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Invitation to Quote

**Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of Department for Business,
Energy and Industrial Strategy**

Subject Contracting Authority Tied Pub Tenant Survey

Sourcing reference number BLOJEU-CR17092BEIS

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)
www.uksbs.co.uk

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UKSBS
Shared Business Services

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Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

Putting the business into shared services

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS) brings a commercial attitude to the public sector; helping Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading service provider for Contracting Authorities for of shared business services in the UK public sector, continuously reducing cost and improving quality of business services for Government and the public sector.

Our broad range of expert services is shared by our Contracting Authorities. This allows Contracting Authorities the freedom to focus resources on core activities; innovating and transforming their own organisations.

Core services include Procurement, Finance, Grants Admissions, Human Resources, Payroll, ISS, and Property Asset Management all underpinned by our Service Delivery and Contact Centre teams.

UK SBS is a people rather than task focused business. It's what makes us different to the traditional transactional shared services centre. What is more, being a not-for-profit organisation owned by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), UK SBS' goals are aligned with the public sector and delivering best value for the UK taxpayer.

UK Shared Business Services Ltd changed its name from RCUK Shared Services Centre Ltd in March 2013.

Our Customers

Growing from a foundation of supporting the Research Councils, 2012/13 saw Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) transition their procurement to UK SBS and Crown Commercial Services (CCS – previously Government Procurement Service) agree a Memorandum of Understanding with UK SBS to deliver two major procurement categories (construction and research) across Government.

UK SBS currently manages £700m expenditure for its Contracting Authorities.

Our Contracting Authorities who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) was created as a result of a merger between the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), as part of the Machinery of Government (MoG) changes in July 2016.

The Department is responsible for:

- developing and delivering a comprehensive industrial strategy and leading the government's relationship with business;
- ensuring that the country has secure energy supplies that are reliable, affordable and clean;
- ensuring the UK remains at the leading edge of science, research and innovation;
and
- tackling climate change.

BEIS is a ministerial department, supported by 46 agencies and public bodies.

We have around 2,500 staff working for BEIS. Our partner organisations include 9 executive agencies employing around 14,500 staff.

<http://www.beis.gov.uk>

Section 3 - Working with the Contracting Authority .

In this section you will find details of your Procurement contact point and the timescales relating to this opportunity.

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1	Contracting Authority Name and address	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy 1 Victoria Street , London, SW1H 0ET
3.2	Buyer name	Kerry Hammond
3.3	Buyer contact details	research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£50,000.00
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris is available here. Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer <u>will</u> result in the Bid <u>not</u> being considered.

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6	Date of Issue of Contract Advert and location of original Advert	04/08/2017 Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Emptoris messaging system	15/08/2017 14.00
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	17/08/2017
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	22/08/2017 14.00
3.10	Anticipated selection and de selections of Bids notification date	29/08/2017
3.11	Anticipated Award date	29/08/2017
3.12	Anticipated Contract Start date	01/09/2017
3.13	Anticipated Contract End date	01/12/2017
3.14	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

1. Background

Aims of the Pubs Code and the Pubs Code Adjudicator

The Pubs Code applies to all businesses owning 500 or more tied pubs in England and Wales. It governs their relationships with tenants of those tied pubs but not with their managed houses or free-of-tie pub tenants. Tied tenants are those that are obliged to purchase beer and other drinks from their landlord. There are approximately 11,500 tied tenants in scope of the Code.

The pub-owning businesses (POBs) currently covered by the Pubs Code are:

- Admiral Taverns Ltd
- Ei Group (formerly Enterprise Inns PLC)
- Greene King PLC
- Marston's PLC
- Punch Taverns PLC

- Star Pubs and Bars (Heineken UK)

The principles which the Pubs Code seek to ensure are:

- fair and lawful dealing by pub companies in their dealings with their tied tenants
- tied tenants are no worse off than if they were free of tie

The Pubs Code was introduced in July 2016 to address concerns that had been raised about the relationship between large pub companies and their tied tenants. Four successive Select Committee Inquiries, in 2004, 2009, 2010 and 2011, identified problems with the treatment of tied tenants and the share of reward gained by pub-owning businesses. Problems are thought to occur due to asymmetric information and imbalances of bargaining power in these business contracts.

The Code aims to address the issues of asymmetric information and an imbalance of bargaining power by imposing information and transparency obligations on the POBs and giving tied tenants the right (in certain circumstances) to opt to move to a free-of-tie tenancy through the “Market Rent Only” (MRO) option. The MRO option gives tied tenants the choice between the tied and free of tie business model, driving POBs to better demonstrate the benefits of the tied model, providing options for the tenant.

For further background see the PCA

website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/pubs-code-adjudicator>

and the government’s impact assessment prior to the introduction of the

PCA https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/408449/bis-15-64-pubs-statutory-code-and-adjudicator-final-stage-impact-assessment.pdf

The PCA is responsible for enforcing the Pubs Code, and has powers to investigate where the Adjudicator has reasonable grounds to suspect that there has been a breach of the Pubs Code, take enforcement action as necessary and report to the Secretary of State on unfair business practices. It is important that the PCA obtains reliable baseline data to be able, over time to assess the impact of the Pubs Code on the regulated sector and whether the objectives of the legislation have been achieved.

The PCA needs to understand the experiences of tied pub tenants in relation to their relationship with their POBs, understand issues which may need to be formally addressed and is able to track changes over time in tenant experiences. The PCA wishes to commission research to provide evidence in these areas to inform targeting of its activity and to act as a baseline for tracking change over time.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Project

Aims of the research

The research aims to provide evidence of the current views and experiences of tied pub tenants within scope of the Pubs Code, on specific issues which the Pubs Code is designed to address. This will be used by the PCA alongside other information to target their activities and to act as a baseline enabling the PCA to demonstrate impact over time. The PCA already has access to some information on issues experienced by tenants through enquiries and referrals submitted to its office and through engagement with tenant representative bodies and other industry representatives. However, it is important that the PCA understands the views and experiences of a representative sample of all tied pub tenants, not just those that have approached the PCA, to understand wider views, and the scale of issues. In addition to helping inform PCA's prioritisation of activity, it is intended that this survey will serve as a baseline position, with questions asked of tenants again in future years, to track change over time.

Specific objectives – research questions

The research questions we wish to answer are:

1. How do tied pub tenants characterise their relationship with their pub-owning business?
 - Level of satisfaction, information channels, any issues
2. What is the current level of awareness and understanding of the Pubs Code, and the Pubs Code Adjudicator, amongst tied pub tenants?
 - This includes both awareness in general, with potential follow up questions on awareness and understanding of specific elements of the Code
3. What are the experiences of tenants that have had an event that puts them in scope of the Code (eg a rent review); what happened, what issues if any did they encounter and what aspects worked well?
 - The Code describes what should happen at specific stages of the POB-tenant relationship and gives tenants' rights to information and actions they can take. We would like to explore tenants understanding, actions and experiences at these specific stages where they had rights under the Code.
4. How do issues related to the Pubs Code compare to other issues faced by tied pub tenants?
5. Whether, and if so how, do the answers to these questions vary by POB (essential) and by the characteristics of the tenant such as amount of experience running a pub, type of pub, type of

tenancy agreement (desirable)?

In addition we would like to ascertain the communication preferences of the tenant population.

Scope of research

The group of people that the research should cover is tied pub tenants within scope of the Pubs Code. This means the person must be or was at some point on or after 21 July 2016:

- i. A tenant of one of the six POBs listed in section 1 AND
- ii. A tied tenant - obliged to purchase beer and other drinks from their landlord AND
- iii. Pub location is in England or Wales

There are approximately 11,500 tied pub tenants that meet these criteria. There are some exceptions and additions to the criteria, which we can discuss with the researcher when appointed.

3. Suggested Methodology

This is a suggested methodology and we would welcome bidders' alternative suggestions providing that they also meet the project aims and objectives. Bidders should also justify why they have suggested an alternative approach. Our preferred option is a telephone survey.

As a government organisation the PCA must ensure that it considers its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

Telephone survey with follow up qualitative interviews (Option 1)

Our methodology priority is to reach a representative sample of tied pub tenants that are within scope of the Pubs Code. We require quantitative data on the proportions of the tenants that hold specific views, and qualitative data to provide additional detail on experiences. Our view is that a telephone survey coupled with a smaller number of follow up qualitative interviews would be suitable.

We would require the researchers to help us develop and refine an appropriate questionnaire to answer our research questions. A good understanding / knowledge of the tenanted pub sector, although not essential is highly desirable.

Sample stratified by pub owning business

The sample should be representative of the population of tied pub tenants for each of the POBs. We would like sub-analysis of all the questions broken down by POB to be conducted. The researcher should advise how many interviews per POB would enable both representative sampling and sub-analysis by POBs. The approximate breakdown of tied pub tenants by POB is as follows:

Name of POB	Approximate proportion of tied pubs by POB (total 11,500)
Admiral Taverns Ltd	7.5%
Ei Group (formerly Enterprise Inns)	40%
Greene King Plc	10%

Marston's PLC	10%
Punch Taverns Plc	25%
Star Pubs & Bars (Heineken UK)	7.5%

Note: The identity of regulated POBs and the number of their tied tenants may be subject to change over time, depending on any associated market activity

Additional qualitative interviews

We would like the option to gather more detailed qualitative information about the experiences of tied pub tenants through longer interviews.

Tenants that have had a Code related event

Research question three explores the experiences of tenants that have had a Code related event. This could include having received a rent assessment proposal in connection with a rent review, receives/sends a section 25/26 Landlord and Tenancy Act 1954 (LTA) notice in connection with a renewal, beginning a new tied tenancy or some other less common Code events. We estimate around 20% of the tenants will have had a rent review by the time of the research; we do not know what proportion of the tenants will have had experienced other sorts of Code related events. Ideally we would like to ensure we have a minimum number of responses from tenants that have experienced a Code related event; however, we wish the answers to research questions 1 and 2 to be representative of the 11500 tied pub tenant population.

Contact details of tied pub tenants

The PCA does not hold the contact details of the tied pub tenants in scope of the Code, these are held by the POBs. The pub-owning businesses are not able to share contact details directly with the researcher, due to data protection reasons, however, we anticipate that they will be able to share the pub name and location (postcode) of pubs that are in scope of the Code. They may be able to share contact details of the tied tenants, but only after having asked the permission of the tenant.

1. POBs provide the researchers with details of all their tied pub tenants with personal data removed, for the researchers to select an appropriate sample. POBs contact this sample and ask for permission to use their personal data for this purpose. When permission is granted the POBs will share name and contact details with the researcher.
2. POBs provide the researchers with details of the pub name and locations only (therefore not providing personal data of name and contact details) and researchers obtain contact details independently. We consider this option may work for some tied pub tenants, but not all as it is known that some tied pub tenants do not manage the pub directly, and therefore would not necessarily be reached at the pub phone number.

In relation to research question three, we will ask POB's if their data can be differentiated by pubs where the tenant has had a Code related event (for example received a rent assessment proposal at rent review ,receives/sends a section 25/26 notice under the LTA 1954). If this is not available, the questionnaire will need to screen for this.

Maximising response rates

We intend on engaging with POB's and tenant representative bodies to encourage them to share details about the survey with tied tenants. We are aware of the need to limit the length of the questionnaire to help with maximising response rate.

Backup plan – online survey [OPTION 2]

We hope that you will be able to identify a feasible way of accessing the contact details of tied pub tenants, working with POBs as necessary. However to mitigate the risk that this is not a feasible approach we would consider an online survey as the next best methodology. We would still like to ensure the output is as robust as possible in terms of respondents being representative of the whole tenant population. Therefore we would envisage targeted invites to participate in the survey, with reminders to maximise response rate, rather than a survey link open to all.

Meetings with the PCA team

The PCA team is based in central Birmingham, and we would require the researchers to attend our office to discuss questionnaire design and provide the presentation of findings to our team.

4. Deliverables

The deliverables required are:

- Question development and a questionnaire
- Dataset of survey results including text from free text comments
- Transcripts from qualitative interviews
- Regular updates on emerging findings and project progress
- Interim report of findings
- Presentation to PCA team in Birmingham
- Quality assured final report
- PowerPoint slides summarising the key findings
- Summary infographic

Publication

The final report for this research project must adhere to BEIS accessibility requirements for all publications on GOV.UK. The publication template will be provided by the project manager. Please ensure you note the following in terms of accessibility:

Checklist for Word accessibility

Word documents will be assessed for accessibility upon receipt. Documents which do not meet one or more of the following checkpoints will be returned to you for re-working at your own cost.

- document reads logically when reflowed or rendered by text-to-speech software
- language is set to English (in File > Properties > Advanced)
- structural elements of document are properly tagged (headings, titles, lists etc)

- all images/figures have either alternative text or an appropriate caption
- tables are correctly tagged to represent the table structure
- text is left aligned, not justified
- document avoids excessive use of capitalised, underlined or italicised text
- hyperlinks are spelt out (e.g. in a footnote or endnote)
- datasets to support those to be published in the final report must be provided in an accessible format (CVS, Excel) on submission of the report.

Terms and Conditions

Bidders are to note that any requested modifications to the Contracting Authority Terms and Conditions on the grounds of statutory and legal matters only, shall be raised as a formal clarification during the permitted clarification period.

Section 5 – Evaluation model

The evaluation model below shall be used for this ITQ, which will be determined to two decimal places.

Where a question is 'for information only' it will not be scored.

The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS, and the Contracting Authority ----- and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation the scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 ($5+5+6 = 16 \div 3 = 5.33$))

Pass / fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms
Price	AW5.5	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.6	Implementation of E-Invoicing
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Commercial	SEL3.11	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool

Scoring criteria			
Evaluation Justification Statement			
In consideration of this particular requirement the Contracting Authority has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.			
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	20%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Understanding the Environment	20%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Methodology	40%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Project Plan & Risk Management	10%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Project Team	10%

Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements

Each question will be judged on a score from 0 to 100, which shall be subjected to a multiplier to reflect the percentage of the evaluation criteria allocated to that question.

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 20% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 20%.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 12% by using the following calculation:

$$\text{Score} = \{\text{weighting percentage}\} \times \{\text{bidder's score}\} = 20\% \times 60 = 12$$

The same logic will be applied to groups of questions which equate to a single evaluation criterion.

The 0-100 score shall be based on (unless otherwise stated within the question):

0	The Question is not answered or the response is completely unacceptable.
10	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
20	Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the response to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
40	Poor response only partially satisfying the selection question requirements with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of being a capable supplier.
60	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire.
80	Good response which describes their capabilities in detail which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements currently employed.
100	Response is exceptional and clearly demonstrates they are capable of meeting the requirement. No significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling in its description of techniques and measurements currently employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider.

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that the final score returned may be different as there may be multiple evaluators and their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score.

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60
Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60
Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40
Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40
Your final score will $(60+60+40+40) \div 4 = 50$

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.

The lowest price for a response which meets the pass criteria shall score 100. All other bids shall be scored on a pro rata basis in relation to the lowest price. The score is then subject to a multiplier to reflect the percentage value of the price criterion.

For example - Bid 1 £100,000 scores 100.

Bid 2 £120,000 differential of £20,000 or 20% remove 20% from price scores 80

Bid 3 £150,000 differential £50,000 remove 50% from price scores 50.

Bid 4 £175,000 differential £75,000 remove 75% from price scores 25.

Bid 5 £200,000 differential £100,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Bid 6 £300,000 differential £200,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Where the scoring criterion is worth 50% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 50.

In the example if a supplier scores 80 from the available 100 points this will equate to 40% by using the following calculation: $\text{Score/Total Points} \times 50$ ($80/100 \times 50 = 40$)

The lowest score possible is 0 even if the price submitted is more than 100% greater than the lowest price.

Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire

Bidders should note that the evaluation questionnaire is located within the **e-sourcing questionnaire**.

Guidance on completion of the questionnaire is available at <http://www.ukpbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

What makes a good bid – some simple do's 😊

DO:

- 7.1 Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.2 Do provide the Bid on time, and in the required format. Remember that the date/time given for a response is the last date that it can be accepted; we are legally bound to disqualify late submissions. Unless formally requested to do so by UK SBS e.g. Emptoris system failure
- 7.3 Do ensure you have read all the training materials to utilise e-sourcing tool prior to responding to this Bid. If you send your Bid by email or post it will be rejected.
- 7.4 Do use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint Excel 97-03 or compatible formats, or PDF unless agreed in writing by the Buyer. If you use another file format without our written permission we may reject your Bid.
- 7.5 Do ensure you utilise the Emptoris messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. You should note that we will release the answer to the question to all Bidders and where we suspect the question contains confidential information we may modify the content of the question to protect the anonymity of the Bidder or their proposed solution
- 7.6 Do answer the question, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid, the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.
- 7.7 Do consider who who the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's needs.
- 7.8 Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.
- 7.9 Do provide clear , concise and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails and fax details.
- 7.10 Do complete all questions in the questionnaire or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.11 Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

What makes a good bid – some simple do not's ☹

DO NOT

- 7.12 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.13 Do not attach 'glossy' brochures that have not been requested, they will not be read unless we have asked for them. Only send what has been requested and only send supplementary information if we have offered the opportunity so to do.
- 7.14 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.15 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Contracting Authority to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you. All information secured outside of formal Buyer communications shall have no Legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.16 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.17 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not offer UK SBS or or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.20 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.21 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.23 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool must be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (previously Government Procurement Service), Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.24 Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. Where they are not permissible any attachments submitted will not be considered as part of the evaluation process.
- 7.25 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.26 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.27 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.28 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority. / UKSBS.
- 7.29 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.30 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.31 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.32 Bidders should note the Government's transparency agenda requires your Bid and any Contract entered into to be published on a designated, publicly searchable web site. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their Bid and Contract may be made public
- 7.33 Your bid will be valid for **60** days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders may only amend the contract terms during the clarification period only, only if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified we may reject your Bid.
- 7.35 We will let you know the outcome of your Bid evaluation and where requested will provide a written debrief of the relative strengths and weaknesses of your Bid.
- 7.36 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.37 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.
- 7.38 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal the Contracting Authority reserves the right to ask additional compliancy checks prior to the award of

any Contract. In the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks the Contracting Authority may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.

- 7.39 All timescales are set using a 24 hour clock and are based on British Summer Time or Greenwich Mean Time, depending on which applies at the point when Date and Time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.40 All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement - including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, the Contracting Authority may disclose within Government any of the Bidders documentation/information (including any that the Bidder considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Bidder to the Contracting Authority during this Procurement. The information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this ITQ consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 7.41 The Government is introducing its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme on the 2nd April 2014 to replace the current Government Protective Marking System (GPMS). A key aspect of this is the reduction in the number of security classifications used. All Bidders are encouraged to make themselves aware of the changes and identify any potential impacts in their Bid, as the protective marking and applicable protection of any material passed to, or generated by, you during the procurement process or pursuant to any Contract awarded to you as a result of this tender process will be subject to the new GSC . The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this ITQ to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this ITQ is accompanied by any instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as a result of any changes stemming from the new GSC, whether in respect of the applicable protective marking scheme, specific protective markings given, the aspects to which any protective marking applies or otherwise. This may relate to the instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as they apply to the procurement as they apply to the procurement process and/or any contracts awarded to you as a result of the procurement process.

USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

- [Emptoris Training Guide](#)
- [Emptoris e-sourcing tool](#)
- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)