# Future Hosting and Storage Services (FHAS) Procurement

# Project Ref: C25613

# Tender Notice Support Document – Competitive Flexible Procedure Overview

# Overview of the Invitation to Submit Initial Tender and Invitation to Submit Final Tender

## Invitation to Submit Initial Tender Stage Overview

1.1.1.   The diagram below, shows the stages after the Participation down selection has been completed and Potential Suppliers have submitted their ISIT proposals:
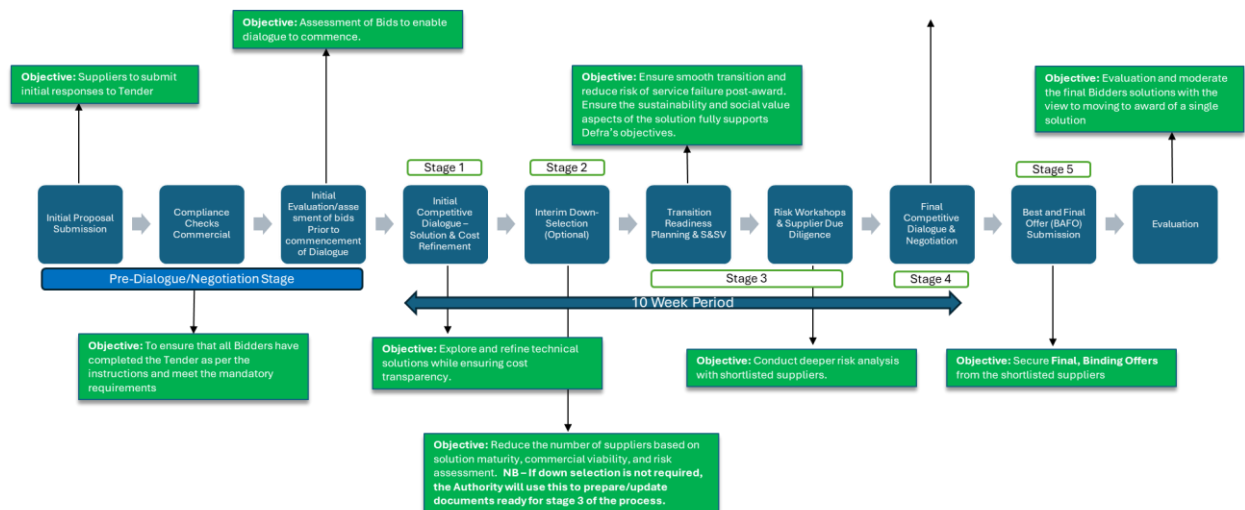


*Diagram 3 – ISIT/ISFT Process Overview*

1.1.2. During each the dialogue/negotiation stages, Potential Suppliers can submit clarification questions (CQs) to the Authority. This should be submitted via the procurement portal, any other method must be agreed with the Authority prior to submission.  All clarification questions submitted and answered by the Authority will be shared with all Potential Suppliers unless they have been marked and agreed by the Authority as Commercially Sensitive. In that case, the Authority will consider whether the clarification question raises matters of interest to other Potential Suppliers. If it concludes that it does, it will distribute a version of the question and its response that does not disclose any commercially sensitive information.

1.1.3.   **Invitation to Submit Initial Tender (ISIT):**

- **Data Room Access Expansion**: Potential Suppliers will gain further access to the Data Room to assist in developing their Initial Tenders.

   **Invitation to Submit Initial Tenders (ISITs):** Potential Suppliers will be invited to submit Initial Tenders via the Authority's procurement portal. These tenders will focus on Potential Suppliers' proposed approaches to meeting the Authority's requirements, including technical, commercial, and innovation elements.

- **Submission of revised Initial Tenders:** following the Clarification Meetings, Potential Suppliers will submit any revisions to their Initial Tenders via the Authority's procurement portal.

## Pre-Dialogue/Negotiation Stage.

1.2.1. **Compliance Checks:**

- **Bid Compliance Checks**: The Authority will review the Initial Tenders to ensure all mandatory requirements have been met.

- **Potential Supplier Initial Tender Preparation:** The Authority prepare the Initial Tenders for issue to the Evaluation Panel to conduct an initial assessment.

1.2.2. **Pre-Dialogue/Negotiation Initial Tender Assessment:**

- **Initial ISIT Assessment:** The Authority will conduct its initial assessment of the ISIT proposals, using the assessment methodology set out in the ISIT Instructions document. This will help prepare for Stage 1 of the process and provide feedback to the Potential Suppliers to prepare for dialogue/negotiations.

   **Authority Dialogue Preparation:** to the Authority will share dialogue/negation workshop details and objectives together with high-level feedback on their initial tenders to the Potential Suppliers to commence the dialogue phase.

## Stage 1 - Initial Competitive Dialogue – Solution & Cost Refinement.

1.3.1. On completion of the pre-dialogue/negotiation assessment, the following stages will be conducted in the order mapped out:

1.3.2. **Initial Competitive Dialogue Stage – Clarification and Refinement:**

   1.3.2.1. During structured initial dialogue with each Potential Supplier that has submitted an Initial Tender, the Authority will clarify and test elements of the Potential Supplier's proposal. Potential Suppliers will be invited to refine and re-submit their Initial Tenders. The key focus areas of dialogue shall be:

- **Solution Feasibility:** Understanding Potential Supplier offerings, innovative approaches, and alignment with Authority requirements.

- **Data Centre Approach** – Detailed discussions on the treatment of the Andover/Cody Park DCs to agree any changes to requirements/approach (Co-Lo agreement or alternative).

- **Cost Models & Transparency:** Preliminary pricing models, TCO discussions, and cost drivers.

- **Service Levels & Performance Metrics:** Reviewing uptime commitments, penalties, and gainshare models.

- **Compliance & Regulatory Considerations:** Ensuring Potential Supplier adherence to legal, security, and sustainability standards.

- **Value-Added Benefits:** Identifying additional features that enhance value-for-money.

1.3.2.2.    After initial dialogue sessions:

- Potential Suppliers may refine and re-submit their Initial Tenders to take account discussions with and feedback from the Authority.

- The Authority will reassess the re-submitted Initial Tenders, where the Potential Supplier has refined or clarified its Initial Tender.

- This reassessment is conducted to update scoring or qualitative judgments, ensuring decisions reflect the most accurate supplier position.

## Stage 2 – Interim Down-Selection Stage (Optional).

1.4.1.  Following initial dialogue, the Authority will conduct an interim down-selection where the number of Potential Suppliers that submitted Initial Tenders is greater than three (3). It will not undertake an interim down-select where the number of Potential Suppliers invited to submit Initial Tenders is three (3) or fewer. This step will:

- Reassess supplier responses using a simplified scoring approach based on clarified submissions (see section 5.13).

- Focus on delivery confidence, sustainability, and commercial feasibility.

- Reduce the supplier field (e.g. from five to three) for final dialogue and tendering.

- **Outcome:** A reduction in the number of Potential Suppliers progressing to the final dialogue phases.

## Stage 3 - Transition Readiness Planning, Sustainability, Social Value and Risk Workshops dialogue.

1.5.1.  This stage will include the following:

1.5.2.  **Transition Readiness Planning, Sustainability and Social Value dialogue:**

- Potential Suppliers provide detailed transition and implementation plans.

- The Authority and Potential Suppliers run a tabletop scenario exercise to simulate operational handover.

- Focus on potential failure points such as data migration, service continuity, governance, and SLA adherence.

- Ensure sustainability and social value commitments are understood that match the objectives of Authority

- **Outcome:** Ensures realistic implementation planning and helps suppliers identify early-stage risks. Test sustainability and social value solutions for feasibility following initial dialogue/negotiations.

### 1.5.3. **Risk Workshop and Supplier Due Diligence:**

- Conduct structured risk workshops in which Potential Suppliers present risk management strategies.

- Cover key areas such as contractual risks, security risks, and service continuity.

- Finalise/remove where possible the potential risks, assumptions, third-party dependencies and Authority Responsibilities.

- **Outcome:** Helps mitigate unexpected issues and increases confidence in supplier viability.

## Stage 4 - Final Competitive Dialogue and Negotiation Stage.

### 1.6.1. **Final Competitive Dialogue and Negotiation Stage:**

- **Final Cost Negotiations:** Refinement of unit pricing, total contract value, and pricing assumptions, following the previous dialogue stages.

- **Final Solution Alignment**: Finalising the proposed approach in relation to feasibility, scalability, and risk mitigation.

- **Contractual Terms & SLA Agreements:** Finalising penalties, incentives, and governance models.

- **Performance & Exit Strategy Considerations:** Long-term operability and future scalability options.

- **Outcome:** A structured framework for ISFT submissions, ensuring clarity and final commitment alignment.

## Stage 5 - Invitation to Submit Final Tender Stage (ISFT)/ Best and Final Offer (BAFO).

### 1.7.1. **Final Tender Stage (ISFT)/BAFO:**

- **Invitation to Submit Final Tenders (ISFTs):** Following the conclusion of negotiations, Potential Suppliers will be invited to submit Final Tenders. These

tenders will represent their best and final offers, incorporating negotiated elements.

- **Clarification Questions:** Suppliers may submit written clarification questions during this stage via the procurement portal.

- **Evaluation of Final Tenders:** The Authority will evaluate Final Tenders using the Award Criteria to identify the most advantageous tender (MAT). The evaluation will focus on delivering value for money, technical excellence, and alignment with the project's objectives.

- **Preferred Supplier Selection:** The supplier offering the most advantageous tender will be designated as the Preferred Supplier. Due diligence will be carried out on the Preferred Supplier's participation stage information to confirm eligibility and compliance.

- **Reserve Supplier notification**: At the same time as the appointment of the Preferred Supplier, the Authority will notify the next highest ranked Potential Supplier that it is the Reserve Supplier. If, for any reason, the Authority does not award the Contract to the Preferred Supplier, the Authority reserves the right to invite the Reserve Supplier to become the Preferred Supplier.

## Pre-Contract Finalisation/Contract Award Stage

1.8.1. **Pre-Contract Finalisation Stage:**

- Following the completion of the evaluation and moderation process, the Authority will enter a final set of Contract Closure discussions, to close out the contract preparation with the Preferred Potential Supplier prior to contract signatures.

1.8.2. **Contract Award Stage:**

- **Internal Approvals:** The Authority will complete all internal approvals required for contract award.

- **Standstill Period:** Following the receipt of approvals, the Authority will provide an assessment summary to each Potential Supplier that submitted a Final Tender. It will then publish the contract award notice and observe an eight (8) working day standstill period in accordance with Procurement Act 2023.

- **Contract Signature:** The contract will be signed with the Preferred Supplier upon completion of the standstill period.

- **Contract Details Notice**: within the period required by the Procurement Act 2023, the Authority will publish the contract details notice and a copy of the signed contract with commercially sensitive information redacted.

## Procurement Process Timetable.

1.9.1. The timetable below provides the key dates for the stages of the procurement:

| Milestone | Date |
|---|---|
| Issue Notice – UK4 Tender Notice | 8th August 2025 |
| Conditions of participation and PQ Issue to Market | 8th August 2025 |
| PQ Response (25 calendar days) | 2nd September 2025 |
| Issue Invitation to Submit Initial Tender (ISIT) | 16th October 2025 |
| ISIT Response (30 calendar days) | 13th November 2025 |
| Negotiation Starts (10 Weeks) | 1st 8th December 2025 |
| Negotiation Ends | 13th 20th February 2026 |
| Issue Invitation to Submit Final Tender (BAFO) | 5th March 2026 |
| ISFT Response (30 calendar days) | 2nd April 2026 |
| Post Tender Contract Finalisation (Preferred Potential Supplier only) | May 2026 |
| Governance Period | May to August 2026 |
| Contract Award/Standstill Period | 12th August 2026 – 25th August 2026 |
| Contracts Details Notice and redacted Contract published | 2026 |
| Contract Signature | 24th September 2026 |

*Table 1 – Procurement Timetable*

## Award Criteria – Quality

1.10.1.  The Authority has determined the award criteria and sub-criteria it will use to assess the Interim and Final Tenders and determine the most advantageous tender. The award criteria and their relative importance represented as a percentage of total importance is as follows:

| Award criteria | Weighting at Final Tender | Range (Percentage Points) |
|---|---|---|
| **Quality** | 70% | - 20% |
| **Price** | 30% | + 20% |

*Table 2 – Level 1 Criteria/Weightings*

1.10.2. Within the Quality award criteria, there are several award sub-criteria, as follows:

| Award Criteria | Sub-Criteria |
|---|---|
| Quality | Potential Supplier Solution |
| | Security and Compliance |
| | Sustainability and Social Value |
| | Implementation Services |
| Price | |

*Table 3 – Evaluation Criteria*

1.10.3. For the potential down-select following the submission of the ISFTs, the detail of each award criteria and sub-criteria together with the assessment methodology setting out how the Interim Tenders are to be assessed by reference to the award criteria is set out in section [cross-reference] (below).

1.10.4. The following table provides the lower-level technical award sub-criteria that will be used for the ISFT evaluation based on a 70/30 quality/price weighting:

| Solution - Detailed Award Criteria for ISFT | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Level 2 Award Criteria | Weighting % | Question No. | L3 Award Sub-Criteria | L3 Weighting % |
| Potential Supplier Solution | 35% | SOL03.01 | On-Premises | 7.0% |
| | | SOL03.02 | Cloud Services | 10.0% |
| | | SOL03.03 | Transformation Scenario (On-Premises) | 3.0% |
| | | SOL03.04 | FinOps | 4.0% |
| | | SOL03.05 | Technology - AI/ML/Automation and future technology Use | 3.0% |
| | | SOL03.06 | Continual Service Improvement, Evolution & Optimisation, Performance Management | 3.0% |
| | | SOL03.07 | Optional Project Services & Onboarding | 2.0% |
| | | SOL03.08 | Collaboration, Supplier Performance & Behaviours | 3.0% |
| Security Solution | 5% | SEC02.01 | Security Solution | 5.0% |
| Sustainability & Social Value | 15% | S&SV02.01 | Carbon Reduction | 4.0% |
| | | S&SV02.02 | Sustainable Resource Use and Waste Reduction | 4.0% |
| | | S&SV02.03 | Climate Change Resilience | 2.0% |
| | | S&SV02.04 | Social Value | 5.0% |
| Implementation Services | 15% | IMP02.01 | Project Implementation Plan and Milestone Deliverables | 6.0% |
| | | IMP02.02 | Implementation Delivery Resources | 2.0% |
| | | IMP02.03 | Continuity of Service | 3.0% |
| | | IMP02.04 | Service Readiness & Cutover | 2.5% |
| | | IMP02.05 | Interaction with Former Suppliers | 1.5% |

*Table 4 – Level 3 Weightings*

1.10.5. As part of the ISIT and ISFT, Potential Suppliers will be required to provide their Risks, Assumptions and Dependencies (RAD) against each question as well as a separate RAD log including all RADs and cross-referenced to those identified for each question.

1.10.6. The Authority will use the RAD document to support the Technical Evaluation. Where RAD items are not included/referenced against each Technical Evaluation Question, the Authority will use additional RAD items as part of the overall evaluation.

1.10.7. The Authority will include Allowable Assumption costs from the Potential Supplier's RAD log into the Total Contract Value (TCV) for the purposes of commercial evaluation. Potential Suppliers must ensure that all costed assumptions are clearly itemised and justified within their submission.

1.10.8. The Authority will assess any RAD items that have not been linked to a Technical Question by assessing whether the nature and/or extent of the risks assigned to the Authority and the dependencies, if accepted by the Authority, would constitute a significant transfer of risk and/or responsibility from the Potential Supplier to the Authority. If the Authority consider they do, it will reduce the Potential Supplier's overall quality mark to account for that transfer.

1.10.9. The Authority will assess any RAD items that have not been linked to a Technical Question using the following methodology:

   1.10.9.1.   The Authority will evaluate all RAD items not directly linked to a Technical Evaluation Question to determine the extent to which, taken as a whole, those RAD items:

   - Require the Authority to incur additional cost or undertaken significant additional effort;
   - Require the Authority to assume responsibility for the acts or omissions of a third-party with which it has no existing legal relationship that would allow the Authority to require that third-party to act in a certain way; and/or
   - Transfer financial or performance risk for the Services from the Potential Supplier to the Authority.

   1.10.9.2.   The Authority will classify the overall impact of the RADs on the Authority as minor, moderate or major, with the following impact on the Potential Supplier's quality scores depending on the classification:

| Impact of RADs | Percentage Reduction of Quality Score |
|---|---|
| Minor | 0% |
| Moderate | -1.5% |
| Major | -3% |

1.10.10.        Full details of this approach will be provided in the ISIT and ISFT. The inclusion by a Potential Supplier of a risk assigned to the Authority or an Authority dependency in its

response to a Technical Evaluation Question or its RAD log does not require the Authority to accept responsibility for that risk or dependency.

## Award Criteria – Price

1.10.11.      The Price evaluation will consist of the following criteria for ISIT/ISFT:

| Award Criteria | Sub-Criteria | Weighting (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Price – 30%** | Total Cost of Solution | 22.5% |
| | Transformation Scenario – Data Centre Exit | 2.5% |
| | Rate Card Scenario – Blended Cost for Project Services | 5% |

*Table 5 – Price Weightings*

1.10.12.      The Total Cost of the Solution will be based on the Potential Supplier's fully costed proposal to deliver the Services described in the procurement process/documentation. This will include Implementation Services and Core Services, and account for any Risks, Assumptions and Dependencies included in the Final Tender.

1.10.13.      The Transformation Scenario will be based on the exiting of a Data Centre (Andover in this instance) to a Public Cloud Solution.

1.10.14.      The Rate Card Scenario will be based on an example project, where Potential Suppliers will be required to use their submitted rate cards using on-shore, near-shore and off-shore resources based on the SFIA roles identified in the Scenario.

1.10.15.      The range shown in the table above are contingent on each other, therefore if Price was to increase by 10%, the Quality would decrease by 10%.

## Award Criteria – Weightings Change and Examples ISFT Stage

1.11.1. Under the PA2023 Section 24, the Authority may refine an award criterion as part of the competitive flexible procedure. It may also, refine the relative importance of the award criteria. Defra will, following the end of negotiations, consider whether it will refine the relative importance of the award criteria by changing the weighting of each criteria within the limits set out in the table in paragraph 1.10.1, i.e., by plus or minus twenty (20) percentage points. Any change will reflect the Authority's view at the closure of negotiations of whether there are a sufficient number of solutions that are likely to fully meet its requirements. Where the Authority consider that there are, it will increase the

weighting of the price award criterion and reduce the weighting of the quality award criterion.

1.11.2. In the event of a level 1 Criteria weighting change, the level 2 and level 3 weightings will change proportionally. For example, if level 1 Quality changed to 60% and Price to 40% the following would change in relation to level 2:

| Award Criteria (Lvl 1) | Sub-Criteria | Level 2 Weighting (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Quality – 60%** | Solution | 30% |
| | Implementation | 12.9% |
| | Sustainability | 12.9% |
| | Social Value | |
| | Security | 4.3% |
| **Price – 40%** | Price | 40% |

*Table 6 – Example Level 1 and 2 Change*

1.11.3. The table below provides an example change to level 3 weightings:

| Solution - Detailed Award Criteria for ISIT/ISFT | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Level 3 Award Criteria | Weighting % | Question No. | L4 Question | L4 Weighting % |
| Potential Supplier Solution | 30% | SOL03.01 | On-Premises | 6.0% |
| | | SOL03.02 | Cloud Services | 8.6% |
| | | SOL03.03 | Transformation Scenario (On-Premises) | 2.6% |
| | | SOL03.04 | FinOps | 3.4% |
| | | SOL03.05 | Technology - AI/ML/Automation and future technology Use | 2.6% |
| | | SOL03.06 | Continual Service Improvement, Evolution & Optimisation, Performance Management | 2.6% |
| | | SOL03.07 | Optional Project Services & Onboarding | 1.7% |
| | | SOL03.08 | Collaboration, Supplier Performance & Behaviours | 2.6% |
| Security Solution | 4.3% | SEC02.01 | Security Solution | 4.3% |
| Sustainability & Social Value | 12.9% | S&SV02.01 | Carbon Reduction | 3.4% |
| | | S&SV02.02 | Sustainable Resource Use and Waste Reduction | 3.40% |

| | | S&SV02.03 | Climate Change Resilience | 1.70% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | S&SV02.04 | Social Value | 4.3% |
| Implementation Services | 12.9% | IMP02.01 | Project Implementation Plan and Milestone Deliverables | 5.1% |
| | | IMP02.02 | Implementation Delivery Resources | 1.7% |
| | | IMP02.03 | Continuity of Service | 2.6% |
| | | IMP02.04 | Service Readiness & Cutover | 2.1% |
| | | IMP02.05 | Interaction with Former Suppliers | 1.3% |

*Table 7 – ISFT Weightings after a Lvl1 & Lvl2 change*

1.11.4. The table below provides an example change to Cost weightings:

| Award Criteria | Sub-Criteria | Weighting (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Price – 40%** | Total Cost of Solution | 30% |
| | Transformation Scenario – Data Centre Exit | 3.3% |
| | Rate Card Scenario – Blended Cost for Project Services | 6.7% |

*Table 8 – ISFT Cost Weightings after a Lvl1 change*

1.11.5. In accordance with the PA2023, the Authority will refine the award criteria between the Initial Tender and the Final Tender and reserves the right to, as a consequence, refine the weightings set out in the ISIT instructions and as per the above section 5.11.

## 1.12. Interim Down-Selection Evaluation Criteria (Optional)

1.12.1. Where the Authority invites more than three (3) Potential Suppliers to submit Initial Tenders, the Authority will undertake a down-selection to exclude suppliers based on an interim assessment of their initial tenders upon completion of the initial dialogue phase.

1.12.2. The Authority may take a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of (5) suppliers through to the next phase of dialogue/negotiations if the interim down-selection is utilised. Further details of the approach used to determine how many Potential Suppliers will progress through to further negotiation will be included in the Invitation to Submit Initial Tenders.

1.12.3. Where the Authority undertakes the Interim Down Selection, the Authority will use the award criteria and methodology set out below.

1.12.4. The award criteria, award sub-criteria and their definitions are:

- **Quality**:

- **Potential supplier solution** - The extent to which the Supplier's proposed technical solution is robust, scalable, and capable of delivering the Authority's service requirements.

- **Sustainability and social value** - The Supplier's commitments and credible plans to deliver environmental, social, and economic value alongside the core services.

- **Implementation services** - The proposed approach to transitioning services from incumbent providers to the new operating model, including risk mitigation and continuity safeguards.

- **Security and compliance** - The Supplier's understanding of, and compliance with, relevant data protection and security— and their approach to identifying and mitigating delivery risks.

- **Price** - The pricing structure, cost transparency, and overall commercial proposition offered by the supplier.

1.12.5. The weighting of the award criteria and award sub-criteria is as follows:

| Award Criteria | Award Sub-Criteria | Weighting % |
|---|---|---|
| Quality | Potential Supplier Solution | 35% |
| | Security and Compliance Solution | 5% |
| | Sustainability & Social Value | 15% |
| | Implementation Services | 15% |
| Price | | 30% |

*Table 9 – ISFT Lvl 2 Weightings*

1.12.6. Each assessment area will be scored on a 4-point scale, taking into account the Potential Supplier's bid as a whole, as follows:

1.12.7. The table below provides the overview of the scoring to each award criteria at the interim down-selection stage only and how the scoring criteria would be applied (reflecting the position in the Potential Supplier's Initial Tenders):

| Assessment Area | Score 3 (Strong) | Score 2 (Moderate) | Score 1 (Weak) | Score 0 (Unacceptable) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Potential Supplier Solution Feasibility** | Proposed solution is robust and it satisfies and is fully aligned to the Authority's requirements. | Proposed solution satisfies and is largely aligned to the Authority's requirements, but some gaps remain | Proposed solution has the clear potential to satisfy the Authority's requirements, but lacks alignment, | Cannot demonstrate technical feasibility. It does not meet and is unlikely to satisfy the Authority's requirements. |

| Assessment Area | Score 3 (Strong) | Score 2 (Moderate) | Score 1 (Weak) | Score 0 (Unacceptable) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | in alignment or evidence. | clarity or sufficient design detail. | |
| Sustainability & Social Value | Clear Net Zero alignment and credible social value plan. Delivery plan and metrics give confidence that the Supplier will deliver its commitments. | Commitments made satisfy the Authority's requirements, but there is insufficient detail or clarity concerning the delivery plan or metrics to give confidence that the Potential Supplier will deliver its commitments. | Commitments made have the clear potential to satisfy the Authority's net zero and social value requirements, but there is limited alignment to the Authority's sustainability expectations and/or limited confidence that the Potential Supplier will deliver its commitments. | No clear sustainability or social value response, or the response does not satisfy and is satisfy to meet the Authority's net zero and social value requirements/ |
| Commercial Feasibility & Pricing | The pricing model submitted with the Initial Tender has clear justification for the level of resource engaged to provide the Services, the charges for those resources is transparent and there are few, if any, risks, assumptions, dependencies of Authority Responsibilities included in the Initial Tender. | The pricing model submitted with the Initial Tender largely justifies the level of resource engaged to provide the Services, the charges for those resources is mostly transparent and there is a moderate number of risks, assumptions, dependencies of Authority Responsibilities included in the Initial Tender. | The pricing model submitted with the Initial Tender has some justification for the level of resource engaged to provide the Services, the charges for those resources lacks transparency and there are many risks, assumptions, dependencies of Authority Responsibilities included in the Initial Tender.. | The pricing model submitted with the Initial Tender lacks any justification for the level of resource engaged to provide the Services, the charges for those resources is opaque and there are very many risks, assumptions, dependencies of Authority Responsibilities included in the Initial Tender. |
| Implementation & Transition Plan | Detailed, phased draft transition plan with realistic resourcing, that fully meets the Authority's requirements and provides high confidence of successful implementation and transition. | Proposed draft transition plans satisfies and is largely aligned to the Authority's requirements, but lack of detail on resourcing and/or timing limits confidence in a successful | Proposed draft transition plan has the clear potential to satisfy the Authority's requirements and provide for a successful implementation and transition, but the draft plan contains unclear | No credible transition or cutover approach. The draft transition plan does not satisfy and is unlikely to satisfy the Authority's requirements. |

| Assessment Area | Score 3 (Strong) | Score 2 (Moderate) | Score 1 (Weak) | Score 0 (Unacceptable) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | implementation and transition.. | phasing or vague resourcing assumptions that significantly reduce confidence | |
| Security | The Initial Tender and draft Security Management Plan submitted with it are fully compliant with data protection requirements, Schedule 5 (Security Management) and security standards. | The Initial Tender and draft Security Management Plan submitted with it is mostly compliant with data protection requirements, Schedule 5 (*Security Management*) and security standards, with minor gaps. | The Initial Tender and draft Security Management Plan submitted with it has the clear potential to be fully compliant with data protection requirements, Schedule 5 (*Security Management*) and security standards, but certain risks remain unresolved or the proposed resolution of them lacks clear evidence. | Non-compliant with key security obligations. The Initial Tender and draft Security Management Plan submitted with it do not satisfy and are unlikely to satisfy the Authority's requirements. |

*Table 10 – Criteria against Scoring Methodology "Interim Down Selection"*

1.12.8. This assessment will focus on whether the Initial Tenders satisfy the Authority's requirements and identify the tenders that best satisfy the Award Criteria, using the assessment methodology set out above and in the ISIT, at the point the assessment is made. The assessment of Initial Tenders will not be taken into account when the Authority assessed the Final Tenders.

1.12.9. The full details of the award criteria and assessment methodology for the Interim Down-Selection Stage will be detailed in the instructions for the ISIT stage of the process.

1.12.10. Potential Suppliers cannot rely on scores they receive from the assessment of their Initial Tenders as an indication of the scores they will receive in the assessment of their Final Tenders. A fresh assessment will take place at that stage which will not be influenced by any assessment undertaken on their initial tenders.