



# Request for Pricing

Tender for Penetration Testing 2020

**DATE OF ISSUE OF ITT:  
03/06/2020**

**DATE OF RETURN:  
On or before 12:00 Noon on Tuesday 23/06/2020**

**Charlestown House,  
Acorn Park Industrial Estate  
Otley Road, Shipley  
BD17 7SW**

**Contact:  
Steve Craison  
ICT Project Manager**

**All Correspondence to be made via the portal**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides information, instructions and the terms regarding the Request for Proposal (RfP) phase of this procurement.

## 1.1 Project Background

Accent have been providing high quality social housing for rent and sale for over 50 years and we remain firmly committed to providing our residents with the excellent homes and top quality services they have a right to expect. We currently own and manage over 21,500 properties across the country, which over 34,000 residents call home. Our residents' homes and services are managed by our regional offices in Stockton, Burnley, Camberley and Peterborough. Our head office, which also hosts our regional office for Yorkshire is located in Shipley, West Yorkshire.

WE ARE ACCENT HOUSING – providing affordable housing since 1966. Our strategic aims are as follows:

- A home you're perfectly happy with
- Real contact choice
- Handling repairs first time
- A named Accent Partner
- Keeping you safe
- Rewarding loyalty
- Getting better and better

Our core values - respectful, creative, dependable and open and honest - sum up exactly what we stand for. They are relevant to every market we work in. Wherever possible, everyone we work with (including our suppliers and contractors), has similar values.

We are seeking more ways to improve our overall resiliency and services to our internal and external customers to support those strategic aims above. This includes ensuring that all of our technologies and ICT infrastructure is up to date accessible whilst minimising the potential risk from cyber attack.

We need to account for:

- Our changing workforce (following the transition to the entire workforce remote working)
- Changing customer expectations
- A push to develop more self-service options and to nudge customers to the most cost effective method of service delivery

- Evolving communications technology

## **1.2 Summary of the Business Case**

Accent Housing Limited would like to invite pricing and proposals from suitably qualified organisations to carry out our annual cyber and information security penetration test.

## **1.3 Explanation of the Request for Proposal Process**

The route to market for this procurement is an “**Open**” process as defined by PCR 2015. The opportunity has been advertised via both CCS Contracts Finder and through Proactis Procurement Portal.

## 2 THE REQUIREMENTS

- Suppliers must be accredited for Cyber Essentials Plus and must be able to audit, report and determine Accent's level of competency to re-attain the certification.
- External penetration test of up to 30 external live/active IP addresses.
- An internal security assessment of the following;
  - 2 x Fortigate Firewalls with approx. 51 rules
  - Server build reviews of Win. 2008 R2 (3), Win. 2012 R2 (55), Win. 2016 (53), Win 2019 (12) including credentialed scanning of a 10% sample.
  - Active Directory Review
  - Workstation build reviews of Win. 8.1 (1), Win. 10 (439) – with credentialed scanning of a 10% sample
  - A Security Review 1 x Android Tablet, 1 x iPad, 1 x Mobile Phone & 1 x laptop.
  - Review of Remote Access solution
  - Wireless review of 3 x SSID's centrally managed by AeroHive
  - Review of the separation at the DR site
- Security assessment of 25 Accent Housing websites and web services from an unauthenticated and authenticated perspective.
  - Assumes single user group per app, no more than 300 active pages in total across all 22 apps with API testing to be performed
  - The sites for authenticated testing will be supplied to the successful supplier.
- Cyber Essentials Plus
  - SAQ review
  - Remote vulnerability scan  $\leq 20$
  - Onsite workstation assessment (suggestions around innovative ideas that comply with COVID-19 restrictions are welcome)
    - 1 x Windows 10 device
    - 1 x Android tablet
    - 1 x iPad
    - 1 x Android mobile phone
    - Issuance of certification and badge if pass status achieved
- Cyber Essentials Plus Support - Initial review of completed SAQ form with feedback as to areas of weakness that may cause a 'fail', plus advice on what to expect from test elements. The client may choose not to continue with the assessment following this pre-assessment support, in which case only this support line item will be invoiced. If the client wishes to continue with the assessment, time will be allowed for mitigating steps to be implemented before the SAQ is resubmitted for formal review under the below line item.
- Suppliers to be available for follow up questions as required.
- Reports detailing the outcomes, recommendations and suggestions to be in a simple to read and easy to understand format.
- Suppliers must provide sufficient detail to their approach and provide sample reports for consideration as part of the assessment – any report must be received within 3 weeks of the conclusion of the work

- Pricing to be on an all-inclusive basis including any pre-work, actual work and then follow up work as required.
- All suppliers will be required to accept our standard terms and conditions and also sign a non-disclosure agreement before any specific technical access details are provided.
- All testing must comply with current Government COVID-19 guidelines around essential working, social distancing and any other such requirements in force throughout the duration of the tender, the testing and the final report presentation

Our delivery requirements for the penetration test 2020 are determined as follows:

## 2.1 Delivery Timescales

- Tender presented on Contract Finder: **03 June 2020**
- Expressions of Interest/Intent to Respond by **09 June 2020**
- All clarification questions to be received by **12 June 2020** – *clarification questions and responses will be made public and answered as soon as possible after receipt*
- Testing to commence from no later than **W/C 3 August 2020** however starting sooner is possible subject to agreement.
- Results, accreditation and final report to be presented to Accent by **28 August 2020**
- Any suppliers wishing to submit a tender response must be able to confirm that they will be able to comply with the penetration testing and reporting date as stated – this is a hard deadline with financial penalties incurred on the successful supplier should they not be able to meet the deadline. Such financial penalties will not exceed the total value of the winning quote.
- Delivery for any hardware to be to Charlestown House, BD17 7SW
- Suppliers can choose to deliver hardware at the time of installation whilst adhering to the timeframe as stated

### 3 INSTRUCTIONS AND DETAILS OF THE PROCUREMENT

| ITEM                                 | CONTRACT DETAILS   |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Procurement Method                   | This procurement will be effected through an Open Request for Proposal (RfP) process published on Contract Finder.   |
| Contract Description:                | To provide penetration testing for the internal and external networks at Accent Housing.   |
| Quantity:                            | This is a single contract solution, to be delivered to a suitable location as defined in this document. It must offer future flexibility to amend the systems included in the solution and / or flex capacity up or down should business requirements change.  |
| Project Manager                      | Steve Craison  |
| Confirmation of Intention to Respond | <p>Expressions of interest to be made via the Proactis portal – for the avoidance of doubt, it is the supplier's responsibility to ensure they are registered on the portal and have suitable and valid insurance policies in place to cover the duration of this contract.</p> <p>Clarification questions must be submitted via the portal and any correspondence is also via this portal. Any communications outside of the portal will be ignored and not responded to.</p> <p>Suppliers who intend to respond to this request should ensure they have submitted an expression of interest through the portal by <b>09 June 2020</b>.</p> <p>Late submissions will not be accepted, and suppliers should ensure they can submit via the portal before the deadline.</p> |
| Clarification Questions              | <p>All clarification questions must be submitted via the Proactis portal before the <b>12 June 2020</b></p> <p>Any questions received after this deadline may not be responded to.</p>   |
| Submission instructions:             | Your RfP response must be submitted by providing a detailed breakdown proposal showing how you meet the requirements before 12:00 noon on <b>23 June 2020</b> .  |

| ITEM                                  | CONTRACT DETAILS                           |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Date/time for RfP<br>Response return: | <b>12.00 noon on Thursday 23 June 2020</b> |



## 4 OVERVIEW OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS

The following sections outline the processes that will be used to shortlist suppliers and the process by which we will then determine the best supplier for our needs.

### 4.1 The Request for Proposal process

The timeline is detailed below.

| Dates                    | Description  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 03/06/2020               | Request for proposal submitted to Contract Finder and advert posted on Proactis procurement portal. All details for the opportunity are included in this proposal. |
| 09/06/2020               | Cut-off for Expressions of Interest to be received   |
| 12/06/2020               | Cut-off for receipt of supplier clarification questions  |
| 16/06/2020               | Deadline for Accent response to clarification questions  |
| <b>23/06/2020</b>        | <b>Deadline for Responses for the RfP</b>  |
| 24/06/2020 – 01/07/2020  | Evaluation & Scoring   |
| 03/07/2020               | Internal Recommendation Report   |
| 06/07/2020               | Contract Finder award to successful supplier   |
| 10/07/2020               | Contract Signature and Purchase Order Raised – statement of works agreed   |
| No later than 03/08/2020 | Project Starts   |
| 28/08/2020               | Report Due by  |

## 4.2 How we will evaluate

Evaluation will be conducted in a single stage and comprises the following:

### RfP Response

The table below shows the weighting.

| Criteria         | Weighting |
|------------------|-----------|
| Technical Merit  | 20%       |
| Service Delivery | 10%       |
| Price            | 70%       |

### Price

We will evaluate costs submitted as part of the proposal. All pricing should be detailed and provide a full breakdown for any software, licence or hardware items, delivery, supply, service, warranty, maintenance and professional services including any specific payment terms.

## 4.3 Scoring

### 4.3.1 Scoring quality

To ensure consistency and to remove any risk of bias the scoring of responses against our scoring system will be done individually by members of the RfP Evaluation Team (this is particularly important for requirements where there is an element of judgement required to assess the response).

Scoring will be based around the following criteria - responses to this tender must clearly demonstrate how you can meet the requirements and to allow for scoring based on your responses:

- 1) Technical Merit – does the supplier demonstrate they have the necessary technical merit to be able to carry out the work undertaken – what accreditations do they have, have they supplied to similar projects in the past, can they provide the necessary resources?
- 2) Service Delivery - Quality of the overall submission – does the supplier clearly specify how they meet the requirements, in particular, does the solution proposed meet the requirements, are they able to deliver according to the specified timelines, does the supplier have the ethical background that Accent warrant, during the coronavirus lockdown have they been able to provide a continued service to their clients, are they able to provide the necessary consultant and professional services required to complete the work?
- 3) Price – is the pricing provided as part of the proposal detailed and of a sufficient breakdown to enable Accent to accurately identify the components required for the project, does it highlight any one off costs, specific contract costs, recurring costs, professional service costs and any other costs that Accent could reasonably expected to pay for a project of this nature?

**Please note that all pricing must be excluding VAT and must be complete – no additional pricing will be entertained for missed elements or other ancillary costs not first determined at the proposal stage**

The following scoring system will be adopted

| Score | Description  |
|-------|--|
| 1     | Unacceptable – poor response – poor indication of understanding of requirements, Little detail and no evidence provided.             |
| 2     | Weak – below average response –concerns over full understanding of requirements, some detail and evidence provided, but poor quality |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 3 | Satisfactory – average response – satisfactory demonstration of requirements is provided but the information is not fully detailed or backed up with evidence. |
| 4 | Good – above average response – meets expectations, relevant information provided and backed up with evidence indicating good understanding of requirements    |
| 5 | Excellent – fully meets expectations, high level of relevant information provided demonstrating robust and coherent understanding of requirements.             |

Each suppliers score will be calculated as follows:

- Each section will be marked out of 5 by a range of evaluators and then will be multiplied by a weighting to get an overall score. Total score will be converted into a % score per section

#### **4.3.2 Methodology for scoring price**

A price score will be calculated for each RfP by reference to the lowest RfP response, which is given a score of 100 points. One point shall be deducted from each of the other RfP responses for each percentage point above the lowest in accordance with the following formula:

$$(a/b) \times 100$$

where            a = price of lowest Bidder  
                      b = price of RfP response being evaluated

A maximum price ratio score of 70% shall be given to the lowest Supplier Partner / Bidder scoring 100 points. The price ratio score shall then be calculated for each other RfP response according to the points score they achieve as a proportion of 100.

Bidders should note that RfP responses considered to be priced very low will be scrutinised to ensure that this is not as a result of a failure to understand our requirements or non transparent pricing.

Accent reserves the incontestable right to entirely disregard any RfP response where it considers the price to be abnormally low or abnormally high.

#### **4.4 Request for Proposal outcome**

The bidder with the highest total score or combinations of total scores will be recommended for contract award, although as stated elsewhere in the document there is no contractual obligation given, implied or intended to procure as a result this RfP

It is also important to note that the actual solution chosen will be subject to the Accent's available budget.

### **5 COMMUNICATION**

This Request for Proposal is a collaborative process, our objective is to assist eligible suppliers to prepare and submit a fit for purpose high quality response.

In order to maintain a credible audit trail, we ask that all communication is confirmed via the procurement portal.

### **6 NOTICE TO BIDDERS**

#### **6.1 Information**

- Whilst the information in this RfP is believed to be correct at the time of issue, neither Accent nor its advisers accepts any liability for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness, nor is any warranty (express or implied) given as to its accuracy, adequacy or completeness.
- The above exclusion extends to liability in relation to any statement, opinion or conclusion contained in, or any omission from this RfP and in respect of any other written or oral communication transmitted or otherwise made available to any Bidder, and no representations or warranties are made in relation to such opinions, statements or conclusions.
- Despite the above, Accent do not exclude liability for fraud.
- Bidders must ensure that they read and understand this RfP. This RfP does not purport to provide all of the information which may be necessary or desirable to enable a Bidder to determine whether or not to submit a response to this RfP.
- Other than if Accent becomes aware of any fraudulent misrepresentation, Accent is not under, and does not assume, any obligation to update or supplement this RfP or to correct any inaccuracies or misrepresentations contained in or any omissions from this RfP, which may exist either at the date of this RfP or subsequently. Information contained in this RfP may change from time to time.
- The timeframes specified in this RfP are indicative only and may be revised by Accent from time to time. If they are revised, Accent shall notify the Bidders accordingly.

- Bidders are solely responsible for obtaining the information which they consider is necessary in order to make all decisions relating to their responses and to undertake any investigations they consider necessary in order to verify any information provided to them during this procurement exercise. Bidders must form their own opinions, making such investigations and taking such advice as is appropriate, regarding the information contained in the appendices and their responses without reliance upon any opinion or other information provided by Accent or any of its advisors.

## **6.2 Variations and other reserved rights**

Accent reserves the right:

- not to award any contract(s) as a result of this procurement exercise;
- to vary the bid timetable as it considers appropriate at any time. Any material changes shall be notified to the person each Bidder has nominated for contact purposes;
- to withdraw this RfP at any time or to re-invite responses on the same or any alternative basis;
- to seek clarification in relation to the information submitted by the Bidders. The Bidders must respond promptly in writing.

## **6.3 Costs to be borne by bidders**

Any expenditure, costs, liability, work or effort undertaken or incurred in proceeding and/or participating in this procurement exercise (including, without limitation, responding to this RfP) ("Bidder Costs") is a matter solely for the commercial judgement of Bidders, and Accent shall not be liable to reimburse or compensate the Bidders in respect of any Bidder Costs.

## **6.4 Language**

English shall be the official language for all means of communications between Bidders and Accent on all matters relating to this procurement exercise (including, without limitation, responding to this RfP).

## **6.5 Governing law**

English law shall govern this RfP. The Bidders agree to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.

## **6.6 Security and confidentiality**

- Bidders shall comply with the instructions regarding communication with Accent as described in this RfP.

- Bidders are also reminded that Accent's invitation to submit responses to this RfP is conditional upon the Bidder's continued compliance with the terms of this RfP.
- This RfP is made available to Bidders on the condition that it is used only in connection with the preparation and submission of responses and/or negotiations in relation to this RfP.
- This RfP must not be disclosed to or seen by any unauthorised persons nor be used for any purpose other than responding to this RfP. RfP related material must be returned to Accent upon request, either on completion of the further procurement exercise or earlier if Accent so requires or immediately should a Bidder decide not to submit a response.
- Bidders shall not make any announcement, and shall procure that their employees, sub-contractors, agents and advisors do not make any announcement (including, without limitation, any communication to the public, to any clients or suppliers of either Accent or each Bidder, to all or any employees of either Accent or each Bidder, and to representatives of the press, radio, television or any other media), regarding the existence, provisions or subject matter of this RfP or containing any information about Accent without the prior written approval of Accent.

## **6.7 Good faith**

- In submitting a response to this RfP, each Bidder undertakes to provide its response in good faith. The Bidder acknowledges that it shall not at any time communicate to any person (other than Accent or its advisers or third parties directly concerned with the preparation or submission of its response) the amount (or approximate amount) of any arrangements or contracts to be entered into in relation to its response or provision of the RfP requirements.
- Bidders are required to confirm in a covering letter to their response that the principles described above have been brought to the attention of all persons (including subcontractors and associated companies) involved in the preparation of a response to this RfP.

## **6.8 Accuracy of information**

The Bidders must ensure that the covering letter referred to in section 6.7 above also confirms that:

- all information provided in their response or subsequently provided to Accent in the course of this procurement exercise (including, without limitation, responding to this RfP) is true, complete, accurate and not misleading;
- opinions stated in any part of their response are honestly held and reasonable grounds exist for holding such opinion;

- any suggestions made during any clarification sessions may be incorporated into Accent's requirements; and
- any change in the status of such information shall be brought to the attention of Accent immediately.
- Bidders who do not provide the above confirmation statement in the covering letter referred to in section 6.7 above may be excluded from participating in this procurement exercise.

## **6.9 Intellectual property rights**

- All intellectual property rights in this RfP (and all other material issued to Bidders by Accent or on its behalf or to which the Bidder has been given access for the purposes of this RfP) shall remain the property of Accent or the relevant owner/licensor. Bidders shall not obtain any right, title or interest to such documentation.
- Each Bidder licenses Accent and its officers, employees, agents, solicitors and advisers to copy, adapt, amend, disclose or do anything else necessary (in Accent's sole discretion) to any material contained in its response (including material in which intellectual property rights of the Bidder or other persons subsist) for the purposes of:
  - engaging in clarifications with the Bidder;
  - evaluating its response;
  - evaluating any subsequent offer made by the Bidder;
  - concluding any resultant contract(s) with the Bidder;
  - reference during management of the resultant contract(s); and
  - anything else related to the above purposes, including governmental and parliamentary reporting purposes.
- By submitting its response and such supporting information each Bidder shall be deemed to have given consent and licence for such copying and use as set out in section above. It is each Bidder's responsibility to ensure that, prior to submitting the relevant information to Accent, it has obtained all necessary third party consents to enable it to provide the consent and licence set out above.
- Notwithstanding the above, ownership of all intellectual property rights in the material contained in the response shall remain unchanged.

## **6.10 Acceptance of this RfP**

By participating in this Request for Proposal, Bidders shall be deemed to have agreed to be bound by the rules, notices and disclaimers contained in this RfP and any further documents issued by Accent during the procurement exercise and no purported rejection, variation or addition to the provisions of this RfP made by Bidders shall have any effect.



### **6.11 Status of this RfP**

This RfP is not and shall not be construed as an offer to any of the Bidders or the basis for a contract.

### **6.12 Additional information, clarifications and information documents**

Notwithstanding any other requirements required by this RfP, Accent may require the Bidder to submit additional information and may require it to make a formal presentation for the purpose of explaining its response and to allow further consideration of its response.

### **6.13 Exclusion of bidder for breach**

If a Bidder breaches any requirement or condition of this RfP then Accent may, at its sole discretion, exclude that Bidder from any further involvement in the process by written notice to that Bidder.

### **6.14 Notification and debriefing**

- Accent will inform all Bidders in writing of any intention to award a contract. Following a minimum standstill period of ten calendar days, subject to there being no substantive challenge to that intention, a contract will be formally awarded to the successful Bidder.
- All unsuccessful Bidders will be afforded the opportunity of a debriefing. Unsuccessful Bidders should notify Accent in writing that they wish to be debriefed. Accent will seek to debrief the unsuccessful Bidder within 20 days of receiving such a request.
- Where an unsuccessful Bidder requests, in writing and no later than midnight on the second working day after being informed of the outcome of the procurement, the reasons why that Bidder was unsuccessful, Accent will provide details of the characteristics and relative advantages of the successful bid.

**End of document**