



Defra Group Management Consultancy Call off Contract: Project Engagement Letter

Completed forms and any queries should be directed to Defra Group Commercial (DgC) at [REDACTED]. Please do not complete this form until you have liaised with DgC, and they have allocated you a lot to access Consultancies within and subsequent reference number.

Engagement details			
Engagement ref #			
Extension?	No	DPEL Ref.	DPEL_61541_156
Business Area	Group HR (GCS Change Portfolio)		
Programme / Project	HR Automation Programme Phase 3 (GCS Portal project)		
Senior Responsible Officer	[REDACTED]		
Supplier	Methods Business & Digital Technology		
Title	DDP194 HR Automation Planning Support		
Short description	<p>HR Automation Programme Phase 3 in Development/Feasibility stage. To support preparation for development of a Programme Business Case, support initial stakeholder engagements and to maximise success for Delivery stage, Programme Team require planning expertise to develop a baselined integrated delivery plan.</p> <p>Previous knowledge transfer, managing a baselined schedule, supported excellent timely delivery of Phase 2. For Phase 3, the team require further knowledge transfer on developing a baselined delivery plan.</p>		
Engagement start / end date	30 June 2025	29 August 2025	
Consultancy Spend approval reference			
Expected costs 23/24	n/a		
Expected costs 24/25	n/a		
Expected costs 25/26	£24,840		
Dept. PO reference			
Lot #			
Version #	1.0		

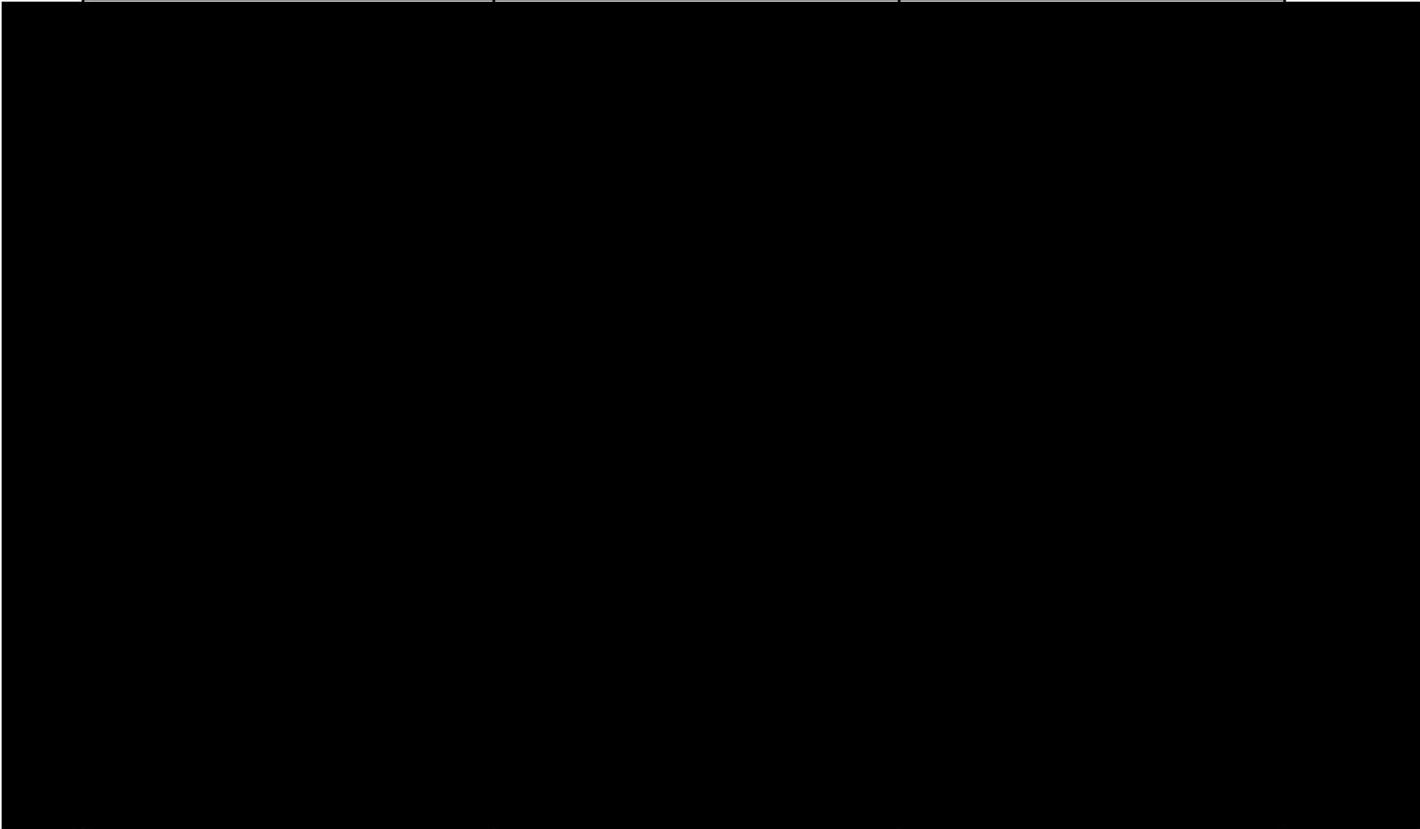
Approval of Project Engagement Letter

By signing and returning this cover note, GCS Transformation accepts the contents of this Project Engagement Letter as being the services required and agrees for Methods Business and Digital



Technology to provide the services in accordance with the agreed Supplier Proposal under the overarching contract (Lot 3 - Ref 28595), with Defra Group and confirms the availability of funding to support recharge for the services.

Signatures		
Supplier	Business Area	Defra Group Commercial



Supplier engages with Business Area to complete. Once agreed, Supplier signs front page and sends to Business Area	Business Area signs front page and sends to DgC	On approval, DgC signs and returns copy to Business Area and Supplier
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Supplier contact:



General Instructions

1. Background

In preparation for the Programme Mandate and Programme Brief development, the Programme team have developed individual plan-on-a-page for the four probable projects of Phase 3:

- i. Further roll-out of MyHR Leavers Service to Natural England and Environment Agency
- ii. Extension of MyHR Leavers Service to contingent labour
- iii. MyHR Query Service, i.e. Extension of MyHR Resourcing Queries Service to include other HR queries services



- iv. MyHR Demand Management service, including a common design phase across Defra Group Corporate Services.

In Phase 2, Methods provided planning specialist resource (under DPEL 61541_135) to develop a baselined integrated delivery plan, which rapidly improved delivery confidence from Amber-Red to Green. As a result, the programme was able to deliver its objectives on time, to quality and budget. The current requirement is to support the development of a baselined integrated delivery plan, plan-on -a-page and identify the critical path within the schedule. In addition, knowledge transfer to the programme team. Focus on skills to develop a baselined integrated delivery plan and refresh, where necessary, skills to managing a baselined schedule.

2. Statement of services

Objectives and outcomes to be achieved

Objective UID:	Objective	Linked to Deliverable(s)	Outcome(s)
A	Develop baselined Integrated Delivery Plan and Review Schedule: Work with Programme Team to validate project POAPs, develop a baselined integrated delivery plan and develop an integrated Programme POAP.	D1 D2 D3 D5	1. Baselined Programme Schedule aligned. 2. High-Level POAP. 3. Schedule tasks tested to confirm in/out scope. 4. Milestone/activity language consistent throughout Programme POAP, schedule & any reporting templates. 5. Agreed process for ongoing schedule maintenance.
B	Establish critical path to delivery of 4 programme objectives: Validate milestones & activity blocks holistically with all stakeholders.	D4 D5	1. Validate & agree path to delivery of (i) MyHR Leavers roll-out to EA, NE and contingent labour, (ii) extended MyHR Queries Service and (iii) MyHR demand management. 2. Identify Critical path, Assumptions/Dependencies/Risks/Issues aligned with workshop outputs. 3. Cross team understanding of process to establish critical path & represent at HL for baselining. 4. Support the further development of the Programme's Dependency log, Assumptions log and Risk/Issues Log
C	Knowledge Transfer & Training in Schedule Management Best Practices: To equip the team with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain the integrated delivery plan and effectively manage its schedule using Microsoft Project, including baselining, tracking progress, and managing changes.	D6	1. Increase proficiency of the team in developing and baselining a programme plan in Microsoft Project. 2. Increase proficiency of the team in managing a schedule in Microsoft Project, including the setting & managing a baseline and techniques for tracking progress, managing changes and ensuring accurate forecasting. 3. Guideline recommendations for best practice to effectively manage a schedule provided.

Scope

**In scope:**

- Review and validation of the Project Schedule including the six named workstreams.
- Identification of in-scope and out-of-scope activities within workstreams.
- Analysis of inter-project dependencies and their impact on timelines.
- Training sessions for key project management staff on developing a programme plan and refresher of scheduling and baseline management.
- Recommendations for managing deviations from the baseline.

Out of scope: The following services are out of scope of this DPEL and would require a Change Control Notice (CCN) or follow on DPEL to provide:

- direct involvement in making changes to project timelines or delivery dates.
- responsibility for managing external vendors or third-party dependencies.
- support any additional workstreams outside Phase 3 added post-engagement or beyond the initial review.

Assumptions and dependencies**Assumptions:**

1. PPM service delivery will be aligned with central Defra portfolio directorate standards and HR Automation expectations where applicable.
2. Methods staff will have access to key stakeholders, including the Project Managers and Workstream Managers, who will engage meaningfully and promptly.
3. Relevant stakeholders will participate in pre- and post-workshop self-assessments.
4. All relevant stakeholders will be available for knowledge transfer, with key topics communicated to the Methods team.
5. Leadership across the programme is aligned in approach and thinking, supporting the engagements constructively.
6. Agreed formats for product delivery will be established upfront.
7. Methods staff will have appropriate access to IT systems for extracting relevant information throughout the contract.

Dependencies:

1. Access to key stakeholders is necessary to deliver the work and meet outcomes.
2. Stakeholder engagement is critical for the success of workshops, assessments, and knowledge transfer.
3. The availability of relevant stakeholders for knowledge transfer and communication of key topics is essential.
4. Timely review and feedback from stakeholders is needed to avoid impacting Methods' delivery windows.
5. There must be identified Project Team members to transfer knowledge related to schedule management.
6. The project requires a detailed stakeholder register and interest/influence analysis to ensure effective stakeholder management

Risk management

Two layers of risk management shall be considered during this engagement:

- Risk to the service provided by Methods to the Client. These risks shall be recorded and mitigated by Methods team and communicated to the named Point of Contact either through regular governance structure or on an ad-hoc basis should a critical risk be raised.
- Risk to the projects which the Methods team are supporting the Client to deliver will be managed through project level risk processes via the Project Manager. Mitigations will be jointly developed.

Risks identified at this point to be included:

- There is a risk that there could be challenges with stakeholder availability and/or engagement that could impact timeframes.
- There is a risk that wider changes on direction could impact the requirements on the DPEL which could impact value of agreed outcomes and deliverables



- There is a risk that external factors (e.g. Stakeholder information / board decisions etc.) could delay the team's ability to agree to baseline the schedule, impacting Method's engagement and ability to support ongoing management capability as effectively.
- There is a risk that there may be a delay to Methods team gaining Project Online (POL) access which would delay all support work

Deliverables

Unique ID	Deliverable	Success criteria	Milestone/ Date	Workstream	Linked objective
D1	Ongoing Methods Reporting	Methods to provide regular highlight reports covering ongoing progress against all deliverables, outlining any upskilling provided & highlighting any blockers, new risks/issues/ dependencies for resolution.	15 August 2025	Programme Management	All
D2	Baselined Integrated Programme Plan (IDP)	Develop and baseline an integrated delivery plan to include all identified high level milestones & to be developed to outline critical path alongside the baseline plan incorporating relevant assumptions.	21 July 2025	Programme Management	
D3	Programme POAP	Develop Programme Plan on a Page (POAP) to include all identified high level milestones & to be developed to outline critical path alongside the baseline plan incorporating relevant assumptions.	21 July 2025	Programme Management	
D4	Critical Path	All stakeholder workshops to take place, providing playback to validate IDP and POAP and secure cross stakeholder agreement for path to Phase 3 go live. Identified assumptions, dependencies and risks to be logged.	21 July 2025	Programme Management	
D5	Project Plan Review & Plan Maintenance process	Post workshop, Methods to provide hands on planning resource support. Develop project schedule ensuring it is fully aligned with agreed HL RQR Path to Go Live. Milestones & activity aligned across POAP and plan with key milestones identified. In/out scope activity validation and clean up. Critical path identification and timeline development. Dependencies logic linked within plan. Plan in line with Defra standards. Assumptions/Dependencies/Risks logs on Pol aligned to workshop outputs.	01 August 2025	Programme Management	



		Established workplan process for PMO team to take forward ongoing plan maintenance.			
D6	Knowledge Transfer & Training	Online training session(s) on Microsoft Project schedule management best practices: Tier 0 – Overview ‘What is a Plan?’ video for future stakeholders Tier 1 – All Stakeholder Capability Session to read & understand a schedule Tier 2 – Maintaining/managing plan on day-to-day basis including dependencies logic linked Tier 3 – Specialised plan management including critical path identification Development of a baselined integrated delivery plan Training materials & recordings provided. Upskilling sessions provided with coaching sessions available for 1:1 support	15 August 2025	Programme Management	

Limitations on scope and change control

Unless instructions to the Supplier are later amended in writing, the work undertaken will be restricted to that set out above. In providing the services detailed above, the Supplier will be acting in reliance on information provided by the Business Area.

The Project Engagement Letter is the agreed contract of work between the Defra Group Business Area and the Supplier and can be varied under the change control process. Any changes to timescales, scope and costs will require approval by DgC.

This Project will be undertaken on a fixed price milestone basis.

Total resource

Total number of resource days

*Total days worked across all resources

**Total working days in engagement

Business Area's team



[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

HR Automation Programme Workstream	Workstream Leads
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

4. Fees

Defra Group will reimburse the Supplier for approved work done according to the table below. The total fees for the scope of work detailed in this Engagement Letter will be up to a maximum of £280,000, inclusive of expenses and excluding VAT.

Cost of the engagement as outlined above is determined by the total time spent by each consultant across the total engagement of the project.

	Cost	Due (link to milestone dates)
Milestone (1) - At completion	£24,840	29 th August 2025
Total	£24,840	
Grand total	£24,840	

Expenses statement

Defra Group overarching contract rates include expenses for any travel to/from any UK location defined by the Business Area as the base office for the work. Only expenses for travel at the Business Area's request from this base can be charged. If appropriate, define permissible expenses to be charged.

Payment

The Supplier should invoice fees monthly in arrears. Defra Group will reimburse fees monthly on confirmation of approval of work delivered by the Business Area. The Supplier will keep an accurate record of time spent by staff in providing the services and provide this information and supporting narrative, if requested.



5. Governance and reporting

As part of the Call-Off Contract, the Supplier and Business Area agree to provide reporting on the following:

- Completion of the time tracker on a monthly basis, to track days worked by our consultants;
- Weekly flash reports of progress and risks
- Weekly or fortnightly engagement with task and finish group

Key Performance Indicators

KPI	KPI Requirement	Description	Reporting Frequency	Who Measures	Method of Measurement	Performance Target
01	Timely Delivery	Deliverables delivered on time as agreed with key milestones	Fortnightly	Defra	% of project deliverables produced within agreed deadlines	100%
02	Quality of deliverables	Outputs are fit for purpose and support Programme/project outcomes with Zero spelling mistakes, clear and simple language and a coherent structure and flow	Quarterly	Defra	Qualitative feedback and assessment	1 round of feedback
03	Reporting provided on time	Reports are delivered on time, with appropriate sections completed to a good standard	Monthly	Defra	% of reports delivered on time	100%

Feedback and satisfaction

Defra Group reserves the right to hold review meetings during the assignment, discussing what went well, opportunities for improvement on future assignments and similar. This will incorporate any 'Show and Tell' documentation or transferable products that have been produced.

A post-engagement quality review of the engagement will be arranged where the Business Area rates the services provided.

Non-disclosure agreements

N/A. The overarching MCF2 framework include relevant NDAs.

6. Exit management

The agreed actions and deliverables by the Supplier for when the contract ends are as follows:

Describe what the supplier will produce upon existing the project engagement:
Upon exit, the supplier will:

- Provide a handover note setting out the location of all final deliverables



- Undertake a (minimum) 1 hour handover meeting with the Defra team
- Provide a final summary of hours worked and associated invoices

Notice period

The nature of these engagements require that Defra Group have the ability to terminate an engagement with notice. Defra Group's termination rights for this engagement are marked below.

The minimum notice period for termination is 5 working days regardless of engagement duration.

1. Business Area identifies a potential need for delivery support, initiates a conversation with DgC, confirms which approvals are required for an engagement to occur, e.g. Consultancy Governance Board if over £100k or DgC Corporate Services Delivery Board if under £100k.
2. Request Form completed by Business Area and submitted to DgC at:
[REDACTED]
3. The form is reviewed by the DgC team around which resource route is most appropriate (e.g. Lots 1/2/3) and may request additional information/edits from the Business Area if required.
4. Lot / Supplier is selected and briefed on the request by DgC, then introduced to the requesting Business Area for further discussion and confirmation of work to be delivered
5. A Project Engagement Letter is completed by the Business Area with input from the Supplier (with supporting proposals as appropriate) and then finally agreed between the two parties, including evidence of all required approvals either being in place or being progressed (e.g. PO) and forwarded to the DgC for review by the Consultancy Governance Board (CGB). Approval states are:

Approval state	Definition	Permissions
Full approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DPEL agreed ▪ DPEL signed: Supplier, Dept and CO ▪ Purchase Order number 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work can start ▪ Supplier can invoice for work