

[5.1] Operational Flexibility

On an on-going basis, you will be expected to have flexibility to provide continuity in respect of quality of service if actual volumes prove to be higher; and manage staffing levels appropriately if actual volumes are lower. You will also be required to demonstrate your flexibility in response to requested change during the life of the contract e.g. extending delivery hours. Your response should cover how you will address any planned and unplanned volume fluctuations on an intraday, intra week and intra month basis whilst maintaining quality of service and should include your typical lead times in which to handle increases in demand and in response to change in accordance with the timescales specified by the Authority. The response should also take into account any seasonal requirements.

Please describe, from a quality and volume perspective, and in detail:

- How you will undertake planning and manage capacity and performance, throughout the life of the contract allowing for forecast tolerances and response to requested change;
- Your manpower planning processes set against the context of delivering planned and unplanned volumes of work and in response to requested change;
- Your manpower planning processes in response to higher than anticipated levels of staff absence and attrition and response to requested change, taking into account daily service performance and including any lead in time for securing additional resource under your speed to competence assumptions.

Supplier Name	<i>Serco Limited</i>	Package	<i>Package B</i>
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How you will undertake planning and manage capacity and performance, throughout the life of the contract allowing for forecast tolerances and response to requested change;

Our planning process:

Serco's Outperform Solutions Team (OST) will be responsible for planning and managing capacity for the Contact Centre Services (CCS) contract. The OST will work closely with the Authority to agree collate operational data; meeting fortnightly. {redacted}:

Figure 1 – Serco planning process {redacted}.

The OST will be responsible for all operational planning activity and will be located at our Knowsley site. The Performance Manager will lead the planning of the service for Serco, {redacted}. The OST will also collate data into MI packs for the Authority review in line with the Statement of Requirements.

The operational management team will have a daily, morning, Review and Preview (RAP) meeting to discuss the previous day's {redacted}.

All key stakeholders in the operational management team will be represented in the RAP meetings to allow quick decisions to be made. {redacted}.

Managing capacity:

As successfully demonstrated on the PIP and UC contracts, the OST will work with the Authority at the beginning of the contract to receive Authority volume forecasts and turn them into robust operational schedules. We will take on more responsibility in the first year for forecasting demand so that, by Year 2, the OST is responsible for the forecasting process (subject to Authority sign off). During implementation, the OST will work with the Authority to calculate the level of resource required to meet the demand at go live. {redacted}. We will share our recruitment and training plans with the Authority during implementation.

Based upon the volumes provided, there will be a total requirement for {redacted}. During live running, the DWP Account Director will have regular meetings {redacted} to share our future resourcing plans, {redacted}. On a regular basis the OST will undertake planning to identify resource levels, based on Authority data {redacted}. Where resource levels required differ from actual workforce headcount, this will be escalated to the management team and acted upon.

Increase in demand: Where volumes are forecast to increase significantly, the OST will create a plan that details the number of additional resources needed to meet demand. {redacted}. A Section Manager will own the ramp up project, working with subject matter experts across our business to deliver robust plans for recruiting and training sufficient resource in the required time. {redacted}.

Decrease in demand: For short term decreases we will engage operational tools to release staff {redacted}. Where the decrease requires significant reductions in staffing, we will identify and select agents to remain on the CCS contract. {redacted}.

Managing performance:

Our operational management team attends weekly and monthly sessions to review performance against SLA's and highlight performance improvements, service innovations and efficiency areas. Contractual SLAs will be turned into operational targets to measure teams and agents. The targets will comprise SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Time-bound) objectives, {redacted}. The operational management team will be responsible for delivering SLAs and will optimise schedules and staffing levels to ensure that all service levels are met.

We will continue to deliver our established and successful {redacted}. The Quality team will analyse operational data {redacted} and share these with the Authority via the MI pack.

This analysis will be used to identify areas for continuous improvement and service innovation. For example, {redacted}.

Managing individual performance:

All agents have a monthly 121 review session with their Team Manager to discuss quality scores and any variance against targets. We will monitor calls {redacted}. Our focus is on providing a consistent high-quality service at the most competitive price. Call monitoring supports our continuous improvement processes {redacted}.

Quality results across the operation will be collated into our overall MI report which will be shared with the Authority as part of the routine governance for the contract. Where necessary, we will create remedial activity plans to address performance issues; these plans will be presented with the MI report and discussed at the monthly Business Review Meeting.

Managing forecast tolerance: {redacted}.

Responding to requested change:

Where it is identified that a change to the service is required we will follow the agreed Change Control process and recommend that the process {redacted}. This allows for informal discussions to take place between the Authority and the Serco management team to scope out the requirement in full and for all options and ideas to be considered. Once the principals of the change has been agreed a Contract Variation will be raised by the Authority; which will be reviewed and agreed as necessary, prior to signature. {redacted}. Formal response times to a change requests will be in line with the Authority's Requirements and draft call off contract and agreed before contract award.

Your manpower planning processes set against the context of delivering planned and unplanned volumes of work and in response to requested change;

In order to react quickly to changing demands, {redacted}. Where the actual volume differs from forecast, the Authority will be made aware immediately. {redacted}.

Your manpower planning processes in response to higher than anticipated levels of staff absence and attrition and response to requested change, taking into account daily service performance and including any lead in time for securing additional resource under your speed to competence assumptions.

Dealing with staff absence and attrition:

Absence and attrition are key metrics that we monitor {redacted}.

Managing daily service performance:

Our OST will define the resource required throughout the day at interval level and create a shift model to meet the resultant demand. Our dedicated Duty Managers are responsible for monitoring real time demand throughout the day. {redacted}.

Securing additional resource:

As an existing supplier with a good understanding of the Authority's working practices, we are in an excellent position to support the DWP further. In the event that the Authority identifies a requirement for additional resource (due to a requirement to process backlogs, or to support a particular time-bound process), we would be able to bring staff online quickly. {redacted}.

All new staff will complete pre-employment checks to BPSS standards and complete the full training course; achieving agreed scores in proof of learning tests before they access live data.

Speed to competence:

We have taken the guidance provided by the Authority in the 'Learning Journeys' to determine the speed to competence for CCS agents. After completing formal training, {redacted}.

Managing seasonality:

Based on our experience with other DWP contracts and our wider public sector customers,{redacted}.

Figure 2 – Serco's approach to addressing changes in demand {redacted}