**Contract 1: Delivery Support**

**Reference:** CSEC (SEND) 17-18/01: Delivery Support for the SEND reforms

**Title:** Contract to provide delivery support to local areas in embedding reforms to services for children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

**Contact Details**:

Name: Angela Overington

Address: Department for Education

0-25 SEND Unit

Level 1, Sanctuary Buildings

Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

E-mail: Contracts2017-18.SEND@education.gov.uk

**Background and description of the services required**

On 1 September 2014, Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 took effect, offering simpler, improved and more consistent help for children and young people in England with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The new system is:

* replacing statements of SEN and learning disability assessments with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans - setting out in one place all the support families will receive;
* requiring councils to publish a ‘local offer’ showing the support available in the area to all children and young people who have disabilities or SEN;
* requiring better co-operation between councils and health services to make sure services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities are jointly planned and commissioned;
* giving parents and young people with EHC plans the offer of a personal budget;
* introducing mediation for disputes; and
* introducing a legal right for children and young people with an EHC plan to express a preference for state academies, free schools and further education colleges.

On 26 January 2016, the Children’s Minister Edward Timpson, announced a package of additional support for implementation of the SEND reforms in England during 2016-17. This included:

* £35.8 million in [implementation funding for local authorities in 2016 to 2017](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-reform-funding-for-local-authorities-2016-to-2017), recognising the additional duties placed on them as a result of the transition to EHC plans
* £27.3 million for the [Family Fund Trust](http://www.familyfund.org.uk/) to support low income families with disabled children
* £15 million to fund the [independent supporters programme](http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/independentsupport), helping to support families and young people to navigate the system, and creating positive experiences for them
* £2.3 million for [Parent Carer Forums](http://www.nnpcf.org.uk/), which bring parents together to provide invaluable support and advice for families

To complement this programme of delivery support, the Government is now seeking applications for a new contract in 2017-18 to support local areas in embedding the SEND reforms.

Some of the key requirements for the contract are provided at Annex A. Further information is contained within the Invitation to Tender documentation. To request a copy of the documentation, please e mail the contracts mailbox at: Contracts2017-18.SEND@education.gov.uk, quoting the contract reference number. In the subject line of your e mail, please include the words ‘Request for ITT documentation’.

**Estimated Contract Start Date (subject to change): 1 April 2017**

**Contract End Date: 31 March 2018**

**Estimated value or range of values**:

The estimated value of this contract is £2.3m in 2017-18 inclusive of VAT.

**Deadline for receipt of tenders (time and date)**:

Three hard copies of all completed tenders must be received by Angela Overington no later than 10.00am on Monday 30 January 2017 at:

The Department for Education

0-25 SEND Unit

Level 1, Sanctuary Buildings

Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

An electronic PDF version must also be submitted no later than 10.00am on

Monday 30 January 2017 to the contracts mailbox at:

Contracts2017-18.SEND@education.gov.uk

**Attachments**

At Annex A are some of the key contract requirements for this tender.

**Whether suitable for SMEs**: Yes

**Whether suitable for VCS**: Yes

**Any other info**:

There may be an option to extend this contract for up to two years depending on the contractor’s performance, the availability of funds and an ongoing need for the services provided.

**The estimated date for award is Tuesday 21 March 2017.**

**Annex A: Key Contract Requirements**

**Contract 01: CSEC (SEND)16-17/01: DELIVERY SUPPORT for the SENd reforms**

**Background**

The Special Educational Needs and disability (SEND) legislation in the Children and Families Act 2014 came into effect from 1 September 2014. Whilst all areas are now delivering the minimum legal requirements of Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, challenges remain in embedding the reforms and further support is needed for professionals in education, health and social care in order to fully realise the vision behind them.

This contract will tackle these issues by:

* Providing support to local information, advice and support services through training, regional networking and sharing good practice.
* Providing support to local areas in delivering a joined-up service to parents, children and young people on matters relating to disability, education, health and social care.
* Supporting local areas in delivering the preparation for adulthood agenda, including developing sustainable links between post-16 and post-19 partners (local authorities; adult health, adult social care; FE colleges, SPIs; employers), so that high quality provision and services are available.
* Providing a support and challenge function to local authorities through the provision of an SEND advisory service.
* Supporting and coordinating regional activity and building sustainability for the longer term.
* Providing targeted support to local areas.
* Delivering a training and development programme aimed at the local authority SEND workforce.
* Supporting a pilot programme around the child’s right to appeal directly to the SEND Tribunal.
* Working with local authorities to review the existing resources and opportunities available to develop the SEND workforce within local authorities at senior leader, middle management and case worker level.
* Developing or bringing together a package of training materials, drawing on existing products where appropriate (particularly those developed under Crown copyright), which local authorities could use to train newly-recruited staff or to support continuous professional development.
* Delivering workforce training targeted at key national priorities, where these correspond with needs identified by local authorities (for example, in regional network delivery plans).

**1.1 Provision of support for local Information, Advice and Support Services (IASSs)**

**Intended impacts:**

* IASS staff are effectively supported to work with children, young people and parents, reflecting the changes from the SEND reforms.
* Parents, children and young people have access to nationally consistent, independent and accurate IAS based on SEND law and guidance.
* An assessment is made and shared with the Department of the quality, effectiveness and capacity of Information, Advice and Support Services.

Local authorities are required under the Children and Families Act 2014 to ensure that information, advice and support is provided to parents, children and young people on matters relating to disability, education, health and social care. In 2017-18, the contractor will be required to provide delivery support to IASSs by:

* Providing legal and other training to IASS staff to support them to work with children, young people and parents, reflecting the changes from the SEND reforms.
* Provide networking and other support for individual services.
* Support local authorities as they re-procure statutory IASS services.
* Monitor consistency of standards, providing support and advice to the Department for Education on the development and quality of IASSs and putting forward proposals for improving their quality as necessary.
* Support local authorities in commissioning an IASS.
* Establish a national data collection strategy to provide up-to-date information on (a) assessment against the IASS Quality Standards, (b) service user evaluation of the service received and (c) service establishment (including funding, commissioning arrangements, staffing etc).

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| The bidder should demonstrate:A good understanding of the role of IASSs and the support they require.Effective strategies for identifying and communicating with IASSs, ideally building on existing networks.An ability to devise and deliver training on this scale and of this nature.An ability to collect, analyse and present monitoring data and suggestions for improvement. |

We expect around 15% of the contract value (inclusive of VAT) to be allocated to this workstrand (subject to negotiation of the overall deliverables).

**1.2 Joint working and transitions**

**Intended impacts:**

* Health, social care and local authority commissioners develop a joined up approach to service delivery, pooling budgets and accountability lines where possible.
* SEND advisors and SEND regional lead local authorities have access to expert intelligence and advice to enable them to improve their understanding and confidence around the integration of education, health and social care.
* Local areas can draw down training provision which they have identified would help them address obstacles in their implementation of the reforms around joint working.
* Local areas struggling most with the joint working/commissioning aspects of the reforms are supported in their areas to develop relationships with partners and to build a strategy for sustainable self-improvement.
* Local areas are able to fully implement joint commissioning arrangements.
* Local areas are able to develop effective pathways from children’s health and social care services to adult health and social care services, including transition arrangements for individual young people.

Under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, local areas are required to work together to deliver a joined-up service to parents, children and young people on matters relating to disability, education, health and social care. The contractor will be required to work across the education, health and social care sectors to embed this culture change. Specifically, the contractor will need to:

* Support local education, health and social care services to develop more integrated processes and services to support children and young people with SEND.
* Deliver regional area sessions for local authority and health colleagues to further regional partnerships around joint working, particularly in relation to low incidence/high needs placements, and support the sharing of learning and experiences.
* Establish and run national and regional working groups to develop practice-based solutions to challenging issues.
* Support local authority education, health and social care services to establish effective joint commissioning arrangements.
* Provide support for transitions between children’s and adult services across health and social care.
* Take account of key national developments in the areas of health and social care – such as those set out in Transforming Care and the Social Care Innovation Programme.

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| The bidder should demonstrate:Effective strategies for identifying and communicating with education, health and social care professionals.A good understanding of effective practice in joint commissioning and integrated service delivery. A good understanding of the barriers to smooth transitions to adult health and social care services and how to overcome them. An ability to devise and deliver training and resources on the issues of joint working to support the local education, health and social care workforces.Plans to work with local authorities and their health and social care partners, both to develop overall plans to improve partnership working, and to address specific issues facing individual areas.  |

We expect around 20% of the contract value (inclusive of VAT) to be allocated to this workstrand (subject to negotiation of the overall deliverables).

**1.3 Provision of Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) Support**

**Intended impacts:**

* Regional lead authorities have fully integrated all the PfA elements of the SEND reforms into regional activity, disseminating knowledge and information appropriately and resulting in provision being delivered (up to age 25 where appropriate) that directly impacts on young people’s outcomes and better prepares them for adulthood.
* Preparation for adulthood is embedded throughout education from the earliest years in tangible ways, with a particular focus on transition planning from Year 9.

The Children and Families Act 2014 has introduced substantial changes to provision for young people with SEN and disabilities aged 16-25. In particular, Part 3 of the Act requires the support for children and young people with SEND to reflect the preparation for adulthood outcomes – i.e. employment, health, independent living and community participation.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Empower local authorities in delivering the preparation for adulthood agenda, through one-to-one support and by building on existing regional groups and / or setting up new regional groups focused on preparation for adulthood. These groups should include local authorities, schools (mainstream and special), colleges and independent special colleges. The aim of the groups should be to action plan at a local level and achieve tangible results in the provision of high quality services.
* Support the drafters of Education, Health and Care plans to embed preparation for adulthood from the earliest years, by providing workforce development and good practice examples, particularly in relation to preparation for adulthood outcomes.
* Support development of level 1 study programmes, including building employment options / relationships.
* Promote supported internships and other pathways to employment for young people with SEND, both regionally and nationally.
* Understand and promote the full range of supported housing options.
* Provide advice to the Department for Education and other Government departments on implementation of the preparation for adulthood agenda.
* Disseminate learning from demonstration sites supported under the 2016-17 delivery support contract (held by the Delivering Better Outcomes Together consortium).

The bidder should demonstrate:

A full understanding of and expertise in the preparation for adulthood agenda, and the delivery challenges it poses for local authorities, post-16 providers and their partners.

How they will communicate expertise and good practice in post-16 policy, delivery and the preparation for adulthood agenda.

How they will support and challenge local authorities, post-16 providers and their key partners to embed changes flowing from the preparation for adulthood agenda.

How they will support mainstream schools to embed the preparation for adulthood agenda.

How they will build sustainable and positive relationships between local authorities, social care and health, schools, post-16 providers, employers and other partners to deliver all of the preparation for adulthood outcomes for young people.

How they will work with SEND regional lead authorities, SEND advisers, other organisations funded by the Department and other partners to co-ordinate and integrate support for local authorities, post-16 providers and their partners.

We expect around 10% of the contract value (inclusive of VAT) to be allocated to this workstrand (subject to negotiation of the overall deliverables).

**1.4       Local authority workforce support**

**Intended impacts:**

* Creating a confident LA SEND workforce, clearly supported with career development, leading to better recruitment and retention.
* Improved workforce confidence in supporting transitions between different education stages, particularly the transition into post-16 education and into adult life.
* An improved understanding of post-16 provision and how to commission it effectively to achieve positive outcomes.
* Better engagement between LA staff and parents on individual EHC plans (as we know that good communication can make a real difference in terms of preventing an adversarial system).
* Ensuring all EHC plans are legally compliant, with clearly written outcomes, leading to a reduction in Tribunal cases

In order to embed the reforms, the local authority SEND workforce – from SEND leaders, through middle management, to caseworkers - needs to be well-equipped with a range of high quality skills, abilities and knowledge. These should range from understanding the legislative requirements of the reforms, through writing good EHC plan outcomes, understanding the best ways to carry out co-production with parents and young people, to personal talents such as leadership and high quality written and oral communication skills.

We would like this element of the contract to deliver across 3 levels:

1. Training for SEND leaders. This should focus on training leaders to embed the culture change required by the Children and Families Act 2014 at a strategic level, including better joint commissioning, bringing budgets together and shaping service provision strategically in a way that delivers better outcomes for families.
2. Training for SEND managers. This should ensure that SEND managers, as operational decision-makers, fully understand the requirements of the law and use this to inform their decisions effectively. We also want to ensure that SEND managers are able to coach their teams in excellent EHC plan writing (including on outcomes) and understand what effective co-production with parents and young people looks like.
3. Training for SEND caseworkers. This should ensure that caseworkers have excellent interpersonal and communication skills (written and oral) to work with families on their EHC plans, and that they have a good understanding of the requirements of the law in relation to SEND issues and procedures. The training programme should be primarily work-based.

These programmes could be delivered separately by different parties or by one organisation. They may include a co-funded approach where participating authorities make a contribution to the costs of training.

In recognition of this, we would like the successful bidder(s) to outline how they would deliver each of these three training and development programmes in 2017-18 aimed at supporting the workforce in local authorities including through training, coaching and/or mentoring as appropriate.

The successful contractor(s) should expect the focus of the training programme to shift in years 2 and 3 of the contract – if applicable – in response to identified needs at the time of contract negotiations.

The bidder should demonstrate:

How they would structure and organise a workforce development programme for local authority personnel at a) senior lead; b) middle management and c) caseworker level. This could be delivered by separate organisations, or by one organisation.

How they would deliver training in the statutory SEND framework for local authority officers.

How they would work with local authorities to review the existing resources and opportunities available to develop the SEND workforce within local authorities, including for case workers.

How they would develop or bring together a package of training materials, drawing on existing products where appropriate (particularly those developed under Crown copyright), which local authorities could use to train newly-recruited staff or to support continuous professional development.

How they would directly deliver workforce training targeted at key national priorities, where these correspond with needs identified in regional network delivery plans and how much training they would plan to deliver within the contract.

How they would ensure that the impact of training was evaluated in the workplace.

If not bidding as a consortium, which partners they would involve in formulating the training to ensure that it delivers the ambitions effectively.

We expect around 5% of the contract value (inclusive of VAT) to be allocated to this workstrand (subject to negotiation of the overall deliverables).

**1.5 Provision of a specialist SEND advisory service**

**Intended impacts:**

* An effective team of SEND advisers is in place to support the Department.
* Interventions by the SEND advisory service lead to a marked improvement nationally in local areas’ progress in implementing the SEND reforms.
* Information and intelligence is shared in an effective and timely manner, resulting in a fully coordinated and complementary offer of support between the SEND Advisory Service and activities carried out by other delivery contractors, including contributions by the service to a range of training and development activities.

During the implementation phases of the SEND reforms, it has been invaluable to have expert advisers who can provide a challenge and support function to local authorities and their partners in delivering all aspects of the SEND reforms. Going forward it will be important to retain such a function. The successful bidder will provide an advisory team that will work closely with a lead adviser who will be appointed by and based at the Department for Education.

The advisory team will help to target the work of SEND regional lead authorities and other specialist support provided through this contract. The successful bidder will provide payroll and expenses management for the team.

The advisory service will need to take a proportionate approach, with advisers spending most time with those local authorities making slower progress in embedding the SEND disability reforms, or where there are particular concerns about quality. The service will also contribute to the identification of good practice and respond to concerns raised in Ofsted/CQC area-based inspections.

The advisory team will need to be agreed with the Department for Education – bids do NOT need to include proposed names for advisers. Advisers will need to have significant experience of the SEND sector across education, health and / or social care delivery.

The bidder should demonstrate:

How they will identify and manage expert SEND advisers with strong experience of supporting and challenging local authorities and other partners across education, health and / or social care.

How they will provide the direct advice, challenge and support to local authorities via a specialist SEND advisory team.

How they will link the work of the SEND advisory team to the work of the regional lead authorities and other specialist support provided through this contract to ensure that good practice is shared and delivery support is targeted based on advisor feedback.

We expect around 25% of the contract value (inclusive of VAT) to be allocated to this workstrand (subject to negotiation of the overall deliverables).

**1.6 Regional support**

**Intended impacts:**

* Sustainable SEND regional networks are able to provide an effective forum for peer support, a channel for delivery of national support, and a source of intelligence and solutions around key implementation issues.
* Flexible support is available to meet training and information gaps in the regions.
* SEND regional networks build on and complement the work of other SEND delivery contractors.

The contractor will be required to provide further support to existing SEND regional networks in 2017-18. Specifically, we would like the successful bidder to:

* Co-ordinate peer support provided by the SEND regional lead authorities to ensure that it is targeted appropriately, taking into account intelligence from the Department for Education and the SEND advisory team, and co-ordinating with the offer of specialist support provided through the other strands of this contract.
* Provide training events and action learning workshops to work through and resolve emerging issues.
* Signpost local authorities and others to other sources of regional support, including capacity-building to develop sustainable regional peer support networks when funding ends.
* Collect and compile feedback about the quality of the support offer and how the reforms are being delivered, including any quality issues.
* Identify unmet need.
* Collect and promote good practice resources and case studies from local authorities, to support local areas in embedding the reforms.
* Support regional or sub-regional collaboration in conducting strategic reviews of special educational provision, and developing regional or sub-regional approaches to commissioning and procuring specialist provision (e.g. to meet low incidence / high complexity needs).
* Provide targeted support to local areas which are responding to CQC / Ofsted inspection or facing significant implementation challenges.

In years 2 and / or 3 of the contract – if applicable – the shape of the regional support programme will change to meet identified need and may include a tighter focus on targeted support.

The bidder should demonstrate:

A full understanding of the SEND reforms, including the SEND code of practice, with particular understanding of the work of local authorities and their partners in implementing the reforms, including the different support requirements and challenges facing them.

How they will provide support and challenge to SEND regional lead authorities and ensure a broadly consistent offer across all regions.

How they will collect and share feedback from the regions about delivery of the SEND reforms, including areas of unmet meet and examples of good practice.

How they will work with the regions to develop a more sustainable model of peer support for future years.

How they will structure and deliver support for local areas in addressing issues identified by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission during SEND area inspections.

How they will structure and deliver support to local authorities with significant implementation issues.

We expect around 15% of the contract value (inclusive of VAT) to be allocated to this workstrand (subject to negotiation of the overall deliverables).

**1.7 Supporting a pilot programme around the child’s right to appeal directly to the SEND Tribunal**

**Intended outcomes:**

* An effective consultation is carried out on the issue of child’s right to appeal to the SEND Tribunal and make disability discrimination claims.
* A pilot is set up to test the child’s right to appeal to the SEND Tribunal and make disability discrimination claims.
* Local authorities in the pilot are supported, including with resolution of any issues.
* Appropriate monitoring systems are in place, enabling sharing of quality, specific and relevant information, with escalation to the Department for Education where required.

A commitment was made in the SEND Green Paper in 2011 that the Department for Education would run a pilot giving children the right to appeal to the SEND Tribunal and make disability discrimination claims. The proposed pilot is expected to test whether the right to appeal is something that children would use, the best way to handle these appeals, and the cost implications of this change.

The Department would like the bidder to work with the Department to establish and facilitate the pilot, and to monitor its progress.

The bidder should demonstrate:

Their understanding of SEND disagreement resolution, with a focus on the SEND Tribunal appeals process.

How they would work with pilot local authorities, children and their families in the process of the pilot - identifying the different support requirements and challenges facing them.

How they would support the Department for Education in an initial consultation exercise by providing knowledge of the SEND appeals process.

How they might structure and deliver support to the pilot local authorities while acting as a first point of contact to provide assistance with the pilot process and supporting the resolution of any issues.

How they might support the Department and the research body in monitoring the progress of the pilot – ensuring pilot authorities are on track and that parents, children, other stakeholders and the First-tier Tribunal are kept informed.

How they would organise and facilitate meetings with all parties to ensure strong and clear communication with the process.

We expect around 5% of the contract value (inclusive of VAT) to be allocated to this workstrand (subject to negotiation of the overall deliverables).

**1.8 Project management**

**Intended impact:** A single point of contact, accurate reporting and smooth operating of the delivery of the contract against KPIs. Risks are identified and managed and a robust exit strategy to support sustainability is developed.

Bidders should describe the staffing and management structure of the team required to deliver the contract. Bidders should think about any specific risks and issues they foresee. They should describe what contingencies and countermeasures they might put in place to mitigate these risks. They should also describe the structures and governance arrangements required to keep oversight of the scheme and proposed reporting mechanisms and measures.

Bidders will be expected to demonstrate how the skills and experience of key staff will ensure the successful delivery of the contract.

The bidder should provide details of the proposed staffing structure that will be employed to deliver the outcomes, including key roles identified to lead the activity as well as other roles to support delivery.

The bidder should indicate: whether staff are already in place, or would need to be recruited, what they will be responsible for, how much time they are expected to dedicate to the activity (on a Full Time Equivalent basis) and how, if at all, this will change during the contract.

Bidders should detail:

Proposed staffing and management structure (if bidding as a consortium, including the responsibilities of different consortium members and how they will work together, including who leads the consortium).

Key staff and their roles (CVs can be attached as an annex).

How they will co-ordinate the different strands of work within the contract to provide a coherent package of support, particularly regarding key cross cutting themes including: local offer, co-ordinated assessment and EHC plans, focusing on outcomes, personal budgets, joint commissioning, preparation for adulthood and participation of children, young people and parents.

That they have a detailed understanding of the processes and systems affecting disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, including a good working knowledge of the SEND reforms.

Specific risks or issues in delivering the proposal and describe the contingencies they would put in place to mitigate them.

How the independence and impartiality of any advice will be maintained, particularly to avoid any potential conflicts of interest.

Key performance indicators for the contract: what they would look like, examples of what they might include and how the contract’s success will be measured.

How the Department for Education will be provided with management and performance information, including co-ordinated reporting to show the support provided to local authorities and their partners across all strands of the contract (whether or not provided as a consortium) and how links will be maintained with the Department for Education, including who will provide day-to-day contact.

How the overall contract will be managed to ensure coordination and achieve economies of scale (whether or not provided as a consortium), including realistic project management arrangements and a high level project/delivery plan.

We expect no more than 5% of the contract value (inclusive of VAT) to be allocated to this workstrand and the two which immediately follow it – costs and security of data (subject to negotiation of the overall deliverables).

**1.9 Costs and value for money**

**Intended impacts:** Budgets are managed efficiently, value for money is achieved and accurate records are kept.

The Department expects to award a contract to run for one year in the first instance, commencing 1 April 2017.

The contract may be extended, following annual performance reviews, for up to two years should it continue to align with Government priorities and should funding be available.

The proposed budget will be no more than £2.3m in 2017-18. Funding levels for a second or third year – should that apply – will be considered at a later stage in the contract. Funding is inclusive of all VAT that may be chargeable.

Although we have given an indication of the proportions of the contract value we expect might be allocated to each workstrand, this is only intended to be indicative. The exact distribution of resources will be confirmed following discussion of deliverables.

The scope of this contract may be extended up to a further value of 30% of the contract. Any changes, including the revised costs, would be agreed with the contractor.

Bidders will need to demonstrate that proposed costs are based on efficient models of delivery and provide good value for public money. You must ensure that all estimated costs are real, auditable and can be justified. Be sure you separately identify and include all expenditure that you expect to incur in relation to proposed activities, i.e. costs associated with:

* overheads i.e. premises/facilities/licences; and
* staffing i.e. management, delivery and administration.

There are restrictions on all paid for communications and marketing activities funded by the Department. You should set out any planned expenditure on these activities with supporting information on the nature of the planned activities.

We would expect quarterly reporting against spending. Please note that the contract is intended to be inclusive of VAT costs and that further amounts will not be available should a vatable supply claim be made at any later stage. No additional costs will be charged to the Department unless agreed with the contract manager prior to expenditure.

It is the responsibility of tenderers to check the VAT position with HMRC before submitting a bid.

Payments of costs to the supplier will be made quarterly by BACS transfer following receipt of a valid invoice.

Bidders should detail:

A complete breakdown of all costs for first year of the contract i.e. 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018, including clear costs for all overheads, including recruitment, accommodation, etc and (if applicable) what VAT will be charged. Where bidders are intending to charge VAT this should be clearly set out in the costs breakdown, including what rate of VAT and an estimate of the total cost of VAT to be charged for the work in question.

As a memorandum, any planned expenditure on communications and marketing activities and information on the nature of the planned activities.

Accounting and finance provisions.

How the overall contract will be managed to ensure co-ordination and achieve economies of scale (whether or not provided as a consortium).

**1.10 Security of data**

**Intended impact:** Departmental or personal data is protected.

The bidder should submit a security plan that explains how they will ensure that Departmental or personal data will be protected.