

## Questions and Answers from the ITT launch events in Sheffield (15/02/18) and London (22/02/18)

QUESTION	ANSWER
<p>(a) Interested in understanding more clearly the reference to the permission to commission library provision from local authorities. We manage a number of prison libraries, situation with public libraries is changing dramatically, so we are interested in providing libraries more in prisons: how are we best to proceed?</p> <p>(b) Can you clarify what you mean by “extend yourself”?</p>	<p>(a) We can't tell you how to proceed, you have to decide that yourself. If a prison library is currently delivered by a Public Library Authority, then the relationship can be formalised through a service level agreement, and does not have to be a contract. If you are not a PLA, or if you are a PLA that wants to extend its reach, then – post March 2019 – you can't simply carry on with a SLA, and will need to be, or be part of, a PEF supplier.</p> <p>(b) I meant geographically. I'm thinking more like a public library authority that wanted to expand outside its natural boundaries</p>
<p>The framework vs the DPS: as I understand it the softer skills could be commissioned through the framework or the DPS but we don't know how they will be commissioned until prison governors decide later in the process, does that mean we have to engage with potential clients through the framework as well as mobilising to engage with the DPS</p>	<p>We can't tell you the right way to approach it. The important point is that providers on the main framework have to be able to provide the whole range of services - through partners, as part of a consortium, or other arrangement – if commissioned by a prison governor. If you have a narrower remit than the broad range of services described in the Specification, you can decide to be part of a PEF bidding consortium or decide to hold fire for the DPS <b>or both</b>.</p>
<p>At what point does us being named on the framework mean anything? And if you get into lot specific design process and then realise you don't have something important can you still as a provider go and get it?</p>	<p>The governor will have written the specification of what they want to buy. The PEF provider will be heavily involved in working with the governor to turn that into a delivery plan. Around the same time, the governor will have started appointing DPS providers. Governors will decide what they want to buy from the PEF, committing the budget whilst the rest will remain uncommitted and available for the DPS. Different governors will take different approaches.</p>

<p>(a) Is there any idea when performance indicators will be released?</p> <p>(b) Can you talk more about IAG?</p>	<p>(a) As far as governor indicators are concerned, we have a team in place that focuses on governor accountability as part of this. As with what Michael Spurr was saying, it is an important part of the mix.</p> <p>Performance measures are being developed within MoJ/HMPPS and will be consulted upon with governors in due course, we expect that any measures will take effect from the beginning of April 2019, tying in to the start date of the new education contracts</p> <p>(b) IAG – We expect to have in place from April 2019 new arrangements for delivery of IAG. There’s hardly a place in the world where a teacher or lecturer wouldn’t expect to provide or deliver careers advice as an incidental part of learning delivery. We would expect, of course, prison education framework providers to also do that. It won’t be the whole extent of IAG, but an important part.</p>
<p>(a) Q: Clarification questions around pricing; following from library question, can you clarify that there is not an expectation to provide a price for the library service in the framework tender</p> <p>(b) Q: Related to the slide about pricing: at framework stage pricing should be provided so that it can be used and evaluated against delivery scenarios: just wondering if as bidders will we understand the scenarios, or if we are to provide our own scenarios. Can you explain more</p>	<p>(a) A: Library pricing is only at call off stage if requested by the prison</p> <p>(b) A: The Scenarios are on Bravo and you complete the pricing within the Excel document that contains the scenario for the lot, or lots, you are bidding for. Different lots will have different scenarios -they are not designed to say, “This is exactly what we will be buying”. They are designed to be a useful tool to help us evaluate pricing. The scenarios vary between each lot based on the type of establishments in each lot (men vs women’s, long term high security etc) and they are based on current OLASS commissioning data. Bidders need to fill in their prices and it auto completes the scenario so you can see how the pricing impacts and interacts with each other.</p>

<p>about what you mean by the evaluations being based on scenarios</p>	
<p>(a) Back in Nov there was a webinar about digital prisons, since then it has gone quiet. What can bidders expect will be provided from the perspective of infrastructure in prison (infrastructure in connectivity to the internet, cells, classrooms)</p> <p>(b) What can they expect to see in terms of national systems that might be provided to facilitate the interchange of information between prisons</p>	<p>(a) we will be issuing an asset register which will be available for for the lots that you have registered interest in. In terms of wider infrastructure and digital prisons it is a moving picture and a review is being carried out about the rollout of delivery plan. Details of individual establishments' information will be much more at call off stage rather than framework stage.</p> <p>(b) We should expect a national system to support data collection and transfer of data between prisons that providers will work with; whether that is sophisticated or not. In terms of a learning platform we have existing systems (eg: VC) at the moment as well as other IT systems that exist. We are currently asking in evaluation framework about digital innovation and what information they can bring to the table for prisoners as a whole.</p>
<p>(a) Pricing in relation to the scenarios: Richard made a point earlier about getting more for the same rather than a discounting strategy but in the commercial pricing evaluation slides it said that bidders can only achieve maximum points by offering 50% off the current cost, how are these two points compatible.</p> <p>(b) If you could give any indication as to your thinking as to how the commercial pricing piece would work at the call off stage so that we are not encouraged to discount twice, once at framework and then later again at call off stage.</p>	<p>(a) Pricing is evaluated on a relative basis compared to the average price received from bidders. We are not looking for people to score maximum points, it's designed to be a relative score not to aim to get all the points.</p> <p>(b) When we do a mini competition in the call-off stage we will have more concrete data. With this greater detail we'll be able to come up with much more specific pricing.</p>

<p>(a) Wanted to check about the requirement and deadline and intention to tender on Monday. Can you confirm that it is the case that if you don't submit that intention to tender by Monday you will not be allowed to apply</p> <p>(b) Governors being able to commission from the PEF provider: do they have to use the one person who wins the call off contract or can they use anyone that gets onto the framework?</p>	<p>(a) If your question is: "Can you still bid if you don't submit the material by Monday", the answer is 'yes'.</p> <p>(b) The idea is that governors have to commission the core common curriculum from the PEF providers who has been selected for their lot. There will be potentially 5 framework providers for each lot. So the mini competition will choose which of those providers will be the provider for that lot for the next 4 years with a potential extension of 2 years. Each governor can decide when they write their specification from that call off competition how much they want to buy from the framework provider. They have to buy core curriculum but after that they can buy as much or as little from the framework as they want. The expectation is what the governors don't buy from the framework, they will get from the DPS. That decision will be made at an establishment level. Once the lot has decided which PEF provider is their provider the lot has made that decision for the period of framework call off.</p>
<p>(a) The only way to drive digital into prisons is to apply for one geographical lot there's no way to apply nationally? So can you as a digital provider bid to provide services in general? If we have thoughts about how you might offer more content digitally then the only way we can provide that is by pairing up with the education providers.</p> <p>(b) will you be publishing all the attendees list from this event and Sheffield?</p>	<p>(a) You will have to bid per lot, and to bid for a lot you have to be able to deliver all the requirements so you will need to partner up with a provider and if you want to do this nationally you will have to partner with a provider across all the lots. We are looking for providers to use digital within their provision</p> <p>(b) Yes</p>

<p>I have a question about the libraries provision. As we are submitting a tender with a costing schedule – the libraries provision is not part of the costing as we don't know whether governors want to continue with their current arrangements or commission library services from the Prison Education Framework (PEF)- how will this work?</p>	<p>Governors with a library services provided through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with a Public Library Authority (PLA) will have the option to continue with this arrangement if the PLA is content to do so. If they haven't got a PLA in place or do not want to continue this with this arrangement they will be able to commission future library services via the PEF provider at the contract Call Off stage and the price will be set out there.</p> <p>For those non-PLA library providers operating in prisons, we are seeking legal advice which we will pass onto governors, on which providers can continue to deliver via a new SLA and which cannot. Governors will have this information to make informed decisions before the Call Off contract stage.</p>
<p>(a) We are a smaller provider so this ITT is not for us?</p> <p>(b) Do we wait until later on to get onto the Dynamic Purchasing System?</p>	<p>(a) It's not for us to prescribe what type of suppliers bid. But to be clear this ITT is for the main PEF. Suppliers must be able to deliver a core common curriculum of maths, English, ESOL and ICT at chosen Lot(s) level. We welcome bidders to use a consortium approach and work with other suppliers.</p> <p>(b) We will be launching the DPS later this year in a separate procurement exercise. The DPS will be an alternative route via which suppliers can bid for additional specific contracts.</p>
<p>(a) The ITT asks bidders to demonstrate digital innovation approaches; can you provide an update on the digital transformation programme?</p> <p>(b) Will suppliers be required to use mandated IT systems, or can organisations bring in their own CRM?</p>	<p>(a) The digital transformation programme is currently undergoing a ministerial review so we are unable to provide a detailed update until the results of that review are public. However, we are clear that IT enabled learning is important and we expect suppliers to consider how digital developments can be used to maximise outcomes for learners.</p> <p>(b) We expect to have some mandatory IT systems in place for development, achievement and learning plans. I will take this question away – please could you send the question through Bravo.</p>

<p>Can you explain why Schedule 6 in the ITT states that for the avoidance of doubt the Buyer shall be entitled to appoint more than one Call Off Contract in each Lot?</p>	<p>A single Call Off Contract will apply in each Lot, in exceptional circumstances only there may be a need to appoint a second Call Off Contract, for example if a new prison was added to a Lot or there were no successful bidders then the process can be re-run. We expect there to be two call offs in Lot 5 to deal with the special circumstances of Morton Hall IRC.</p>
<p>What information do prime contractors need to give about any arrangements they have with their subcontractors and other delivery partners?</p>	<p>We are excited about consortiums and expect to see clear plans for setting up that vehicle. Clear structures and the more detail the better.</p>
<p>I have a question about the number of prisoners with a learning difficulty and/or disability (LDD). This could vary considerably over the life of the contract. How can we account for that in our pricing structure?</p>	<p>The cohort of prisoners with LDD could change at establishment level, we believe that any changes will be balanced out at Lot level.</p>
<p>(a) How will we ensure fairness so that new suppliers have access to the same regional intelligence as incumbent providers, ie. details of future prison education plans and priorities?</p> <p>(b) I agree, but there is a specific question in the ITT about providing knowledge about regional Lots. I am referring to that and the current understanding about education and the needs of their population.</p>	<p>(a) At the mini competition stage all successful bidders will have access to the same specific core information. Ethical Walls will prevent a governor from sharing future prison education plans and priorities with providers. To support prospective bidders, we are organising a programme of prison visits.</p> <p>(b) The way the questions work is that there are 7 questions, only one of which is Lot specific covering 15% of the total marks available. This won't give an overwhelming advantage to the incumbent supplier and we have done our best with ethical walls to level the playing fields. Prison Ofsted inspection reports (published as part of the HMIP reports): <a href="https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/">https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/</a> will be generally of interest to prospective bidders. Section 3 is the part that deals principally with education and libraries in custody.</p>

<p>How are we ensuring new providers will provide quality data from an Ofsted perspective and provide what they need?</p>	<p>We are in discussions with Ofsted to agree the data we will expect from suppliers which will form part of a central requirement.</p>
<p>Curriculum planning- how can suppliers agree a Delivery Plan when the needs of establishments will fluctuate in year and result in suppliers spending more or less money than planned?</p>	<p>The Delivery Plan will be flexible to recognise that actual delivery may vary and will be subject to review within the contract Year.</p>
<p>Are the National Occupational Areas listed in the specification document expected to stay core during the length of the contract or can you switch in and out during the contract duration?</p>	<p>I think there may be some confusion here. For clarity let me explain that suppliers must offer the core common curriculum of maths, English, ICT and ESOL, they must the specified Awarding Organisations' qualifications and this element of the Specification must be commissioned from the PEF. This element of the Specification <u>cannot</u> be procured via the DPS.</p> <p>We have selected the Awarding Organisations whose qualifications will be used exclusively in seven subjects so that those starting a course at one prison can bank and build on their progress if they move elsewhere. The National Occupational Standards listed in the specification document simply set out which specific elements of the (broadly described) vocational areas to which the Awarding Organisation qualifications requirements apply.</p> <p>These 7 subjects are broadly what all prisons do. We do not expect this will change over the life of the contract.</p>