

Direct Invitation to Quote (DITQ)

Part 1 - Instructions

DN323115 Family Group Conference Coordinators

# General Guidance

## Please ensure you read this document before completing the DITQ documents.

# Introduction

## Tenderers are advised that all costs incurred either directly or indirectly in preparation, submission or otherwise related to this DITQ will be borne by them, and in no circumstances will the Council be responsible for any such costs. Tenderers are also advised that the Council at its sole discretion acting reasonably and in good faith reserves the right to abandon the DITQ at any stage prior to contract award.

## The e-procurement system used by the Council is Pro Contract [[https://procontract.due-north.com](https://procontract.due-north.com/)/](https://procontract.due-north.com/) . Please note that DITQ documents submitted electronically will, upon being submitted, be deemed to have been signed electronically within the meaning of the Electronic Communications Act 2000.

## Quotations shall be completed in full and submitted without qualification. All quotation documents, including formal written proposals, are to cover the requirements as stated in the service specification.

# Instructions for Tenderers

## Tenderers shall ensure that they are fully familiar with the nature and extent of the obligations, which they will assume if their tender is accepted.

## All communications relating to this DITQ must be conducted via Pro Contract [[https://procontract.due-north.com](https://procontract.due-north.com/)/](https://procontract.due-north.com/). All correspondence/notifications will be sent to the email address on Pro Contract https://procontract.due-north.com/ as registered by your organisation.

## Any communication between Tenderers and Southwark Council employees regarding this contract during the DITQ process not conducted via the “Messaging” section on Pro Contract [[https://procontract.due-north.com](https://procontract.due-north.com/)/](https://procontract.due-north.com/) could lead to individual bids being rejected or the entire process being abandoned.

## Please use the “Messaging” link for this contract on Pro Contract [https://procontract.due-north.com](https://procontract.due-north.com/)/ to raise any questions relating to this DITQ. Questions should be submitted no later than three days before the deadline for the receipt of quotations. Questions submitted after this time will not be answered.

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## All questions that are seeking to clarify any points in any of the DITQ documents should be posted on Pro Contract [https://procontract.due-north.com](https://procontract.due-north.com/)/ . Our answers will be posted on Pro Contract [https://procontract.due-north.com](https://procontract.due-north.com/)/ for all other bidding organisations to see, unless the question is considered to be confidential.

## Please note that it is your responsibility to regularly review the Messaging section on Pro Contract <https://procontract.due-north.com>for all questions and answers as well as any additional information that might have been posted.

## Tenders must be submitted via Pro Contract [https://procontract.due-north.com](https://procontract.due-north.com/)/ no later than the date and time as specified in the DITQ document. For details of how to do this please read the guidance on the opening page of the portal.

## Do not include supporting documents with your submission, unless specifically requested to do so. However, we may ask to see further documentation at a later stage.

## Tenderers are advised that all costs included in preparation and submission of quotations and any other costs will be borne by them, and in no circumstances will the council be responsible for any such costs.

## It will be the Tenderer’s responsibility to state in their submission any information which they regard as confidential, personal information, trade secret or may prejudice their commercial interests and to discuss this with the Council prior to submission.

## The Tenderer should provide any potential third parties it appoints to assist with the contract with all necessary technical and commercial information to enable such third parties to accurately quote to the Bidder. It is council policy not to respond to any direct approach from such potential third parties seeking details about a particular DITQ.

## Tenderers must declare the share of any contract they intend to sub-contract and list any proposed third parties in their submission.

## In accordance with Freedom of Information Act 2000, from January 2005, public organisations must respond within 20 working days to written requests for information from anyone. The information requested must be supplied unless it falls into specified categories of information which include: confidential, personal, trade secret, or information which would or would be likely to prejudice the bidder’s or the Council’s commercial interests. These categories are exemptions under which information need not be disclosed.

## You are advised that information which falls into our agreed interpretation of the legal definition of confidentiality, personal information, trade secret or prejudice to your commercial interests may still have to be disclosed in some circumstances. For example, if there were very strong public interests reasons for disclosure, we may have to disclose trade secrets, or information that would, or would be likely to prejudice your commercial interest. The Council may be forced to make information public as a result of an appeal by a member of the public against our initial decision not to reveal information. The public can appeal through our internal complaints procedure and ultimately to The Information Commissioner’s Office, the government organisation responsible for enforcing the Act.

## You will need to provide also with your submission a contact within your organisation to ensure that should we need to consult on an information request we can do this promptly. If we are unable to contact anyone to consult we may have to release the information to ensure that we remain within the 20 working days deadline.

## Further detailed guidance on contracts with third parties, in particular confidentiality clauses, and the implications of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 at The Information Commissioners Office web site using [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk).

## The Council needs to ensure the continuous financial viability of any economic operator. By the contract commencement date or at any point during contract period, the Council reserves the right to run an independent financial appraisal for the purposes of that financial reassurance.

## For the purposes of establishing economic and financial standing the Council may take into account industry standard ratio such as:

* performance ratios including gross profit, net profit, earnings before interest and tax, return on capital employed, return on assets;
* ownership ratios including gearing for total debt or fixed asset worth, long term liability to capital employed, and percentage of business;
* stability ratios including current ratios, interest cover, average trade for creditors/debtors and liquidity ratios;
* efficiency ratios including stock, acid test ratios, debtors, creditors and asset utilisation.

## The Council must publish details of each individual item of expenditure that exceeds £500.00. The Council must also publish details of any contract, commissioned activity, framework agreement and any other legally enforceable agreement with a value that exceeds £5,000 (Transparency Code for Local Government 2015 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/408386/150227_PUBLICATION_Final_LGTC_2015.pdf>)

# Confidentiality of Information and Documents

## Please be advised that Southwark Council works in strict Accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (2000) (FOIA) and as such will only keep confidential information that is properly confidential in its nature and then only for a reasonable amount of time. Any information submitted to us may be subject to disclosure in response to a request under FOIA.

## You should be aware that, even where you have indicated that information is commercially sensitive, we may be required to disclose it under the FOIA in response to a request where such disclosure is considered to be in the public interest. Please also note that the receipt by Southwark Council of any material marked ‘Confidential’ or equivalent should not be taken to mean that we accept any duty of confidence by virtue of that marking.

# Evaluation

## The Tender shall be prepared on the basis of the full performance of all of the services specified and to the standard specified in the tender documents. We will evaluate the tenders to determine whether tenderers are able to meet this requirement and will not accept any tender which we do not consider able to meet this requirement.

# Information for Tenderers

## Tenders shall be completed in full and submitted without qualification. All tender documents, including formal written proposals, are to cover the requirements as stated in the service specification.