

Q. Annex A, section 5 – ‘The winning bidder would be required to assist in the support and maintenance of all the above hardware and infrastructure in line with the requirements outlined in section 3, a – f.’

Can NMRN confirm what is meant by maintenance in this statement? For example, does this mean HW break-fix, patching or something else?

A. As suggested in the question, this is intended to be things like patching, software/firmware updates and other standard pro-active maintenance tasks.

Q. Annex A, section 3 C – ‘On-site support for issues escalated by the IT Manager. (Please specify SLA you are able to provide for on-site support in relation to critical issues. e.g. same day, next working day, 48 hours etc.)’

Can NMRN please advise how many requests there have been for on-site support during the last 12 months and if possible, the nature of the issues?

A. Please refer to issue 2 of the clarification questions.

Q. In Annex B, quality criteria number 3 (support package and SLAs) references Annex A, section 6 d. Unfortunately, we can’t see a section 6.

Could you tell us what this reference relates to please?

A. Apologies for this. This is a typo as the section referred to has been moved from Annex A. This is referring to the ‘Tender Requirements’ section underneath the evaluation criteria table in Annex B.

Q. You have stated that monitoring is in place and provided by your current MSP but monitoring is not directly listed in your support specification. Please can you advise if monitoring is in scope & required within the £75,000 3-year budget envelope?

A. Whilst monitoring is not directly in scope as an individual item, we currently have this as part of our existing package to provide real-time alerts to our MSP helpdesk on the status of our infrastructure. This would fall into scope as support and maintenance of infrastructure: Annex A, section 5 – ‘The winning bidder would be required to assist in the support and maintenance of all the above hardware and infrastructure in line with the requirements outlined in section 3, a – f.’ It is the supplier’s choice as to whether monitoring is included as part of their recommended support package.

Q. With reference to Support Specification d. Remote support of servers and infrastructure at all sites, can you confirm that this is for 3rd Line support to the in-house IT team and not for pro-active support, management and patching of the servers?

A. This would primarily be for 3rd line support to the IT team.

Q. Please could you clarify which services the free Azure credits have been used for?

A. We use Azure AD as part of our 365 setup. We only use Azure to enforce MFA for 365 logins but not much else. As we are on the free version, this has its limitations.

Q. Focussing on the point that the storage assets within the infrastructure are now out of warranty and support.

With this in mind, is there an opportunity to replace the hardware that is currently out of warranty/support? And if so does that sit outside of the stated budget?

IT Support Tender-
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A. As mentioned in Annex A, section 4 there is opportunity to replace this hardware. This sits outside of the scope of this initial support services tender and is not included in the stated budget.

Q. how many calls do you currently escalate to 3rd line / month any statistical history would be helpful.

A. Please refer to issue 2 of the clarification questions.

Q. Where the most volumes of calls might be ie servers, Microsoft end users etc.

A. We do not have formal information on this, however most tickets raised to the MSP by the in-house IT team will be around infrastructure such as servers/network.

Q. Who is responsible for software patching I assume internal team.

A. Primarily this would be the internal team with the assistance of the MSP if required. Should a supplier wish to include this within their recommended support package and can do so within budget, we would welcome this.

Q. Do you have OEM hardware / software contracts in place for all equipment, will renewals of contracts form a part of the future contract?

A. Please refer to issue 1 of the clarification questions for hardware support. For our software packages such as ticketing, we have support contracts in place with the vendors.

Q. You mentioned some applications are already in the cloud, who is your cloud provider?

A. We have various cloud/SaaS applications from various vendors. These are hosted with the vendors.

Q. What tools do you use internally including ticketing system?

A. Internally we do not have any management tools. We currently use Galaxy from Gateway Ticketing Systems but this is under vendor support.

Q. What are your internal SLA's to end users / business

A. For critical/urgent internal issues, we aim to respond within 1 hour. For standard priority, within 1 working day, and for low priority 1 working week. For service requests which do not present an issue, we do not have an internal SLA.

Q. Details of what the NMRN currently does in terms of cyber security are available on request

A. Please refer to issue 2 of the clarification questions.

Q. We would also like to clarify where your data is stored. Is everything on local servers on your premises?

A. All of our data is stored on-premise. As we use 365, our emails are in the cloud and we may have small amounts of data in things like Teams/OneDrive/SharePoint.

Q. In order to start providing services on 1st April could you confirm your planned date for making a decision?

A. After the tender closes on the 19th January, we will go through our evaluation phase before inviting the top 5 suppliers to interview. This is planned to be done by the end of January. Once this is done, we will re-evaluate and can then issue award notices and are then obliged to enter a 10 day standstill period. If everything is completed on schedule and we are able to get internal sign off etc. then we would be looking to move forwards by around mid-February.

Q. Are there any key challenges that will need to be dealt with as a priority on 1st April, especially where the outgoing MSP is concerned for example?

e.g. Is your current Veeam Cloud Connect relationship tied closely with your MSP contractual arrangements and will you be seeking to transition your Veeam CC archive data elsewhere? Or will Veeam CC repository provider relations be maintained such that when it is deemed necessary to retrieve archive data from the Cloud Connect repository, contractual obligations dictate that we will not have any commercial or competitive difficulties in doing so?

A. There are no priority issues which will need to be dealt with on 1st April. The Veeam cloud connect contract is separate to our existing support services contract so this would not present any challenges. It would be likely that we will want to host the repository with the winning supplier but this will not be an immediate priority for the 1st April.

Q. Regarding your current Citrix environment, are you using this to deliver a complete virtual desktop, or only specific published apps?

A. We are delivering a complete virtual desktop. However, as mentioned, we are looking at removing Citrix.

Q. What version of Citrix are you currently using?

A. Unknown

Q. Noted that NMRN are using vSphere 6.7 which is EOL. Have you maintained you VMware subscriptions under vendor support?

A. VMware is under full vendor support.

Q. Could you elaborate further on how you envisage working with the MSP on future (non-support) projects? You wish to work with the MSP to define future strategies and planning projects, but would this also rule out the MSP from actually delivering these projects or supplying goods related to future works?

A. The MSP will not be ruled out of delivering any projects and it is instead likely that we would want to work with the MSP to deliver these as they will have background knowledge on our infrastructure and understand how we work. Depending on the value of goods related to the project, we may have to take the supply of these through a tender to meet our procurement rules. However, the MSP will be able to bid for these.

Q. What has triggered the change in MSP? It would be helpful to know if this decision was intended to change circumstances as well as suppliers.

IT Support Tender-
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A. We have not reviewed this contract since 2016. As our current contract has come up for renewal, we are running this tender process to review the market and see what is available to NMRN. Furthermore, as well as being a charity, NMRN is classed as a non-departmental public body which means we are bound by certain procurement rules and are required to go to tender for larger value contracts.

Q. With the above in mind, are there any aspirations for your future MSP partnership that would be helpful to know? For example, that the future relationship has a greater degree of satisfaction measurement, or that there is more or less of a particular type of expertise?

A. The only aspirations for any future MSP partnerships are to ensure that NMRN and the supplier has a good working relationship and the MSP is able to fulfil the support requirements specified in this tender scope and the subsequent contract with timely, pro-active responses.

[Deadline for Submissions](#)

Thursday 19th January 2023 at Midday (1200)

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