



CONTENTS

1.	PURPOSE.....	2
2.	BACKGROUND TO THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.....	2
3.	BACKGROUND TO REQUIREMENT/OVERVIEW OF REQUIREMENT	2
4.	DEFINITIONS.....	3
5.	SCOPE OF REQUIREMENT	3
6.	THE REQUIREMENT	3
7.	KEY MILESTONES AND DELIVERABLES	5
8.	MANAGEMENT INFORMATION/REPORTING	5
9.	VOLUMES.....	5
10.	CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	5
11.	SUSTAINABILITY	6
12.	QUALITY	6
13.	PRICE	6
14.	STAFF AND CUSTOMER SERVICE	7
15.	SERVICE LEVELS AND PERFORMANCE	7
16.	SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS	8
17.	PAYMENT AND INVOICING	8
18.	CONTRACT MANAGEMENT	8
19.	LOCATION	8



1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), herein referred to as the Customer or Authority, is undertaking a procurement exercise to award a Contract to a Supplier to track changes to people's financial circumstances due to the covid19 pandemic.
- 1.2 The project will involve:
 - 1.2.1 Regular (every 2 weeks) tracker polling consisting of a grid of 10 battery statements to gauge change on a number of different personal financial and housing metrics;
 - 1.2.2 Monthly (every 4 weeks) booster sample of at least 400 renters in arrears and at least 100 renters asked to leave a rented tenancy by their landlord or agent, to capture additional detail – 5-7 follow-up questions;
 - 1.2.3 Regular delivery of data tables breaking down responses by key variables (in particular, housing tenure);
 - 1.2.4 Periodic delivery of raw data in SPSS format, including demographic and weighting variables.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

- 2.1 The Customer is a ministerial department, supported by 13 agencies and public bodies.
- 2.2 The Customer is responsible for housing in England and its job is to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area.
- 2.3 The Customer's key objectives include: driving up housing supply; increasing home ownership; devolving powers and budgets to boost local growth in England; and supporting strong communities with excellent public services.
- 2.4 This research is linked to the Customer's aims of supporting strong communities and driving up housing supply.

3. BACKGROUND TO REQUIREMENT / OVERVIEW OF REQUIREMENT

- 3.1 The customer seeks to better understand the financial resilience of households in light of the covid19 pandemic and, in particular, we require a way to track over time the proportion of renters in arrears and those who have been asked to leave a rented tenancy, in addition to the extent and nature of those arrears and evictions.
- 3.2 In the autumn 2020, the government put in place a support package for renters, to assist with any hardship encountered as a result of the covid19 pandemic (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-sets-out-comprehensive-support-for-renters-this-winter>). We will use the data collected from this project to monitor the circumstances of renters, track key metrics over time, and



understand any potential pressures on local authority services as a result of these circumstances.

- 3.3 An existing short contract for a very similar project is currently under way and was executed on an emergency basis due to the urgency surrounding the covid19 pandemic. The customer wishes to procure a new contract in order to obtain data into the summer of 2021.

4. DEFINITIONS

Expression or Acronym	Definition
MHCLG or the Customer	means the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
PRS	means Private Rented Sector
SRS	means Social Rented Sector
QA	means Quality Assure
SPSS	refers to the IBM SPSS statistics package

5. SCOPE OF REQUIREMENT

- 5.1 The Customer is commissioning time series polling on the nature and extent of the impact of covid19 on household finances and housing circumstances.
- 5.2 Specifically, the contract will include:
- 5.2.1 Regular (every 2 weeks) tracker polling consisting of a grid of 10 battery statements to gauge change on a number of different personal financial and housing metrics. Given the Customer's budget and required number of questions, we are happy if these go out as a part of an omnibus survey;
 - 5.2.2 Monthly (every 4 weeks) booster sample of at least 400 renters in arrears and at least 100 renters asked to leave a rented tenancy by their landlord or agent, to capture additional detail – 5-7 follow-up questions;
 - 5.2.3 Regular delivery of data tables breaking down responses by key variables (in particular, housing tenure);
 - 5.2.4 Periodic delivery of raw data in SPSS format, including demographic and weighting variables.

6. THE REQUIREMENT

- 6.1 The Customer is commissioning a series of polls to capture time series data on the financial resilience of households and their housing circumstances. In particular, we would like to capture data on renters who are in rent arrears and those who have been asked to leave a rented tenancy by their landlord or agent.



- 6.2 We anticipate this will include a bi-weekly ‘tracker grid’ consisting of 10 battery statements with yes/no responses. Currently, the questions on the grid are as follows:

	Yes	No	N/A
I have had trouble paying my credit card bills			
I have had trouble paying my utility bills			
I have gone into arrears on my rent			
I am concerned about being evicted			
I have negotiated a rent arrangement with my landlord/agent that is different to the one I had pre-covid			
I have taken out a loan			
I have increased my overdraft			
I have been asked to leave a rented property by my landlord/agent.			
I have had to dip into my savings to make ends meet			
I have been able to save more than usual this month			

- 6.3 Given the number of questions we require, we are happy if this goes out as a part of the supplier’s omnibus surveys, if applicable.
- 6.4 Every second fieldwork period (i.e. every 4 weeks) we would like to boost the sample by targeting those in rental arrears and those who have been asked to leave a rented tenancy with their landlord or agent. We would like to ask these groups 5-7 follow up questions about the extent of the arrears, the reasons they have been asked to leave, and what they expect to do as a result of being asked to leave their tenancies.
- 6.5 Based on requirements for subset analysis, and the general proportions of respondents available with these characteristics, we would expect a boost to include about 400 renters in arrears, and 100 renters asked to leave by their landlord or agent. Cross over in these groups has previously been about 20%.
- 6.6 We will require the ability to break down responses by demographic characteristics – in particular housing tenure, employment status (pre and post covid), ethnicity, region, social class, income, disability, and whether the respondent has dependent children.
- 6.7 Detailed tables should be delivered in spreadsheet format promptly following each fieldwork period and should include breakdowns of the responses on key variables specified by the Customer.
- 6.8 We require the supplier to calculate and apply appropriate data weights, which will rebalance the data to be nationally representative based on relevant demographic details. These will be applied to the results so that proportions reported in tables are nationally representative. We would like the supplier to detail their weighting strategy in their bid.
- 6.9 Periodically – likely every six (6) polling waves – the Customer will require a raw dataset in SPSS format to undertake their own analysis using the data. The dataset should include demographic variables, as well as sample and population weights.



- 6.10 We will initially require the data for 24 weeks (i.e. 12 nationally representative tracker grids, with 6 boost waves). Given the currently unpredictable nature of the pandemic, however, we may need to extend the contract further, depending on the progression of the pandemic and the impact it is having on households and household finances.

7. KEY MILESTONES AND DELIVERABLES

- 7.1 We would hope to start the contract in early February, with our first fieldwork commencing shortly thereafter (the first weekend following award, if feasible).
- 7.2 We would begin the fieldwork cycle with both the tracker grid and a boost sample. After which would follow the tracker grid on its own. We hope to go to field every two weeks.
- 7.3 The following Contract milestones/deliverables shall apply:

Milestone / Deliverable	Description	Timeframe or Delivery Date
1	Contract award	Early February
2	Online meeting to agree workplan	Within 3 days of contact award
3	First fieldwork	Within week 1 of Contract Award; subsequent fieldwork periods every 2 weeks
4	Delivery of data tables	Within 24 hours of fieldwork close
5	Delivery of raw dataset	Approximately after every 6 periods of fieldwork (i.e. every 12 weeks) or upon request

8. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION / REPORTING

- 8.1 The Supplier will be required to provide test links to the online questionnaire for Customer sign off prior to any fieldwork.
- 8.2 The Customer will require regular progress reports throughout the project as required (i.e. updates on achieved boost sample), with updates to changes in risk or the success of the project. We require any issues to be raised promptly with the lead contact for the Customer.
- 8.3 The Customer will require the Supplier to appoint a Project Manager for the project who will act as main contact for the Customer.

9. VOLUMES

- 9.1 Volumes expected under this contract are detailed in sections 5, 6 and 15. In summary, we expect that each nationally representative poll (i.e. the bi-weekly tracker grid) will survey at least 2000 respondents, and each boost sample (run



every 4 weeks) will achieve at least 400 renters in arrears, and at least 100 renters who have been asked to leave a rented tenancy by their landlord or agent.

10. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- 10.1 The Supplier will be expected to continually improve the way in which the required Services are to be delivered throughout the Contract duration.
- 10.2 The Supplier should present new ways of working to the Customer during contract review meetings.
- 10.3 Changes to the way in which the Services are to be delivered must be brought to the Customer's attention and agreed prior to any changes being implemented.
- 10.4 The Customer will monitor and approve progress and quality of outputs.

11. SUSTAINABILITY

- 11.1 N/A

12. QUALITY

- 12.1 Main deliverables will be assessed for quality by the Customer's Project Manager, and signed off by an internal Project Board. The Customer will expect, at minimum, the following requirements:
 - 12.1.1 Achieved sample is representative and large enough to appropriate for subset analysis, particularly with respect to housing tenure;
 - 12.1.2 Questionnaire responds to main research questions and is user friendly. While questions are largely set, we would expect the Supplier to make suggestions for any changes to questions that would improve the data we gather relative to our research questions;
 - 12.1.3 The online survey is secure and properly programmed to ensure questions are properly programmed and routed correctly;
 - 12.1.4 Tables and dataset are thoroughly QA'd and delivered to specification.

13. PRICE

- 13.1 The budget for the initial six months of data, as specified, is £36,000 (excl VAT). It is possible that the contract could be extended for up to a further six months after the initial period. If this happens, there would be additional budget available, but we would expect pricing for this further six months to be consistent. As such, please provide a detailed breakdown of pricing as part of your bid (i.e. per question/unit prices, an itemised breakdown of costs for the booster waves, etc).



- 13.2 Prices are to be submitted via the e-Sourcing Suite (Attachment 4 – Price Schedule) excluding VAT and including all other expenses relating to Contract delivery.

14. STAFF AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

- 14.1 The Customer requires the Supplier to provide a sufficient level of resource throughout the duration of Contract in order to consistently deliver a quality service to all Parties.
- 14.2 The Supplier's staff assigned to the Contract shall have the relevant qualifications and experience to deliver the Contract.
- 14.3 The Supplier shall ensure that staff understand the Customer's vision and objectives and will provide excellent customer service to the Customer throughout the duration of the Contract.

15. SERVICE LEVELS AND PERFORMANCE

- 15.1 The Customer will measure the quality of the Supplier's delivery by:

KPI / SLA	Service Area	KPI/SLA description	Target
1	Communication	Progress reports by email according to agreed work programme milestones circulated to deadline.	100%
2	Fieldwork	Achieved sample	At least 2000 nationally representative respondents for each tracker wave. For boosts, 100 evicted and 400 in arrears.
3	Data tables	Fully QA'd data tables delivered with specified crossbreaks and appropriate weights	Delivered within 24 hours of fieldwork end
4	Raw data	Full QA'd dataset delivered in SPSS format, including sample and population weights	Delivered within 48 hours of request, or by specified deadline (with at least 48 hours notice).
5	Risk Management	Risks monitored regularly and any concerns brought to the attention of the contract manager within 24 hours of identification.	100%



- 15.2 The Authority will maintain a record of provider adherence to the agreed service level and performance timelines. Any non-adherence will result in performance review meetings between the Customer and the successful Provider, to provide a full debrief and explanation as to why the service level agreement was not met. Improvement plans will also be established here.
- 15.3 Failure to meet the service level requirements outlined above could result in the Customer choosing not to continue the contract for further waves of the polling. For continuous requirements, such as those concerning risk management or progress reports, failure to meet service level agreements is defined as missing targets twice within any rolling three-month period.

16. SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS

- 16.1 The Supplier will be required to collect and securely store data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Details on how this will be delivered should be provided within written proposals.
- 16.2 The Supplier will be required to provide assurance to the Customer that all data will be destroyed within a reasonable timeframe from completion of the project.

17. PAYMENT AND INVOICING

- 17.1 Payment can only be made following satisfactory delivery of pre-agreed certified products and deliverables.
- 17.2 **REDACTED.**
- 17.3 Invoices should be submitted via email to the appropriate contact within MHCLG, provided upon award of Contract.

18. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

- 18.1 Attendance at Contract Review meetings shall be at the Supplier's own expense; however, meetings are likely to be online for the duration of the project.

19. LOCATION

- 19.1 The location of the Services will be carried out at the Supplier's address (or suitable alternative in the case of continued home working due to COVID-19). Project management and progress meetings will take place online using a suitable videoconferencing platform, likely for the duration of the project.