.
* Applicants and any sub-contractor or member of a consortium who are also completing Form B must complete the self-declarations in relation to this Form B on behalf of all connected persons and entities, in accordance with The Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024.

## **B.1 Mandatory Grounds for Exclusion**

**We certify that we are registered on the Government’s Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender Service, and that we are not considered an excluded supplier under any of the provisions in** [**Schedule 6 of the Procurement Act 2023**](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/54/schedule/6)**.**

Yes

No

**If you have answered “no”, please provide an explanation below.**

## **B.2 Discretionary Grounds for Exclusion**

**We certify that we are registered on the Government’s Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender Service, and that we are not considered an excludable supplier under any of the provisions in** [**Schedule 7 of the Procurement Act 2023**](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/54/schedule/7)**.**

Yes

No

**If you have answered “no”, please provide an explanation below.**

## **B.3 Sub-contractors**

**We certify that the subcontractor(s) we rely on to deliver this contract are, or will be by contract award, registered on the Government’s Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender Service, and are not an excluded supplier(s) under any of the provisions outlined in B.1.**

Yes

No

**If you have answered “no”, please provide an explanation below.**

**We certify that the subcontractor(s) we rely on to deliver this contract are, or will be by contract award, registered on the Government’s Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender Service, and are not an excludable supplier(s) under any of the provisions outlined in B.2.**

Yes

No

**If you have answered “no”, please provide an explanation below.**

Please note that we will verify the information provided on this Form B with the Central Digital Platform.

We reserve the right to ask you to replace any sub-contractors that you are relying on to deliver the contracts that are excluded or excludable suppliers.

Form C: Compliance with minimum standards

* **Applicants are to reproduce this Form C retaining the question text and question numbering and return it as part of their submission. Applicants are to answer all questions.**
* Applicants must edit the header of this section to insert their name at the top of every page of the forms so that it is clear to evaluators whose bid is whose.
* **Please do not append any documents unless specifically requested below.**
* **Responses to this Form C will be evaluated against the criteria at the end of the Form.**

## **Technical or Professional ability**

Our minimum standards for technical or professional ability are that Applicants have the experience, capabilities and qualifications set out in the questions below and are able to provide satisfactory references as evidence of their relevant track record. Please complete each question as instructed.

**Lot 1 – Actuarial Services**

We need to be satisfied that your organisation has previous relevant experience in providing similar services.

**Within your organisation can you demonstrate a proven track record and extensive knowledge and experience of providing Actuarial Services to LGPS Administering Authorities over a complete valuation cycle?**

Yes

No

If yes please provide detailed evidence of your organisation’s relevant experience, including details of previous clients and projects. Please note that if you cannot evidence a proven track record and extensive knowledge of providing Actuarial Services your application will fail.

**Answer below** (maximum 500 words)

**Lot 2 – Benefits Consultancy**

We need to be satisfied that your organisation has previous relevant experience in providing similar services.

**Within your organisation can you demonstrate a proven track record and extensive knowledge and experience of providing Benefits Consultancy to LGPS Administering Authorities over a complete valuation cycle?**

Yes

No

If yes please provide detailed evidence of your organisation’s relevant experience, including details of previous clients and projects. Please note that if you cannot evidence a proven track record and extensive knowledge of providing Benefits Consultancy your application will fail.

**Answer below** (maximum 500 words)

**Lot 3 - Governance Consultancy**

We need to be satisfied that your organisation has previous relevant experience in providing similar services.

**Within your organisation can you demonstrate a proven track record and extensive knowledge and experience of providing Governance Consultancy to LGPS Administering Authorities.**

Yes

No

If yes please provide detailed evidence of your organisation’s relevant experience, including details of previous clients and projects. Please note that if you cannot evidence a proven track record and extensive knowledge of providing Governance Consultancy your application will fail.

**Answer below** (maximum 500 words)

**Lot 4 - Funding Risk Advisory Services**

We need to be satisfied that your organisation has previous relevant experience in providing similar services.

**Within your organisation can you demonstrate a proven track record and extensive knowledge and experience of providing Funding Risk Advisory Services to support specialist projects to public service pension schemes.**

Yes

No

If yes please provide detailed evidence of your organisation’s relevant experience, including details of previous clients and projects Please note that if you cannot evidence a proven track record and extensive knowledge of providing Funding Risk Advisory Services your application will fail.

**Answer below** (maximum 500 words)

**Lot 5 – Consultancy Services to Support Specialist Pension Projects**

We need to be satisfied that your organisation has previous relevant experience in providing similar services.

**Within your organisation can you demonstrate a proven track record and extensive knowledge and experience of providing Consultancy Services to Support Specialist Pensions Projects to other large institutional pension schemes?**

Yes

No

If yes please provide detailed evidence of your organisation’s relevant experience, including details of previous clients and projects. Please note that if you cannot evidence a proven track record and extensive knowledge of providing Consultancy Services to Support Specialist Projects to public service pension schemes your application will fail.

**Answer below** (maximum 500 words)

## **Performance**

**Has your organisation:**

1. had any contract terminated early for breach of contract in the last 36 months (this applies to any contract you have operated, not just Council contracts)?

Yes

No

1. had any contract amended or varied due to poor performance or contractual non-compliance in the last 36 months (this applies to any contract you have operated, not just Council contracts)?

Yes

No

1. been subject to any performance or warning notices (or similar notices) issued by commissioners or other bodies regarding any contractual or performance issues? (this applies to any contract you have operated, not just Council contracts)?

Yes

No

If your answer to any of the above is ‘yes’, please give details on a fully referenced separate sheet explaining what happened and what you have done to put matters right, and attach copies of any relevant correspondence with the relevant contracting authority or regulatory body. If you are unable to evidence what you have done to put matters right, your application will fail.

**Answer below** (a guide of 500 words)

To be scored as a pass/fail. If you fail this part of the application, your application will not be considered further.

## **References**

Applicants must have experience of providing the services they are applying to provide. Therefore, we require details of two people that can provide references per lot applied for, from organisations for whom you have provided services of a similar scope to the requirements within this procurement in the last 3 years. If applying as a consortium, we require each member to supply details of two referees. **Failure to provide two eligible referees for each lot applied for** **may result in disqualification.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reference information Lot 1 – Actuarial Services | Referee 1 | Referee 2 |
| Customer Organisation: |  |  |
| Customer contact name: |  |  |
| e-mail: |  |  |
| phone number: |  |  |
| Date contract awarded: |  |  |
| Contract reference and brief description: |  |  |
| Total contract value in GBP(£): |  |  |
| Contract length in years: |  |  |

Scored as a pass/fail. If you are unable to provide satisfactory referees, we will not take your application further.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reference information Lot 2 – Benefits Consultancy | Referee 1 | Referee 2 |
| Customer Organisation: |  |  |
| Customer contact name: |  |  |
| e-mail: |  |  |
| phone number: |  |  |
| Date contract awarded: |  |  |
| Contract reference and brief description: |  |  |
| Total contract value in GBP(£): |  |  |
| Contract length in years: |  |  |

Scored as a pass/fail. If you are unable to provide satisfactory referees, we will not take your application further.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reference information Lot 3 – Governance Consultancy | Referee 1 | Referee 2 |
| Customer Organisation: |  |  |
| Customer contact name: |  |  |
| e-mail: |  |  |
| phone number: |  |  |
| Date contract awarded: |  |  |
| Contract reference and brief description: |  |  |
| Total contract value in GBP(£): |  |  |
| Contract length in years: |  |  |

Scored as a pass/fail. If you are unable to provide satisfactory referees, we will not take your application further.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reference information Lot 4 – Funding Risk Advisory Services | Referee 1 | Referee 2 |
| Customer Organisation: |  |  |
| Customer contact name: |  |  |
| e-mail: |  |  |
| phone number: |  |  |
| Date contract awarded: |  |  |
| Contract reference and brief description: |  |  |
| Total contract value in GBP(£): |  |  |
| Contract length in years: |  |  |

Scored as a pass/fail. If you are unable to provide satisfactory referees, we will not take your application further.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reference information Lot 5 - **Consultancy Services to Support Specialist Projects** | Referee 1 | Referee 2 |
| Customer Organisation: |  |  |
| Customer contact name: |  |  |
| e-mail: |  |  |
| phone number: |  |  |
| Date contract awarded: |  |  |
| Contract reference and brief description: |  |  |
| Total contract value in GBP(£): |  |  |
| Contract length in years: |  |  |

Scored as a pass/fail. If you are unable to provide satisfactory referees, we will not take your application further.

## Economic and financial standing

The information provided will be used to assess your Organisation’s financial standing.

**Our minimum standards for economic and financial standing are that:**

* Applicants comply with regulatory requirements relating to the filing of statutory accounts;
* Applicants’ statutory accounts (if any) have received a ‘clean’ audit opinion or, where the audit opinion is qualified, suitable, appropriate and timely action has been taken to deal with the issues raised;
* The financial aspects of Applicants’ organisations (including but not limited to the payment of creditors) are properly managed;
* Applicants’ organisations are financially sustainable, including adequate liquidity, profitability, balance sheet strength and cash flow.

**Checks and review:**

1. We will first check that your statutory accounts (where you are required to file them) have been filed on time. If they are overdue, we will seek an explanation from you and, if no acceptable explanation is forthcoming, we will not take your application further.
2. We will make checks with a credit rating agency and, if there are any adverse reports (such as High Court writs, County Court Judgements, or qualifications to your auditor’s report) we will seek an explanation from you. If no acceptable explanation is forthcoming, we will not take your application further.
3. Subject to (1) and (2) above we will review the information provided and publicly available information and will consider whether there are “warning signals” which, taken together, indicate significant cause for concern about your financial stability. These may include:
4. falling cash levels
5. falling profit margins
6. increasing overdraft with static turnover
7. major reductions in staffing
8. increasing employment with static turnover
9. increasing debtor and creditor days
10. larger increases in creditors than debtors
11. deteriorating liquidity
12. over-reliance on short term debt
13. high gearing
14. unsatisfactory results of ratio analysis
15. increasing pension liabilities
16. heavy write-offs of foreign or subsidiary holdings
17. late filing of accounts
18. qualified accounts
19. profit warnings
20. County Court Judgements (CCJs)
21. poor credit ratings
22. unusual accounting policies
23. changing auditors and bankers
24. debt rating downgrades/alerts
25. concerns raised by investment bank prospect reports
26. adverse press reports.

We may seek further information or explanation from you about any such matter.

**Information required:**

The following financial information is required to be provided and an assessment will be undertaken to produce a summary profile of your organisation's financial condition and that of its ultimate parent (if applicable).

If you have changed your legal identity during the last two years, please provide accounts for both old and new identities.

A qualitative assessment will be used to identify the level of risk presented by your organisation the results of which will be categorised either as a Low Risk, Medium Risk or High Risk.

The Council may seek further information from any Applicant about their economic and financial standing during the evaluation.

The Council may also ask any Applicant whether it is willing to offer a financial guarantee (such as a parent company guarantee or ultimate holding company guarantee) and/or a performance bond and/or any similar instrument and may take into account the comfort offered by these instruments in its assessment of whether financial risk is ‘high’.

**In order to meet minimum standards your organisation must be categorised as either a 'low' or 'medium' risk. Applicants categorised as a 'high' risk will be eliminated and their application will not be taken further.**

1. Please provide a copy of the audited accounts at i for the most recent two years. If this is not available, please provide one or more of ii, iii or iv to demonstrate your economic/ financial standing. Please indicate which items you have attached to your bid by ticking “yes” or “no” in the relevant box.
2. A copy of the audited accounts for the most recent two years.

Yes

No

1. A statement of the turnover, profit and loss account, current liabilities and assets, and cash flow for the most recent year of trading for this organisation.

Yes

No

1. A statement of the cash flow forecast for the current year and a bank letter outlining the current cash and credit position.

Yes

No

1. Alternative means of demonstrating financial status if any of the above are not available (e.g. forecast of turnover for the current year and a statement of funding provided by the owners and/or the bank, charity accruals accounts or an alternative means of demonstrating financial status).

Yes

No

1. Have you complied with regulatory requirements relating to the filing of statutory accounts, including filing accounts on time?

Yes

No

**If you have answered “no”, please provide an explanation below**

1. Where the Council has specified a minimum level of economic and financial standing and/or a minimum financial threshold within the evaluation criteria for this **tender,** please self-certify by answering ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ that you meet the requirements set out here.

Yes

No

**If you have answered “no”, please provide an explanation below**

1. Where the audited accounts (if any) provided do not cover the most recent full financial year (or part financial year if you have been trading for less than one financial year), please provide a statement of your turnover, profit & loss and cash flow for that financial year (or part year if full year not applicable) and an end period Balance Sheet, or a draft set of accounts.
2. Where a Consortium or Association is proposed, the information is requested for each member company.

**Evaluation**

For each candidate we will prepare an analysis stating a summary score, from 1 to 3, as follows:

1 – High risk Unacceptable financial risk

2 – Medium risk Some concerns but acceptable

3 – Low risk No material concerns

and a summary justification for the score given, reflecting reasoned professional judgment, where an Applicant receives a score of 1.

Parent Companies will not be reviewed unless a company fails its initial assessment.

We will eliminate Applicants who score 1.

## Modern Slavery Act

If you have an annual turnover of at least £36 million and are a relevant commercial organisation as defined in the Modern Slavery Act 2015, please confirm that you have published a statement and that you meet the requirements of Section 54 and any guidance issued under Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Yes

No

N/A – our turnover is less than £36 million and we are not a relevant commercial organisation as defined in the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

If you cannot answer yes to this question where you have an annual turnover of at least £36 million and are a relevant commercial organisation as defined in the Modern Slavery Act 2015, your tender will be rejected.

## Environmental management

1. Has your organisation been convicted of breaching environmental legislation, or had any notice served upon it, in the last three years by any environmental regulator or authority (including local authority) or have any prosecutions pending?

If your answer to this question is “Yes”, please provide details of the conviction or notice and details of any remedial action or changes you have made as a result of conviction or notices served.

The Council will not appoint Applicants that have been prosecuted or served notice under environmental legislation in the last 3 years, unless the Council is satisfied that appropriate remedial action has been taken to prevent future occurrences/breaches.

Yes

No

**If your answer to this question is “Yes”, explain below**

1. If you use sub-contractors, do you have processes in place to check whether any of these organisations have been convicted or had a notice served upon them for infringement of environmental legislation?

Yes

No

N/A

**If your answer to this question is “Yes”, explain below**

**Where a written response has been provided to support a “yes” for question 1, it will be scored against the criteria at the end of this Form C. If you do not pass this part of the evaluation, your** tender will be rejected.

## Compliance with equality legislation

For organisations working outside of the UK please refer to equivalent legislation for the country or countries in which you are located.

1. In the last three years, has any finding of unlawful discrimination been made against your organisation by an Employment Tribunal, an Employment Appeal Tribunal or any other court (or in comparable proceedings in any jurisdiction other than the UK)?

Yes

No

1. In the last three years, has your organisation had a complaint upheld following an investigation by the Equality and Human Rights Commission or its predecessors (or a comparable body in any jurisdiction other than the UK), on grounds of alleged unlawful discrimination?

Yes

No

If you have answered “yes” to either or the questions above, please provide a summary of the nature of the investigation and an explanation of the outcome of the investigation to date.

If the investigation upheld the complaint against your organisation, please use the written response to explain what action (if any) you have taken to prevent unlawful discrimination from reoccurring.

You may be excluded if you are unable to demonstrate to the Council’s satisfaction that appropriate remedial action has been taken to prevent similar unlawful discrimination reoccurring.

**If your answer to questions 1 or 2 is “Yes”, explain below**

1. If you use sub-contractors, do you have processes in place to check whether any of the above circumstances apply to these other organisations?

Yes

No

N/A

**If your answer to this question is “No”, explain below.**

**Responses to questions 1 and 2 will be scored against the criteria at the end of this Form C where a written response has been provided to support a “yes” to either of these questions. If you fail this part of the evaluation, your** tender is likely to be rejected.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Descriptor FOR THE ALLOCATION OF PASS/FAIL scores | Mark awarded |
| The application shows one or more of the following features appropriate to the question:   * Applicant has not provided a response * Applicant provides a response of such a poor standard as to provide no confidence that the Applicant could meet the requirements * Applicant provides no evidence that their experience and/or expertise is relevant to this contract * The Applicant has demonstrated poor industry practice in their response * The Applicant does not hold the required qualification(s), registration(s) or licence(s) in order to perform the contract and will not do so by contract commencement * Supporting documents (where requested) are of insufficient quality, depth or relevance to provide any confidence that the Applicant could meet the requirement. | Fail |
| The application shows, relevant to the appropriate question, that:   * The Applicant has the required experience and/or expertise to provide the service and provides some confidence that they would be able to perform the contract * The Applicant has demonstrated that they have the capability to perform the contract * The Applicant has demonstrated that they hold the required qualification(s), registration(s) or licence(s) in order to perform the contract or that they will do so by contract commencement * The Applicant has demonstrated good industry practice in their response * The supporting documents (where requested) are of good quality, relevant and of sufficient depth and demonstrate that the Applicant could meet the requirement. | Pass |

Form D: Willingness and ability to comply with contractual requirements

* Applicants are to reproduce this Form D, retaining the question text and question numbering, and upload it as part of their submission. Applicants are to answer all questions.
* Applicants must edit the header of this section to insert their name at the top of every page of the forms so that it is clear to evaluators whose bid is whose.
* **Please do not append any documents unless specifically requested below.**

D1. Conditions of contract

The following questions are marked as pass/fail, where “yes” is a pass, and “no” is a fail.

**D1.1 Terms and conditions**

We are willing to enter into the contract in accordance with the specified terms and conditions, without modification. **Please Note:** We have carried out comprehensive consultation on the Terms and Conditions. We do not expect any further changes to these terms and conditions. If you still have any questions these **must be addressed during the clarification period.**

Yes

No

We cannot accept any caveats to your response to question D1.1.

**D1.2 Data Protection**

We understand the requirements of the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and guarantee our ability to comply with the applicable regulations and legislation and with the Data Processing Schedule appended to the terms and conditions.

Yes

No

**D1.3 Data Centres**

Norfolk County Council as data controller must ensure that any personal data provided by it to you as processor is handled and stored in such a way that it is protected according to UK GDPR standards. That applies even where your data centre is outside of the United Kingdom or European Union. Should your data centre be located in a third country, please confirm what country this is and, where necessary, what measures you propose to guarantee an equivalent level of protection.

Where will you store and handle personal data pertaining to the contract?

UK:  Yes  No

European Union:  Yes  No

If somewhere outside the EU or UK, where are your data centres located:

If you have selected a country outside the UK or European Union, please confirm what country this is and, where necessary, what measures you propose to guarantee an equivalent level of protection.

**Please answer below:**

Norfolk County Council in recognition of its responsibilities as data controller is unable to process your application if no response to this question is received, or if the response, in its opinion, is unclear or unable to establish how an equivalent level of protection is to be provided. You should consider taking legal advice on this issue if you are unsure of how to respond.

Form F: Quality

* Applicants are to reproduce this Form F retaining the questions and numbering and return it as part of their tender submission. Applicants must answer all questions.
* Applicants must edit the header of this section to insert their name at the top of every page of the forms so that it is clear to evaluators whose bid is whose.
* Applicants’ responses must be clearly legible and in at least 11-point type, on a line spacing of at least 1.2 times the type size.
* The answer to each question must be self-contained. Responses such as ‘see answer to question x’ are not acceptable.
* You should not assume that the evaluators have any prior knowledge of your organisation, its capabilities or the solutions your organisation offers and you should ensure your responses to each question presume the evaluators know nothing of your organisation, and where relevant your subcontractors, consortium members or partners if you are heavily reliant on a third party in a bid.
* **Please do not append any documents unless specifically requested below.**
* Ensure that your answers are succinct and do not drift over the word count guide unnecessarily. If the word count is causing you significant issues with answering a question thoroughly, please raise this as a clarification. Please note that if you grossly breach the word count guide anything over that guide is likely to be disregarded.
* Please ensure all answers are fully referenced to the relevant question.
* The scoring matrix provided in Evaluation Data (Section 8) is to assist evaluators in establishing areas of the proposals that concern them, and those areas that they think are good, and feedback will be provided to all Applicants.

### AI and Machine Learning (not scored)

Are AI or machine learning technologies used as part of the products or services you intend to provide?

Yes

No

If “Yes”, please describe how AI technologies are integrated into your service offerings below and ensure that they are fully described in your responses to the weighted questions.

F1. QUESTIONS applicable to all Lots

For each question below, you only need to answer the question once. Your score for that answer will apply to all lots for which you are bidding.

### F1.1 Sharing research and added value (5%)

Please explain how your organisation will share the results of relevant specific research that is undertaken relating to the LGPS.

Please describe what innovation and added value your organisation would bring to Awarding Authorities (for example knowledge dissemination, leadership, representation).

**Answer below** (A maximum of 500 words)

### F1.2 Performance Management (10%)

Please explain how you will manage performance of a contract to maximise effectiveness and efficiencies, including the escalation procedures for dealing with poor performance of a contract. Your answer should address performance in the round, not just your appraisal system.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F1.3 Working with other Service Providers (8%)

Please describe how you will work with a contracting authorities other service providers (Advisors and Consultants) to devise and deliver joined-up outcomes.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 500 words)

### F1.4 Client Relationship Management (9%)

Please explain your organisation’s proposed approach to relationship management under this Framework with an explanation of how your relationship with the contracting authorities would operate, be developed and managed, including but not limited to:

* client reporting and meetings;
* dealing with issues/concerns;
* details of what client services are provided inside and outside the UK;
* briefings on topical issues and any ‘added value’ aspects.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 1000 words)

### F1.5 Environmental, Social and Governance (5%)

Please describe your organisation’s internal approach to addressing ESG issues including, but not limited to:

* Your commitment to net zero and/ or your climate policy, demonstrating your approach;
* The steps you are taking to reduce your organisation’s emissions and the targets you have set and the metrics you have set to monitor and achieve these targets;
* Your approach to diversity and equality and how you create an inclusive culture within the workplace. Please confirm If you have a diversity policy in place and the regularity of review.
* Your approach and policies with regard to Modern Slavery.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

F2. LOT 1 ACTUARIAL SERVICES LOT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

### F2.1 Maintaining Knowledge and Understanding (12%)

Wider pension legislation and the operational environment for LGPS administering authorities, employers and other stakeholders is continually developing (e.g. pensions review etc).

Please describe how you will obtain and maintain your knowledge and understanding including but not limited to:

* keeping up to date with regulatory and industry changes within the LGPS and how you will apply this to the services you provide to your clients;
* your organisations relationship with national bodies and other key stakeholders and how this supports the LGPS.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F2.2 Key Personnel (12%)

Please describe your workforce strategy and how this will meet the complexities and challenges of providing Actuarial Services to the LGPS including but not limited to:

* your team structure relevant to this Lot outlining roles and number of personnel and where this sits within your organisation. Please describe how this will support a contracting authority and enable you to obtain scalability to secure further LGPS contracts whilst maintaining service levels.
* a brief description of relevant roles that will be delivering Actuarial services including but not limited to:
  + LGPS experience
  + relevant professional qualifications
  + for information, the number of staff in each role
* the key measures you will have in place to ensure and maintain continuity of service (including key person risk) and develop and maintain appropriate levels of knowledge and skills within the service delivery team.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words plus Organisational Structure diagram and relevant bios of key personnel which should be no more than 1/2 A4 page per bios). **Please note that the structure diagram and the bios are not included in the word count.**

### F2.3 Changing Shape of Public Service Delivery (10%)

Public sector service delivery models are in a constant state of evolution. Please demonstrate your approach, including but not limited to:

* the changes taking place and the impact on administering authorities, scheme employers and all other stakeholders;
* the support you would expect to provide in delivering and implementing any changes.
* Your approach to future change within the industry and how you will support contracting authorities.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F2.4 Statutory Services and Specialist Advice and Support (12%)

Please describe the statutory services, specialist advice and support you would be expecting to provide to a typical client in the 3-year valuation cycle.

Please provide a plan including timescales for the services/outputs identified.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words plus plan) **Please note the plan is not included in the word count.**

### F2.5 Future Sustainability of the LGPS (11%)

What proposals do you have to develop the approaches taken to the valuation and funding strategy to support the future sustainability of the LGPS.

Please describe how you incorporate climate change considerations into your valuations and models or please provide details on how you plan to do this in future.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F2.6 Technology (6%)

* Please describe what innovations you will use to improve data quality, information and reduce costs?
* How will these innovations add value to Contracting Authorities and their employers?

What facilities are available for Contracting Authorities to use technology directly (e.g. data checkers, quick calculators, etc.) and your requirement for self-service (i.e. data validation submission)?

A**nswer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

F3. LOT 2 BENEFITS CONSULTANCY LOT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

### F3.1 Maintaining Knowledge and Understanding (17%)

Wider pension legislation and the operational environment for LGPS administering authorities, employers and other stakeholders is continually developing (e.g. pensions review etc).

Please describe how you will obtain and maintain your knowledge and understanding including but not limited to:

* keeping up to date with regulatory and industry changes within the LGPS and how you will apply this to the services you provide to your clients;
* your organisations relationship with national bodies and other key stakeholders and how this supports the LGPS.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F3.2 Key Personnel (16%)

Please describe your workforce strategy and how this will meet the complexities and challenges of providing Actuarial Services to the LGPS including but not limited to:

* your team structure relevant to this Lot outlining roles and number of personnel and where this sits within your organisation. Please describe how this will support a contracting authority and enable you to obtain scalability to secure further LGPS contracts whilst maintaining service levels.
* a brief description of relevant roles that will be delivering Benefits Consultancy Services including but not limited to:
  + LGPS experience
  + relevant professional qualifications
  + for information, the number of staff in each role
* the key measures you will have in place to ensure and maintain continuity of service (including key person risk) and develop and maintain appropriate levels of knowledge and skills within the service delivery team.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words plus Organisational Structure diagram and relevant bios of key personnel which should be no more than 1/2 A4 page per bios). **Please note the Organisational Chart and Bios are not included in the word count.**

### F3.3 Changing Shape of Public Service Delivery (14%)

Public sector service delivery models are in a constant state of evolution. Please demonstrate your approach, including but not limited to:

* the changes taking place and the impact on administering authorities, scheme employers and all other stakeholders;
* the support you would expect to provide in delivering and implementing any changes.
* Your approach to future change within the industry and how you will support contracting authorities.

A**nswer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F3.4 Engagement and Specialist Advice and Support (16%)

Please explain how you could support a contracting authority in communicating with stakeholders on specific areas of interest.

What areas do you believe will be the main focus over the short and longer term?

Please provide two examples of recent communication resources provided.

A**nswer below** (A maximum of 500 words plus examples). **Please note the examples are not included in the wordcount.**

F4. LOT 3 GOVENANCE CONSULTANCY LOT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

### F4.1 Maintaining Knowledge and Understanding (16%)

Wider pension legislation and the operational environment for LGPS administering authorities, employers and other stakeholders is continually developing (e.g. pensions review etc).

Please describe how you will obtain and maintain your knowledge and understanding including but not limited to:

* keeping up to date with regulatory and industry changes within the LGPS and how you will apply this to the services you provide to your clients;
* your organisations relationship with national bodies and other key stakeholders and how this supports the LGPS.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F4.2 Key Personnel (16%)

Please describe your workforce strategy and how this will meet the complexities and challenges of providing Actuarial Services to the LGPS including but not limited to:

* your team structure relevant to this Lot outlining roles and number of personnel and where this sits within your organisation. Please describe how this will support a contracting authority and enable you to obtain scalability to secure further LGPS contracts whilst maintaining service levels.
* a brief description of relevant roles that will be delivering Governance Consultancy services including but not limited to:
  + LGPS experience
  + relevant professional qualifications
  + for information, the number of staff in each role
* the key measures you will have in place to ensure and maintain continuity of service (including key person risk) and develop and maintain appropriate levels of knowledge and skills within the service delivery team.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words plus Organisational Structure diagram and relevant bios of key personnel which should be no more than 1/2 A4 page per bios). **Please note that the structure diagram and bios are not included in the word count.**

### F4.3 Changing Shape of Public Service Delivery (15%)

Public sector service delivery models are in a constant state of evolution. Please demonstrate your approach, including but not limited to:

* the changes taking place and the impact on administering authorities, scheme employers and all other stakeholders;
* the support you would expect to provide in delivering and implementing any changes.
* Your approach to future change within the industry and how you will support contracting authorities.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F4.4 Engagement and Specialist Advice and Support (16%)

What do you think are the key factors influencing LGPS governance over the short and longer term and how would you assist funds to manage governance risks, maintain and improve upon governance standards and improve the effectiveness of decision making?

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

F5. LOT 4 FUNDING RISK ADVISORY SERVICES SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

### F5.1 Maintaining Knowledge and Understanding (15%)

Wider pension legislation and the operational environment for LGPS administering authorities, employers and other stakeholders is continually developing (e.g. pensions review etc).

Please describe how you will obtain and maintain your knowledge and understanding including:

* keeping up to date with regulatory and industry changes within the LGPS and how you will apply this to the services you provide to your clients;
* your organisations relationship with national bodies and other key stakeholders and how this supports the LGPS.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 500 words)

### F5.2 Key Personnel (14%)

Please describe your workforce strategy and how this will meet the complexities and challenges of providing Funding Risk Advisory Services to the LGPS including but not limited to:

* Your organisational structure and how this will support a contracting authority and enable you to obtain scalability to secure further LGPS contracts;
* a breakdown of the key personnel who will be delivering services under this Framework Agreement; giving their experience, qualifications and roles (individual bios of key personnel are required);
* the key measures you will have in place to ensure and maintain continuity of service (including key person risk) and develop and maintain appropriate levels of knowledge and skills within the service delivery team. To include how you will manage this area alongside your firm’s other client services and work with other advisers.

(A maximum of 750 words plus Organisational Structure and relevant bios of key personnel which should be no more than 1/2 A4 page per bios)

### F5.3 Changing Shape of Public Service Delivery (10%)

Public sector service delivery models are in a constant state of evolution. Please demonstrate your approach, including but not limited to:

* the changes taking place and the impact on administering authorities, scheme employers and all other stakeholders;
* the support you would expect to provide in delivering and implementing any changes.
* Your approach to future change within the industry and how you will support contracting authorities.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F5.4 Tools and Approaches (8%)

Please provide details of the tools and approaches that you have developed or could develop that would assist the fund to control risk by integrating multiple factors including investment, funding and cashflow risks. Examples of quantifiable outcomes is preferred with demonstrable understanding of output incorporated into strategic thinking.

A**nswer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F5.5 Management and Mitigation of Risks (8%)

Please describe the key risks that can arise, and how you seek to manage and mitigate these risks and the process of agreement with your LGPS clients.

A**nswer below** (A maximum of 500 words)

### F5.6 Policy Development (8%)

Please explain how you might assist in developing the contracting authorities’ policies to use risk controls and how these changes to incorporate tools would produce improved outcomes.

A**nswer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

F6. LOT 5 CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO SUPPORT SPECIALIST PROJECTS LOT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

### F6.1 Maintaining Knowledge and Understanding (16%)

Wider pension legislation and the operational environment for LGPS administering authorities, employers and other stakeholders is continually developing (e.g. pensions review etc).

Please describe how you will obtain and maintain your knowledge and understanding including but not limited to:

* keeping up to date with regulatory and industry changes within the LGPS and how you will apply this to the services you provide to your clients;
* your organisations relationship with national bodies and other key stakeholders and how this supports the LGPS.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F6.2 Key Personnel (16%)

Please describe your workforce strategy and how this will meet the complexities and challenges of providing Actuarial Services to the LGPS including but not limited to:

* your team structure relevant to this Lot outlining roles and number of personnel and where this sits within your organisation. Please describe how this will support a contracting authority and enable you to obtain scalability to secure further LGPS contracts whilst maintaining service levels.
* a brief description of relevant roles that will be delivering Consultancy Services including but not limited to:
  + LGPS experience
  + relevant professional qualifications
  + for information, the number of staff in each role
* the key measures you will have in place to ensure and maintain continuity of service (including key person risk) and develop and maintain appropriate levels of knowledge and skills within the service delivery team.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words plus Organisational Structure diagram and relevant bios of key personnel which should be no more than 1/2 A4 page per bios) **Please note that the structure diagram and the bios are not included in the word count.**

### F6.3 Changing Shape of Public Service Delivery (15%)

Public sector service delivery models are in a constant state of evolution. Please demonstrate your approach, including but not limited to:

* the changes taking place and the impact on administering authorities, scheme employers and all other stakeholders;
* the support you would expect to provide in delivering and implementing any changes.
* Your approach to future change within the industry and how you will support contracting authorities.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 750 words)

### F6.4 Project Management Methodology (16%)

Please outline your approach and methodology for project management when delivering client services.

Please ensure you provide a holistic response covering all areas you consider critical to a successful outcome.

Please provide a brief overview/case study from a pension’s related project that you have undertaken in the last 3 years demonstrating your approach.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 1000 words, plus an example of a high-level extract from a pensions project plan undertaken in the last 3 years. This should be a maximum of 2 A4 pages) **Please note that the examples are not included in the word count.**

**Information Only Questions**

**Please Note: The responses to these questions are for information only and will not be evaluated, however they will be included in the supplier catalogue.**

### Social Value

Please describe how your organisation improves the economic, social and environmental well-being of the UK.

**Answer below** (A maximum of 500 words)

Form G: Pricing schedule

* Applicants are required to complete the Form G Pricing Spreadsheets for each Lot you are bidding for and return it with this Invitation to Tender.
* Applicants must insert the organisations name where requested in each spreadsheet so that it is clear to evaluators whose bid is whose.
* Applicants must follow the instructions within the spreadsheet on how to complete the pricing form.
* **Please do** not **append any documents unless specifically requested below.**
* All prices tendered must **exclude VAT**.
* **Prices quoted may be used for direct award of contract.**
* **Please note that the price quoted by you are the maximum you will be able to charge throughout the term of the Framework, subject to the increases included in the terms and conditions of contract.**

**Illustrative Role Definitions – All Lots**

Please use these illustrative role definitions to assist you in your pricing.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Notes (typical experience, qualifications) |
| Director / Partner | Extensive relevant experience, nationally or internationally renowned as an expert. Extensive experience of leading or directing major complex, business critical projects, bringing genuine strategic insight.  Typically we would expect a person in this category to have a minimum of 10 years relevant experience |
| Managing Consultant | Substantial relevant experience and in a consultancy / training role. Previous experience of at least 5 major projects.  Typically we would expect a person in this category to have a minimum of 10 years relevant experience |
| Principal Consultant | Substantial relevant experience and in a consultancy / training role. Previous experience of at least 3 major projects.  Typically we would expect a person in this category to have a minimum of 8 years relevant experience |
| Senior Actuary | Fully qualified actuary and Member of the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries (IFoA) with 5 years relevant experience, |
| Qualified Actuary | Fully qualified actuary and Member of the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries (IFoA) |
| Senior Consultant | Substantial relevant experience including working with a range of high quality and relevant projects; familiar with the issues / problems facing public sector organisations.  Typically we would expect a person in this category to have a minimum of 5 years relevant experience |
| Consultant | Notable relevant experience and in depth knowledge. Able to support work in process and organisational design and lead workshops and events.  Typically we would expect a person in this category to have a minimum of 3 years relevant experience |
| Junior Consultant | Demonstrable relevant experience; evidence of client facing experience and support services.  Typically we would expect a person in this category to have a minimum of 2 years relevant experience |
| Programme Manager | Extensive relevant experience, nationally or internationally renowned as an expert. Extensive experience of leading or directing major complex, business critical projects, bringing genuine strategic insight.  Typically we would expect a person in this category to have a minimum of 10 years relevant experience |
| Project Manager | Substantial relevant experience and in a project manager role. Previous experience of at least 5 major projects.  Typically we would expect a person in this category to have a minimum of 10 years relevant experience |
| Trainee Actuary | Any individual who is undertaking actuarial training |
| Professional Staff | Non actuarial support staff |
| Project Support Officer | Experience in project management, planning or support, with responsibilities for tasks and projects within the portfolio, and with some budget responsibility. |
| Other (Applicant defined) |  |
| Other (Applicant defined) |  |
| Other (Applicant defined)  If you wish to define different or additional roles, please add these into the table above with illustrative definitions. However, these will not be included in the evaluation process. | |

Form Z: Applicant's declaration

* Please read the declaration carefully before signing it.
* Applicants may either print this Form Z on plain white A4 paper, sign and date it with a pen, scan and then upload it as the final part of their submission, or use an electronic signature.
* Applicants are to edit the header of this section to insert their organisation’s name at the top of every page of the forms.

## Z.1 Checklist

Check each issue below and tick each box.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| We confirm that: | Tick |
| We are registered on the Government’s Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender Service |  |
| Any subcontractors we are relying on are registered on the Government’s Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender Service |  |
| We do not appear on the Government’s debarment list |  |
| Any subcontractors we are relying on do not appear on the Government’s debarment list |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| We have completed the following forms: | Tick |
| * Form A (as the cover sheet to our submission) |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Form B |  |
| * Form C including references, plus supporting financial information |  |
| * Form D |  |
| * Form F plus:   + F2.2 Organisational Structure Diagram and Bios   + F2.4 Plan   + F3.2 Organisational Structure Diagram and Bios   + F3.4 Examples   + F4.2 Organisational Structure Diagram and Bios   + F5.2 Organisational Structure Diagram and Bios   + F6.2 Organisational Structure Diagram and Bios   + F6.4 example |  |
| * Form G   + Spreadsheet for Lot 1   + Spreadsheet for Lots 2, 3, 4 and 5 |  |
| * This Form Z, either printed then signed with a pen, then scanned and uploaded as a .pdf, or added electronically |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| We have: | Tick |
| Amended the header on each form to insert our organisation’s name. |  |
| Included all required documents and information, without omission. |  |
| Made arrangements for the tender to be uploaded and submitted on time, with adequate contingency for ICT failures, power outages etc. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| We have not: | Tick |
| Used a smaller typeface or line spacing than that permitted. |  |
| Annexed any document not specifically requested. |  |

## Z.2. Declarations

**AI, Large Language Models and Machine Learning Software declarations**

AI tools can be used to improve the efficiency of the bid writing process; however they may also introduce an increased risk of misleading statements. Have you used AI or machine learning tools, including large language models, to assist in any part of your tender submission? This may include using these tools to support the drafting of responses to Award and/or Minimum Standards questions.

Yes

No

Please detail any instances where AI or machine learning tools, including large language models, have been used to generate written content or support your bid submission, below:

Where AI tools have been used to support the generation of Tender responses, please confirm that they have been checked and verified for accuracy:

Yes

No

**Important Legal Notice declaration**

We agree to the conditions specified in the ‘Important Legal Notice’ at section 11 of the Invitation to Tender.

We warrant, represent and undertake to the Council that:

1. neither we nor any employee or third party acting on our behalf has offered, promised or given any bribe or inducement or made any improper threat or colluded (or offered or agreed to collude) with any other person in connection with this procurement exercise
2. we have complied in all respects with this Invitation to Tender
3. all information, representations and other matters of fact contained in our tender are true, complete and accurate in all respects
4. we have made our own investigations and research and have satisfied ourselves in respect of all matters (whether actual or contingent) relating to the tender and have not submitted this tender response and will not have entered into the contract in reliance upon any information, representation or assumption (whether made orally, in writing or otherwise) which may have been made by or on behalf of the Council
5. we have satisfied ourselves as to the correctness and sufficiency of the information we have inserted in the tender
6. we have full power and authority to enter into the fFamework Agreement and provide the services
7. we are of sound financial standing and will have sufficient premises, working capital, skilled staff, and other resources available to us to provide the services in accordance with the contract
8. we have obtained or are able to obtain all necessary consents, licences and permissions to enable us to provide the services.

We hereby offer to provide the services in accordance with the contract attached as the annexure to this Invitation to Tender which includes for the avoidance of doubt any documents specified in the contract as forming part of the contract including (but not limited to) the prices and operational proposals set out in this tender, the terms and conditions of contract, the Specification attached as a Schedule to the terms and conditions, and any written clarifications issued or received by the Council prior to the written acceptance of the Council of this tender.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Tendering Organisation |  | Signature of authorised officer |  |
| Date |  | Position of authorised officer |  |
|  |  | Name of authorised officer |  |
| Name of Tendering Organisation |  | Signature of authorised officer |  |
| Date |  | Position of authorised officer |  |
|  |  | Name of authorised officer |  |

1. Source: Scheme Annual Report 2024- https://lgpsboard.org/index.php/cs-2024 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Source: Annual Report and Accounts 2022-2023 https://nilgosc.org.uk/resource-category/annual-reports/ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Source: LGPS Scotland SAB Annual Report 2021-22 https://lgpsab.scot/annual-report-2022-2023/ [↑](#footnote-ref-4)