Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

## Defra Group Management Consultancy Framework: Project Engagement Letter

Completed forms and any queries should be directed to Defra Group Commercial at DgCCosnsultancy@defra.gov.uk

Engagement details			
Engagement ref #	DPEL_61545_003		
Extension?	N	**DPEL Ref.**	N/A
Business Area	DEFRA: Nature for Climate Fund		
Programme / Project	NCF Trees Programme		
Senior Responsible Officer	███████		
Supplier	PA Consulting		
Title	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework		
Short description	To develop a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for the Nature for Climate Fund (i.e. the initial design of an ongoing M&E programme). Identification and initial data collection to fill any significant data deficiencies is also required, to allow baselining of the NCF programme.		
Engagement start / end date	17/1/22		31/3/22
Funding source	CDEL R&D		
Expected costs 21/22	£200k ███████████████		
Expected costs 22/23	£Total Engagement Costs (to be less than approved funds)		
Expected costs 23/24	£Total Engagement Costs (to be less than approved funds)		
Dept. PO reference	Dept. PO reference # (to allow for Defra Group recharge)		
Lot #	Lot 2		
Version #	0.1		

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Approval of Project Engagement Letter

By signing and returning this cover note, the **NCF** accepts the contents of this Project Engagement Letter as being the services required and agrees for **PA Consulting** to provide the services in accordance with the agreed Supplier Proposal under the overarching contract (Lot 2 - Ref 28595), with Defra Group and confirms the availability of funding to support recharge for the services.

Signatures		
Supplier	**Business Area**	**Defra Group Commercial**
By: ▮▮▮▮▮▮ *Signature*	By: _____ *Signature*	By: ▮▮▮▮▮▮ *Signature*
or and on behalf of PA Consulting ▮▮▮▮▮▮ Member of PA's Management Group	For and on behalf of NCF Director General, Environment Rural and Marine ▮▮▮▮	Defra Group Commercial ▮▮▮▮ Grants Category Officer
18th January 2022	17th January 2022	10th January 2022
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
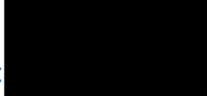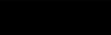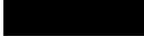
Supplier contact ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Business Area contact ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

1. Background

Briefly justify why support is required:

The 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP) was launched in January 2018 and sets the ambition towards "A green future: Our 25 Year Plan to improve the Environment". Defra, and the Defra group, will predominantly deliver and assess the delivery of the 25 YEP goals. Among other priority areas, the 25 YEP outlines the Government's focus on tree planting as a key driver of improved environmental and social outcomes. It includes commitments to drive extensive increases in tree planting, both in towns and cities and in rural areas. It also summarises ambitions to protect and support existing trees and forests, and to develop enhanced markets for UK forest products. These commitments have been developed into a portfolio of new government activities and targets.

The Environment Bill, introduced on 30th January 2020, introduces new targets relating to trees, which are currently under development and will build on the aims set out in the 25 YEP. In addition to this, the UK government is also following advice from the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) which has recommended an annual tree planting rate of 30,000 hectares by 2025, as part of our commitment to deliver Net Zero by 2020 and meet the Paris Agreement goals. We are intending to consult on a long-term statutory target for trees, using the target setting power in the Environment Bill.

The England Trees Action Plan (2021 to 2024) sets out the government's long-term vision for the treescape it wants to see in England by 2050 and beyond. The plan outlines over 80 policy actions the government is taking over this Parliament to set the trajectory towards delivering this vision and provides a strategic framework for implementing the Nature for Climate Fund. It includes a commitment to create a detailed evaluation framework for ETAP that will track progress towards key objectives and allow us to adapt our interventions as we learn from the successes and failures during implementation. The priority outcomes identified in ETAP are:

- Expanding and connecting our trees and woodlands.
- Developing trees and woodlands as part of the green economy.
- Protecting and improving existing trees and woodlands.
- Connecting people with trees and woodlands.

An evaluation framework is required for this Programme. This should be informed by the current trees policy landscape as described above and the CCC recommendations.

2. Statement of services

Objectives and outcomes to be achieved

State and describe the aims of the engagement:

The core objectives of the NCF that are of relevance to the ETAP are:

- To put tree planting in England on the trajectory required for the UK to meet HMG's target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050:
- Increasing annual planting rates to at least 7,500 ha per year by 2025;
- Planting 27,804 ha of new woodland between 2020/21 and 2024/25;
- Sequestering 10 MTCO2e by 2050 (and continuing to sequester carbon after that); and,
- Improving the resilience of England's trees, woods and forests.

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- To improve people's access to nature for the benefit of people's physical and mental health and to develop visitor economies by ensuring activity close to where people live;
- To position the UK as a global leader on nature-based solutions to climate change, maximizing ecosystem services from trees

The core objectives are therefore to create a monitoring and evaluation framework to be able to report on the success of the ETAP.

Scope

Define the scope of the services *(SMART):*

The M&E framework should include the following elements:

- **Review of policy and technical documentation** – this includes relevant impact assessments, consultation documents, policy documentation, background and briefing papers. This also includes speaking and working with SMEs, policy leads and other key stakeholders, and leveraging their knowledge and understanding to capture the right information in developing the evaluation framework. This review will be important to help map out and understand potential process and reporting data.
- **Development of project theory of change** – working with key stakeholders and policy leads to confirm a theory of change for the NCF Tree Programme and develop theories of change for three projects within the NCF Tree Programme. In line with Magenta Book 2020, this would set out how the NCF Tree Programme is expected to work in practice, including any assumptions and an assessment of the wider social and economic and evolving policy context.
- **Development of evaluation framework and questions** – this will follow from the development of the theory of change and will be important in identifying knowledge gaps. Evaluation questions will need to be developed in close collaboration with Defra policy and operational personnel. Key themes will be created to support the development of a thematic framework to support the development of capturing data requirements in a structured way. The approach to development of the evaluation framework should be informed by the Magenta Book 2020 including the key principles around the requirement for scoping and designing an evaluation. These include:
  - Understanding the intervention and its evidence base
  - Understanding the type of evaluation required
  - Understanding the appropriateness of the evaluation methods
  - Agreeing the most appropriate evaluation approach and identifying the most suitable evaluation methods.
- **Review data requirements and sources** – this involves undertaking a data mapping exercise to understand data requirements to meet evidence needs and options for how these can be met. More detail on data requirements is set out in Data requirements and sources, below. This will include an assessment of the suitability of current data and requirements for new data collection, set against the evaluation questions developed as part of this project. Data requirements will be driven by the programme Theory of Change, focusing on key evidence gaps, and evaluation questions that are to be developed as part of this project.

  In developing data requirements, proposals should be consistent with the strategic approach set out in Natural England's Monitoring Strategy 2019 and Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) Terrestrial Biodiversity Evidence Strategy 2019. Existing monitoring commitments in the 25 YEP should be taken into consideration and, where possible, those being set within the Environment Bill, which are currently under development. We would like the contract to recommend the level and nature of data needed to effectively evaluate the success of the NCF Tree Programme and how to make best use of data already collected through existing monitoring.

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Assumptions and dependencies

Provide further description of the assumptions and dependencies:
- Maximum no. of 3 project level theories of change and final programme theory of change
- Programme Theory of Change well developed and socialised with relevant stakeholders
- Project management support provided to set up meetings with stakeholders
- Stakeholders available to support development of project level theory of change
- KPIs and existing data to be provided for review

Deliverables

Describe what the supplier will produce:
- Project Plan - This will set out in detail the refined methodology setting out key tasks, project timeline and project timeline.
- Project Level Theory of Change
- Evaluation framework – setting out the proposed approach to the evaluation of the NCF Tree Programme, together with proposed baseline data and requirements
- Review of existing data to develop data requirements and baseline
- Long term evaluation plan covering evaluation milestones and resource requirements to implement.
- *Capability Assessment and tool options to support operational approach to monitoring and reporting across NCF*

Deliverable	Success Criteria	Milestone / Date	Owner (who in the delivery team?)
Project Plan	A project plan is required to be sent to the Defra Project Officer, following the Inception Meeting. This will set out in detail the refined methodology setting out key tasks, project timeline and project timeline. It should clarify any key decision points and when detailed input from project steering group is required.	Jan 2022	▉
Evaluation Framework	• **Final intervention theory/theories of change** • **Confirmed evaluation principles and questions** - setting out what the evaluation is seeking to provide and the evidence that is required to address these. • **Methodological details** - in particular the approach to understanding the net impact of NCF Tree Programme (taking into account attribution of impacts, deadweight and displacement). • **A suite proposed of data requirements and indicators**	February 2022	▉

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Deliverable	Success Criteria	Milestone / Date	Owner (who in the delivery team?)
	• **Timelines for key evaluation milestones** - recommended dates of outputs from the evaluation, and which evaluation questions each output may feed into. • **Proposals on resource requirements for implementation of evaluation** – including minimum resource needed for proportionate evaluation and options for where additional resource inputs could add value. • **Detailed learning and feedback proposals** - to ensure that stakeholders are engaged, that learning is taken on board and that evaluation remains responsive to the needs of stakeholders.		
Theory of Change (3 projects)	Fully developed Theory of Change/s to set out the drivers of progress. This would draw on existing evidence, policy documentation and be developed in conjunction with policy leads and other stakeholders.	March/April 2022	███████
Data Requirements	A suite proposed of data requirements and indicators - with a clear justification for any new measures, an understanding of how data will be delivered, when, and to what standard, as well as where in the evaluation this data will feed. This should also include recommendations for IT infrastructure needed to meet reporting needs.	March 2022	███████
Evaluation Plan	A draft evaluation framework, setting out the proposed approach to the evaluation of the NCF Tree Programme, together with proposed baseline data. Deliver an online workshop/survey (or other methods) across policy teams and ALBs to share a fully-developed Theory of Change and finalise evaluation questions for the NCF Tree Programme. Initial baseline data for key evaluation metrics will also be presented to allow comparison as the programme continues.	March 2022	███████
Tool Options	*Complete a capability assessment of existing solutions/tools to monitor and report against KPIs and provide a short list of recommendations against an agreed assessment criterion.*	*March 2022*	███
Internal Capability Development Outcomes			
Training and capability building of staff		Throughout – training package developed	

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Deliverable	Success Criteria	Milestone / Date	Owner (who in the delivery team?)
Social Value Outcomes			

Limitations on scope and change control

Business Area / Supplier to supplement with any additional areas, as deemed appropriate.

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 time and materials basis.

For the avoidance of doubt time is not of the essence.

3. Delivery team

Delivery team is identified below.

Name	Role (link to stage/s resource will work on)	Grade	Daily rate	# of days	Cost
Core Requirement					
███████	███ ██	███	██	▋	███
███	███	████	██	█	███
████	███	████	██	█	███
████	██ ██	████	██	█	███
Total				149	£199,798

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Name	Role (link to stage/s resource will work on)	Grade	Daily rate	# of days	Cost
███████████					
████	██ ██	██ █	███	█	████
	███				
				194	████

Total resource	Total days* Engagement Length** *Total days worked across all resources **Total working days in engagement	3.23

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 £250,468, 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.

Stage	Cost	Due (link to milestone dates)
Stage A – Core Requirement	£199,798	March
████████████████	████	███

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.

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

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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	End of project	NCF	% 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	End of project	NCF	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	Weekly/Monthly	NCF	% 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

The overarching MCF2 framework include 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:

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> Supplier to produce and complete all deliverables in line with the Successful Criteria above to the agreed milestones resulting, all documentation and full knowledge being transferred to DEFRA Team and the end of the contract

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:

   consultancy2@defra.gov.uk

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	• DPEL agreed • DPEL signed: Supplier, Dept and CO • Purchase Order number	• Work can start • Supplier can invoice for work

Request

Contact Defra Group Commercial (DgC)	→ Business Area completes consultancy request form and submits to DgC	→ DgC review	— Request progressed →	DgC allocate Supplier
			— Request not progressed →	Liaise with Engagement Lead on next steps

Engage

Supplier and Client engage	→ Complete PEL and submit to Engagement Lead	→ CGB review PEL	— Approval granted → Satisfy conditions if applied →	Commence work
			— Approval not granted →	Liaise with Engagement Lead on next steps

Change request

Contact Defra Group Commercial (DgC)	→ Complete relevant documentation and submit to Engagement Lead	→ CGB review docs	— Approval granted → Satisfy conditions if applied →	Changes accepted
			— Approval not granted →	Liaise with Engagement Lead on next steps