

## 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 #	DPEL_61541_096				
Extension?	N	DPEL Ref.			
Business Area	Environment Agency, COO				
Programme / Project	Freedom of Information Discovery				
Senior Responsible Officer	[REDACTED]				
Supplier	Methods				
Title	EA COO FOI Discovery				
Short description	This is a discovery exercise to identify options to improve current compliance response times for freedom of information requests.				
Engagement start / end date	25/09/2023	24/11/2023			
Summary of Changes	<p>Changes have been made to the DPEL, to reflect the discussions had in Sprint 0.</p> <p>We agreed that our time would be better spent focusing on one area of Fols, Flood and Coastal Risk Management, rather than a high level look at all of Fols. As such, the Scope of the project has changed to call out that this will be our focus as well as what will be out of scope. However, the deliverables and project approach has remained the same.</p>				
Consultancy Spend approval reference					
Expected costs 23/24	£52,240.00				
Expected costs 24/25	n/a				
Expected costs 25/26	n/a				
Dept. PO reference	Dept. PO reference # (to allow for Defra Group recharge)				
Lot #	Lot 3				
Version #	V2.0				



## Approval of Project Engagement Letter

By signing and returning this cover note, [REDACTED] EA 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) - [REDACTED], with Defra Group and confirms the availability of funding to support recharge for the services.

Signatures		
Supplier	Business Area	Defra Group Commercial
By: [REDACTED] <i>Signature</i>	By: [REDACTED] <i>Signature</i>	By: [REDACTED] <i>Signature</i>
For and on behalf of Methods [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	For and on behalf of [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Defra Group Commercial [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
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

## 1. Background

Briefly justify why support is required:

The Regulator for Fol, Information Commissioners Office, has advised current compliance and response times for information requests need to be improved. Initial improvements have raised compliance from 63% to 76%. It will be difficult to maintain this level of continuous improvement without maintaining a high number of personnel or implementing a technical solution. The ICO advises compliance needs to be 90%, and they are going to issue an enforcement notice by the end of July. This discovery exercise will identify a set of options to improve response rates.

## 2. Statement of services

### Objectives and outcomes to be achieved

State and describe the aims of the engagement:

To fulfil this requirement a discovery exercise is proposed to:

- Complete a discovery assessment to review and map current processes, systems, data flows, and escalation routes, (identifying regulation requirements), for Freedom of Information (FoI) requests, with a focus on Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) requests.
- Provide a list of options to resolve the back log, and identify (where possible), automated technical solutions to simplify, address and resolve both current and foreseen issues.
- Look to use existing solutions if pragmatic and viable i.e., on-line service.
- Create a timely and pragmatic plan.

Outcomes:

A plan to identify:

- Increased efficiency through streamlining process and data flows.
- Opportunities to reduce resource profile to create, monitor, and maintain FoI requests.
- A path to a reduction in complaint levels.

## Scope

Define the scope of the services:

- Map the As-Is landscape for Freedom of Information requests, to understand current processes, systems and data required for FoI requests, with a focus on Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) requests.
  - Directorates include COO, Flood and Coastal Risk Management Environment & Business, Operations as a minimum
  - Consider and incorporate plans where appropriate from each directorate into wider pragmatic plan
- Acquire and review relevant documentation
- Identify current pain points and opportunities for business, process, technological improvement, and efficiency, along with their positives, negatives, risks, and implications.
- Trade-offs or tensions should be identified as part of identifying potential options for change. These will be documented as part of the final recommendations

Out of scope:

Although Methods will review the overall FOI process, they will not review specific FOI processes such as: Corporate Services, Information Rights, and National Requests as the EA has the resources to review these themselves.

## Assumptions and dependencies

Provide further description of the assumptions and dependencies:

- GDPR data sharing protocols are agreed and signed off.
- Common workspace environment required so that Methods consultants can access Environment Agency data from their Methods devices, this will enable them to work with datasets using specific analytics tools
- Methods will have timely access to data
- Defined EA decision-making contacts
- Access to technical expertise from Environment Agency (systems and processes)

## Risk management

Provide further details of any foreseen risks with this project and how they could be mitigated:

- Capacity in Environment Agency project delivery teams to support and engage with the Delivery Partner. Active participation outside of the core COO team will be required from



System Owners. The quality of outcomes may be impacted by a lack of active engagement, stakeholders need to be identified early and brought into the project team.

- Single Point of Failure within the COO team – it is a small team with limited resources. We will agree to internal protocols so that the Delivery Partner is not adversely affected by unplanned absences, as far as possible. We will need a point of contact in the absence of the Programme Manager and minimum monthly and ad hoc meetings with the SRO.
- EA internal communication and change management plans are sufficient to encourage engagement.

## Deliverables

Deliverable	Success Criteria	Milestone / Date	Owner (who in the delivery team?)
<b>Project Stage A</b>			
Service Delivery Document (SDD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach to delivery defined by Methods and signed off by client</li> </ul>	29/09/2023	Delivery Manager
Final Discovery report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report containing maps for processes, data, and systems relating to Freedom of Information requests, relevant to identified pain points</li> <li>• Maps must identify pain points and opportunities to streamline processes to increase efficiency and reduce complaints               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Opportunities must consider technological landscape and/or (where possible) identify automated technical solutions to pain points</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Options appraisal and final recommendations</li> </ul>	24/11/2023	Delivery Manager
<b>Internal Capability Development Outcomes</b>			
<b>Social Value Outcomes</b>			

## 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.

## 3. Delivery team



Name	Role (link to stage/s resource will work on)	Grade	Daily rate	# of days	Cost
	Assurance Lead	Managing Consultant			
	Technical Assurance Lead	Managing Consultant			
	Engagement Lead	Senior Consultant			
	Delivery Manager	Senior Consultant			
	Data Engineer	Senior Consultant			
	Business Analyst	Consultant			

<b>Total resource</b> <b>Total days*</b> <b>Engagement Length**</b>	
*Total days worked across all resources **Total working days in engagement	

#### Business Area's team

#### 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 £52,240, excluding expenses and VAT.

Stage	Cost	Due (link to milestone dates)
<b>A</b>		
Final Report	£52,240	24/11/2023
<b>Expenses</b>		
Up to and not exceeding £3500 (if required)	£3500	24/11/2023
<b>Grand total</b>	£52,240	24/11/2023

#### Business Area considerations:

- Are the costs and fees appropriate (costs linked to deliverables, rates, and drive value for money)?

## 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. Up to not exceeding £3,500 for co-location days, a separate purchase order to be raised when necessary.

## 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 monthly, to track days worked by our consultants

## Key Performance Indicators

KPI	KPI Requirement	Description	Reporting Frequency	Who Measures	Method of Measurement	Performance Target
1.	Availability of Methods	Methods named delivery contact or delegate will respond to client correspondence within 24 hours.	Ongoing for duration of DPEL	EA Programme Manager with Methods Engagement Lead	Escalation from client team if expected behavior is not demonstrated	90% response rate within 24 hours.
2.	Regular checkpoints provided by Methods	Weekly reporting to ascertain delivery progress, key risks/concerns	Weekly	EA Programme Manager with Methods Engagement Lead	Regular project meetings	Measured against DPEL deliverables.
3	Delivery of agreed deliverables do not exceed agreed baseline dates outside of tolerance	Baselined plans detail agreed delivery dates, these will not be exceeded above tolerance without agreement between all parties	Weekly	EA Programme Manager with Methods Engagement Lead	Regular project meetings	Measured against DPEL deliverables.



## 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

## 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:

## Notice period

The nature of these engagements requires that Defra Group can 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"> <li>▪ DPEL agreed</li> <li>▪ DPEL signed: Supplier, Dept and CO</li> <li>▪ Purchase Order number</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work can start</li> <li>▪ Supplier can invoice for work</li> </ul>

