

Questions and answers posed at the contractor briefings on 7th July 2008

- THE INFORMATION PROVIDED HERE SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON FOR THE PURPOSES OF TENDER APPLICATION.
- THE BRIEFING MEETINGS ARE IN PART TO OBTAIN FEEDBACK ON THE PLANS FOR HOW CFSW WILL OPERATE AND THIS COULD MEAN PLANS MAY BE AMENDED.
- WHEN TENDERING YOU WILL NEED TO RELY ON INFORMATION PROVIDED WITHIN THE TENDER PACK AND INFORMATION PROVIDED AS RESPONSES TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS.

Will there be a framework for smaller contractors in the future?

The current framework is being set up in response to the key demands of work identified by public bodies. The importance of smaller contractors within sub-regional economies is recognised. However, it is hoped that frameworks for smaller works will be established in due course, subject to resources. Smaller contractors who join forces and apply as part of a fully constituted consortium can apply for the current framework.

Will housing associations be able to use the Framework?

The Framework is open to all public bodies operating within the South West Region. Experience in the South East indicates that Housing Associations are keen to use frameworks, but they find it difficult to have framework usage approved by their governance group so in practice this is less likely.

How will individual contractors be appointed to individual projects?

It is anticipated that the framework will operate along the lines of the South East Centre of Excellence (SECE) model. In the South East all contractors appointed to the framework have received work, but in part according to their performance. There may be a reserve list of contractors on the Construction Framework South West who will not be awarded work initially. In the South East, no framework contractors have complained of insufficient work. It should also be noted that different public bodies have different standing orders, therefore, a reasonably flexible approach is required. Selection details will be published in the ITT

Will there be a standard building form of contract across the South West?

No, the client will decide on the appropriate contract for the project, this may be JCT, NEC, GC Works etc. There will be a pre-construction agreement with the contractor, who will in effect, support the design team. The pre-construction agreement will be separate from the main works contract.

Will the number of Framework contractors be limited to 15?

The exact number of framework contractors has not been decided. It will depend on a number of factors including the quality and nature of the bids received, the size of programme and geographical coverage that needs to be achieved.

If we have limited experience in a particular field (eg Schools), will this count against us?

Hopefully not. There should be sufficient range of template projects for CFSW to assess a contractor's capabilities.

Will you be strengthening links with Construction Groups such as CIOB?

Yes, we will be looking to engage with the industry at every opportunity.

Is the Framework making appointments of consultants before June 2009?

There is no commitment on the part of CFSW to consultants; there is an existing framework for consultants (South West Consultants Framework), hosted by Torbay Council. The consultants framework and the major construction framework are entirely separate. However all public bodies in the south west will be mindful of the proposed new Construction Framework and the need for a collaborative approach.

Will the framework be centralised?

Devon County Council will act as host authority on behalf of participating public bodies within the SW region. This is a similar approach to that adopted by SECE and Hampshire County Council but participating bodies will control the selection of their contractors from the framework list.

Is it proposed that Contractors come with their own consultant teams?

It is not a requirement of the Construction Framework for Contractors to have an in house design capability.

With regard to design & build, will contractors deal with one consultant exclusively on the Framework?

No, contractors can use who they wish. Contractors may propose more than one supply chain and 2 or 3 contractors may use one design chain. This has not proved to be a problem for the SECE framework.

With regards to design & build, will the teams be appointed at Stage A/B?

Possibly, it depends on how much control the client wishes to retain.

Will Key Performance Indicator scoring be an objective of CFSW?

Yes.

Will the same KPIs as SECE be used?

Not confirmed yet, but this would seem likely as it will enable us to compare notes performance.

Do KPIs 'drill down' to designer level?

Yes. The Key Performance Indicators will drill down to consultant level and will include reviews of product, process and performance.

We note that three user groups are planned for the framework – will there be communication between the user groups?

Yes, but protocol has yet to be agreed by the CFSW Project Board. Sometimes it will be appropriate for the user groups to work independently but sometimes in conjunction with each other; it is a question of getting the balance right. In the SECE model, the three groups meet at least once a year at an annual conference. Mutual trust and collaboration are critical to the success of the framework. The need to deliver best value cannot be underestimated.

Questions and Answers posed at the contractor briefings on 10th July 2008

Will there be a commitment to training and use of local labour?

This will be covered in the Tender documentation.

Comment: The requirement for a turnover of £30 million per annum will cut smaller contractors out of the framework.

CFSW is a framework for major construction projects across the South West region. If smaller construction companies were on this framework they would be working to capacity very quickly and would be unable to take up other work in the region. This framework is Phase 1 and results from priority needs identified by public bodies. Subject to funding it is hoped that lower value sub-regional frameworks may subsequently be put in place (as they have, for example, in the South East region). It is well recognised that Small & Medium Sized Enterprises have a valuable role to play and it is hoped they would play a strong part in any lower value sub regional framework.

How will the contractors be selected because in some cases many companies could be part of a single group?

The CFSW Project Board will establish the detail of this and it will be communicated in the procurement documentation.

The Framework has received central government funding, and therefore will need to demonstrate the benefits. Will these be measured by bespoke or existing Key Performance Indicators?

Performance indicators are likely to be very similar to those used by the SECE Construction Framework which are covered in the SECE part of the presentation.

Will central government funding continue?

CFSW has received funding for three years via LIFT South West. The SECE Framework in the South East has recently received additional funding for a further three years (following the successful completion of their first three years) and it is hoped that future funding will be secured for CFSW in the same way.

KPIs for contractors have been discussed; what about the performance of the Client Project Teams?

There will be a 360 degree review and feedback process on people, process and procedures. Obviously this will include the project team, clients and consultants.

Is it certain a 2nd and a 3rd tier construction framework will proceed?

This will depend on demand and available funding.

If contractors are to be brought in at the feasibility stage, will project funding be in place at that point?

Not necessarily, but clients will be strongly advised that this should be standard procedure. Each public body will have its own procurement rules which will be made clear by the commissioning body when a project is notified. As a general principal there should be no speculative tendering and public bodies should not proceed to framework contractor selection until funding is available.

Will all contractors be expected to work to the same overhead and profit margins?

No, but in practice the differences between contractors usually tends to be small. Clients will consider overall costs when appointing contractors.

How will the PQQ documentation be issued?

The PQQ will be issued electronically via the website

www.Devontenders.gov.uk

A link will be sent to all Applicants which have expressed their interest in this tender, by registering on the e-tendering website before the closing date for doing so.

An electronic link will be sent to the e-mail address which applicants entered when they registered, which will contain a link to enable applicants to download the Prequalification documents when they are released. This is envisaged to take place on 1st September 2008.

There are no limitations in terms of capacity in terms of uploading documents and files to the website, as part of your PQQ return submission.

The main elements of the PQQ submissions must be made electronically; only supplementary information that is not unavailable electronically may be returned by other means. The instructions for doing so will be clearly laid out within the PQQ documentation.

Will contractors need to identify their supply chains and designers?

Yes, in the ITT template projects, contractors will be asked for details about their supply chains and designers. Contractors on the framework will not be tied to use specific supply chains or designers, but the framework will expect them to use comparable organisations to those identified in the ITT.

Will all procurement be design & build?

No, a range of options are available.

Will clients obtain all their construction work via the Framework?

Work can also be procured by traditional tendering processes and clients are not obliged to use the framework for all of their works.

Will there be an obligation for contractors to engage consultants on the South West Consultants Framework?

No, contractors do not have to use consultants from the 'South West Consultancy Framework' (as hosted by Torbay Council).

Will CFSW deal with Housing Association construction projects?

If all parties are in agreement, yes. However, the experience in the South East region has been that the governance arrangements of Housing Associations has meant that in practice it can be difficult for Housing Associations to use the construction framework. That said Construction Framework South West are happy to explore the use of the framework being used by Housing Associations in the South West.

Is the Framework likely to include national as well as regional contractors?

Given the scale of the framework and the projected levels of work, it is likely that some national contractors may be included in the framework. Ideally, it is important that there is a mix of contractors who can undertake projects of different sizes and types within the scope of the phase 1 framework.

Will there be workshops for contractors to share learning?

In the South East there are several groups set up in the spirit of public body and private industry co-operation where contractors lead groups dealing with sustainability, Health & Safety and waste issues etc. CFSW will follow a similar model.

Are underlying contracts common throughout the users?

No. Underlying contracts are not specified and it is up to the public body to choose the most appropriate for their needs. For example, this could be NEC3, JCT or GC Works contracts. But we understand it is not possible to use PPC2000 (due to relationship between the parties).

How will the consultants be appointed – is the main route through the contractors?

The appointment of consultants will depend on the procurement route chosen and resources available to the client. Flexibility is viewed as very important to the success of the framework.

What is the SECE website address?

See CFSW website links