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Mr Darren Millar AM
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Reference	PA141/MM/hcj
Date	30 April 2015
Pages	1 of 4

Dear Darren

COVERING TEACHERS' ABSENCE

The Auditor General has asked me to provide comments on the latest Welsh Government response, dated 13 April 2015, to the Committee's May 2014 report on *Covering Teachers' Absence*. The latest response is best considered alongside the information provided in the letter from the Minister for Education and Skills on 25 February 2015, and in the context of the commitments given in the Welsh Government's original response to the Committee's report. On the 15th July 2014, the Committee considered that original response and the Auditor General's advice on it. On 16 September 2014, the Committee considered further information from the Welsh Government in respect of its response to recommendations 1, 3 and 13.

Wales Audit Office staff have not had the opportunity to discuss the content of the most recent responses with Welsh Government officials. However, I have set out below some of our observations on matters arising from these responses. The Committee will be aware of the on-going Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Committee inquiry on supply teaching. Wales Audit Office staff have given evidence to the CYPE Committee, and the terms of reference for that inquiry are closely aligned to the issues raised in the reports by the Public Accounts Committee and the Auditor General. It is therefore likely that the evidence already received, or still to be received, by the CYPE Committee will shed further light on some of the issues covered in the Welsh Government's responses. We have not reviewed the evidence received to date by the CYPE Committee.

The latest response notes that the Welsh Government is proposing to publish guidance on the effective management of school workforce attendance in July 2015, for implementation from September 2015. Much of the content of the Welsh Government's responses to the Committee's recommendations relates to the development of this guidance. Informal consultation on the guidance should now be underway. However, Wales Audit Office staff have not seen the draft guidance and we are not able to comment at this stage on the extent to which it addresses the key issues identified by the Committee and by the Auditor General's report, not only in respect of the management of staff absence, including circumstances that do not relate solely to sickness absence, but also the management of cover staff. Similarly, the responses refer to the development of the '*National Model for Regional Working – Revitalising People Management in Schools*'. The wording of the latest response gives the impression that this document had already been published earlier in April 2015. As far as we are aware [at the time of writing] that document is still to be published on the Welsh Government website.

In its original response, the Welsh Government indicated that the guidance on school workforce attendance would be issued for stakeholders to comment on in September 2014, and published later that autumn. The Welsh Government has not explained the reasons for the delay in either of its two most recent responses. The delay has, understandably, had a knock-on impact on the Welsh Government's plans to explore the scope for a further thematic review into cover arrangements by Estyn (in response to Recommendation 6 in the Committee's report). That review will not now progress until 2016-17 at the earliest, subject to fresh consideration of the proposal in October 2015.

The Welsh Government has continued to emphasise that responsibility for managing and evaluating the reasons for teacher absence, as well as the extent and costs of supply cover, lies with schools and employers. The Welsh Government has indicated that the planned guidance documents referred to above will reinforce expectations in respect of data collection and reporting and that it will regularly review teacher absence data with the HR Directors Network and the WLGA. The Welsh Government has not explained why it will not be possible to publish local authority level data on teacher absence sooner than June 2016 and the Welsh Government response suggests that this data will relate only to sickness absence and not other reasons for teacher absence from the classroom. Overall, the Welsh Government's intentions regarding any central monitoring of relevant teacher absence and supply cover data, or the level of prescription in the forthcoming guidance, remain unclear at this stage. We note that during its evidence session with the CYPE Committee on 18 March 2015 the Welsh Local Government Association offered to provide further information from local authorities on teachers' absence and the use of supply teachers.

The Welsh Government has not provided a timetable for action in response to Recommendation 3 in the Committee's report, having rejected the recommendation in its original response. In rejecting the recommendation that the Welsh Government should amend regulations to make it a requirement for at least one member of each governing body to be designated to lead on HR matters, the Welsh Government noted that the regulations cannot require an individual governor to be designated lead for a specific issue. The latest response reiterates the Welsh Government's position, which the Welsh Government had also expanded upon in the further information considered by the Committee in September 2014. The Welsh Government has noted again that there is already provision for governing bodies to delegate [certain] functions to a committee or to an individual by choice. The Welsh Government has also noted previously that in education law, local authorities are already responsible for providing governors with training to enable them to carry out their role effectively. Notwithstanding the Welsh Government's position with regard to the specific actions proposed by recommendation 3, we would still expect the forthcoming guidance on the management of attendance to reflect issues relating to the role and responsibilities of governing bodies, including in respect of supply cover.

Recommendation 10 concerned the specification for re-tendering of the framework contract for school supply staff, and this is an issue that I know has been the subject of consideration by the CYPE Committee. My colleague Steve Martin followed up the evidence that we gave to the CYPE Committee with a letter about the re-tendering arrangements and highlighted certain issues that the CYPE Committee might have been interested to follow up. I have enclosed a copy of that letter. I note that the Welsh Government has not made clear in its latest response to you whether it has agreed as part of the new contract, awarded to New Directions Ltd, specific arrangements to recover any additional costs for Continuing Professional Development for supply staff, as referred to in Recommendation 10.

In response to Recommendations 11 and 12, the Welsh Government has noted that it will not be taking forward the evaluation work originally envisaged in order to respond to these recommendations. The Welsh Government has referred to the discontinuation of the existing Masters in Education Practice programme and the development of a new programme to be implemented in September 2016. Aside from the implication that there may be a gap in provision for new entrants between now and September 2016, the Committee might wish to enquire further about how, other than through the evaluation work that was previously planned, the Welsh Government will ensure that lessons from the existing programme, including in respect of the engagement of supply teachers and value for money, will be taken into consideration when developing the new programme.

Finally, the Auditor General is currently completing a value for money examination looking at the development of regional education consortia arrangements. Any consideration of that report by the Public Accounts Committee could provide members with the opportunity to explore with the Welsh Government, and potentially consortia and local authority representatives themselves, issues arising from the Welsh Government's responses to the Committee's recommendations on covering teacher absence as regards respective roles and responsibilities.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Mortlock'.

Matthew Mortlock
Director Performance Audit



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Ms Ann Jones AM
Chair of the Children,
Young People and
Education Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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Reference	PA134/SM/HCJ
Date	1 April 2015
Pages	1 of 3

Dear Ms Jones,

INQUIRY INTO SUPPLY TEACHING IN WALES: RE-TENDERING EXERCISE FOR SUPPLY TEACHERS

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence to the Committee on 5 March 2015. At that meeting, I undertook to provide more information on the re-tendering exercise for supply teachers that is currently on-going. The tendering exercise is being undertaken by the National Procurement Service (NPS).

I have included below some further details based on information supplied to us by the NPS. I would emphasise that Wales Audit Office staff have not reviewed the arrangements for the on-going procurement exercise. Nor have we undertaken any audit work to consider the overall value for money of the contracts currently in place, further to the commentary and recommendations in the Auditor General's September 2013 report on *Covering Teachers' Absence*.

Background to the national framework contract for agency staff

In 2012, two contracts for the provision of temporary education staff were let as part of a larger exercise to procure agency staff for councils in Wales. This exercise was led by Cardiff Council on behalf of 17 local authorities. Both contracts (North Wales and South Wales) were awarded to New Directions (Education) Ltd, a large supply agency with headquarters in Cardiff. The contracts were for a three year period but have since been extended for a further year.

In July 2014, NPS issued a tender document for the award of a new three-year contract for the provision of temporary education staff. Again, this exercise forms part of a larger procurement of agency workers for local authorities. The contract will include the provision of supply teachers, cover supervisors, teaching assistants, tutors and education support staff. It will cover all local authorities in Wales. However, while all local authorities are customers of NPS and are expected to use its frameworks for services where these exist, schools have greater discretion under local management of schools (LMS) arrangements and are not mandated to use the contract to procure temporary staff.

We understand that the NPS is aiming to finalise the contract award by the end of March 2015. Although it will not come into operation until August 2015, the NPS plans to circulate award details to local authorities and schools before the end of the 2014/15 academic year.

Issues that the Committee might wish to follow up

The extent to which schools make use of the current contracts

The Auditor General's report noted that schools had little or no knowledge of the current contracts and had not been given guidance on how to use them effectively or their potential benefits. The report expressed doubts that the current contracts would lead to reduced costs and noted that there was no clear mechanism in place for reviewing their effectiveness (para 4.22-4.25). The audit work that informed the Auditor General's report was undertaken within a year of the contracts being awarded. The Committee might want to inquire with the Welsh Government about the extent to which it has reviewed the current contractual arrangements to assess value for money and to inform the re-tendering exercise. The Committee could explore the extent to which the contracts have been marketed to schools by local authorities and the extent to which they have ultimately been used by schools.

The guidance available for schools using supply agencies

As under the current contractual arrangements, schools will remain able to negotiate their own arrangements with one or more of the other 40 supply agencies operating in Wales. As a result, schools should still benefit from guidance on conducting negotiations with agencies as recommended in the Auditor General's report (paras 4.14-4.16 and Recommendation 4a). The Committee may want to explore what, if any, information and guidance has been provided for schools in this regard.

The scope to use the new contract to improve the quality of supply teachers and other cover staff

The Auditor General's report concluded that lack of involvement of the Welsh Government's Department for Education and Skills, local authorities' education departments and schools in the specification for the current contracts meant that the opportunity to incorporate requirements about the quality and training of supply teachers was missed (para 4.21). In May 2014, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) recommended that the Welsh Government work with the WLGA, supply agencies and schools to develop the specification when retendering the contract for agency staff to ensure that supply teachers have appropriate CPD opportunities and to work out arrangements to recover any additional costs associated with providing training. The Welsh Government accepted this recommendation in principle. In a letter updating the PAC on progress in February 2015, the Welsh Government reported that the NPS had included in its tender documentation a specific evaluation question on how the supplier will ensure training and CPD is provided to the temporary workforce.

The NPS has shared the evaluation criteria for the new contract with us, a copy is enclosed with this letter. The tender document sets out a minimum of health and safety training, manual handling, safeguarding, conflict and behaviour management for education staff (such as 'Team Teach') and asks how the supplier will monitor CPD. Bidders were also asked to describe how they will maintain and improve the quality of agency workers, for example through pre-employment checks, placement feedback and performance management arrangements. The Committee may wish to inquire of the Welsh Government what, if any, involvement its Department for Education and Skills, local authorities and schools had in drawing up the evaluation criteria. Depending on timing of the contract award, the Committee might want to satisfy itself that the successful bidder has committed to putting appropriate quality and costing arrangements in place.

I hope that this information helps the Committee's inquiry.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Martin
Project Manager, National Studies



Tender for NPS-PSU-0010-14 Managed Service Provision for the Supply of Agency Workers Technical Evaluation Response Lot 3 – Managed Service Provider for Education Staff (Master Vendor or Neutral Vendor Solution)	
Evaluation Scoring Guidance and Method Statement	
Part 1	Evaluation Scoring Guidance
Part 2	Evaluation Criteria for Non-Commercial Elements
Part 3	Method Statement Questions

Part 1 – Evaluation Scoring Guidance

This template will be used by the Evaluation Panel to score the questions that require scoring and is being provided to bidders for guidance and completion.

In relation to the Method Statements, bidders will not progress to the next stage if they receive a zero marking for any individual question, or if they obtain a total score of less than 200 points.

This technical questionnaire consists of subject area specific questions. Each section consists of the following:

- Relevant question(s)
- Word count allowance (Any words provided after the acceptable word count for each question will not be evaluated)
- Marks to be allocated to the question
- A breakdown of what bidders will be expected to provide in their response

To assist in the fair evaluation of technical responses, you must not include names relating to your bidding organisation within your response to this document.

Please only embed documents as part of your response if requested

Please do not save your response as a PDF prior to uploading to the electronic tendering system.

SECTION A: SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT, PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONAL DELIVERY		
<i>Maximum points available – 240</i>		
Question		Max points
1	Maintaining & Improving the Quality of Agency Workers	60
2	Supply of Agency Workers	100
3	Tier Management	40
4	Electronic Ordering & Approval Solution	20
5	Professional Training	20
	Total points	240
SECTION B: ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT		
<i>Maximum points available – 110</i>		
Question		Max points
6	Agency Worker Regulations Management	5
7	Extended Hours Provision	40
8	Implementing & Managing Change	50
9	Contract Management	15
	Total points	110
SECTION C: POLICY RESPONSES		
<i>Maximum points available – 50</i>		
Question		Max points
10	Equal Opportunities & Diversity	5
11	Welsh Language Requirements	15
12	Community Benefits	20
13	Pension & National Insurance Requirements	10
	Total points	50

Part 2 - Evaluation Criteria for Non-Commercial Elements

Scoring Guidance

Your response is to be marked as indicated below:

	Evidence	Scores (%)
Good / Strong Evidence	Strong Evidence To be issued when evidence far exceeds expectations in terms of relevance to the area being tested and when compared to the requirements of the grade. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence is well presented and structured; and • Evidence is directly and wholly relevant to the area being tested; and • Evidence is judged to far exceed the minimum requirement for the grade and may actually correspond to the requirements of a higher grade. 	100
	Good Evidence To be issued when evidence exceeds expectations in terms of relevance to the area being tested and when compared to the requirements of the grade. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence is well presented and structured; and • Evidence is well aligned to the area being tested; and • Evidence is judged to exceed the minimum requirements of the grade. 	75
Competent Evidence	Competent Evidence To be issued when the evidence offered is sufficient in terms of relevance to the area being tested and when compared to the requirements of the grade. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient evidence is presented and follows a basic structure; and • Evidence is sufficiently aligned with the area being tested; and • Evidence is judged to meet the minimum requirements of the grade. 	50
Poor / Unsatisfactory Evidence	Unsatisfactory Evidence To be issued when the evidence offered is insufficient in terms of relevance to the area being tested and/or when compared to the requirements of the grade. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some evidence is presented but assertions and statements are insufficiently supported; or • Evidence offered is only partly relevant to the area being tested; and/or • Evidence offered is/may be relevant to the area being tested but is judged to be insufficient when compared to the requirements of the post in terms of sophistication/complexity. 	25
	Poor Evidence To be issued when the evidence offered is way short of expectations in terms of relevance to the area being tested and/or when compared to the requirements of the grade. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little/no evidence is presented to support assertions or general statements; or • Evidence does not correspond in any way to the area being tested; and/or • Evidence is/may be relevant to the area being tested but is judged to be far below the required level for the post in terms of sophistication / complexity. 	5
	No Evidence attempted To be issued when evidence is missing from a Method Statement.	0

Part 3 – Method Statement Questions

Section A – Supply Chain Management, Performance and Operational Delivery
<p>[Question 1]: Maintaining & Improving the Quality of Agency Workers</p> <p>Bidders must provide a method statement, in no more than 2500 words, outlining how they will maintain and improve the quality of Agency Workers provided to users under this framework.</p>
<p>Background Guidance</p> <p>We would wish to be satisfied that you have robust plans and processes in place to maintain and improve the quality of agency workers provided under this arrangement.</p>
<p>Response Guidance</p> <p>Bidders will be expected to provide evidence of a systematic approach to ensuring continuous improvement over the duration of the framework agreement, including as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Pre Employment Checks Please provide details, per job category, of the checks that you and / or Tier Providers would undertake prior to engagement, to include how you would ensure compliance by the said Tier Providers. b) Personal Protective Equipment Please provide your methodology as to how you would ensure that when requested you issue Agency workers with appropriate PPE, to the Users required standard, prior to engagement. c) Managing Performance Issues Please provide details of how you intend to maintain and improve the quality of workers supplied to the User, and also how you intend to manage any performance, disciplinary or any other issues as soon as they are reported. d) Assignment History Risks How would you monitor previous employment/assignments so that you can advise the hiring manager on possible risks/considerations? E.g. unsuccessful previous assignments with the User and / or previous unsuccessful applications for Agency Worker assignments with the User? e) Non-engagement of individual workers How you would manage a request from the User that a particular individual should not be engaged in any capacity. <p>Bidders should also provide information on how they would work with individual Users Hiring Managers to ensure they receive the support they need to use your service. This should include information on training on your electronic ordering system, understanding Users specific requirements, understanding complex requirements, information regarding start dates, checking to ensure User satisfaction following placement, managing placement renewals and end of placements.</p> <p><i>‘Please enter your response here’</i></p>
<p>Scoring Guidance</p> <p>Marks available = 60</p>

Section A – Supply Chain Management, Performance and Operational Delivery
<p>[Question 2]: Supply of Agency Workers</p> <p>Bidders must provide a method statement, in no more than 2500 words, demonstrating their process for supplying agency workers across all job categories, and their end-to-end booking process.</p>
<p>Background Guidance</p> <p>We would wish to be satisfied that you are able to supply all types of agency workers as required within the Lot you are bidding.</p>
<p>Response Guidance</p> <p>Bidders will be expected to provide evidence of a systematic approach to supplying agency workers to all Users under this arrangement, including as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Please detail how you will ensure that there is sufficient resource to cater for all categories of staff and skill sets required at all times, either by direct provision or via tier arrangements. Please include how your Managed Service Provider Solution is tailored to the multi sector, multi spend requirements of the Welsh Public Sector, and how you will deal with requests in more rural areas, or where requests are for types of workers which in your experience are difficult to meet the volumes required. b) Please provide details on your end-to-end process for satisfying bookings, including short-notice bookings and requests for highly specialist roles. c) Please provide details on your process for ensuring all pre-employment and background checks are undertaken for all agency workers (your own and tier providers), and how the different types of workers require different checks, relevant to their position, location, etc. Where applicable please include information on how you ensure these checks are kept up to date. Please include information relating to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Central Compliance Team - Safeguarding - Process for ensuring all DBS checks undertaken <u>relevant</u> to the type of worker - Process for ensuring all Vetting undertaken <u>relevant</u> to each type of worker - Process for ensuring all successful agency workers are provided with the appropriate on-boarding information, and receive the relevant pre-employment checks for the role, prior to commencing (including but not limited to identity checks, DBS checks, right to work verification, verification on training and qualifications, Welsh Language, etc.) d) How do you ensure all Agency Workers are paid promptly (within 5 days of approval of the relevant timesheet)?

- e) Please provide brief details of the content of your proposed handbook that will be supplied to all Agency Workers under your management within this arrangement, that will govern their conduct whilst in placement
- f) Please explain your Sourcing Strategy for ensuring continuity of the service provision, including an e-procurement solution based on the tender proposal, provision of specialist workers and posts which may be more difficult to recruit to, and how you will develop the workforce in these areas to improve availability over the life of this arrangement – innovative ideas are welcome.
- g) Please also detail how you propose to manage competing requests for agency worker requirements, and how you would manage prioritisation.
- h) in the event that your own organisation fails to deliver any element of the Service, or any tier providers that you manage fail to deliver, how will such failures be addressed by your organisation and what remedial action will be taken. Please also provide details on how you will keep the User advised on developments?
- i) Bidders should explain how they will ensure that the Total Charge Rates for agency workers are visible, consistent and competitive. It is important that the methodology to be adopted particularly with regards to engagement and buy-in from Tier Providers is clearly explained. This must clearly make reference to where the approach outlined has been successfully implemented. It is expected that the methodology will reflect how rates submitted in the Commercial Envelope take into account current market conditions.

'Please enter your response here'

Scoring Guidance
Marks available = 100

Section A – Supply Chain Management, Performance and Operational Delivery

[Question 3]: Tier Management

Bidders should provide a method statement in no more than 2500 words describing how they will ensure that Tier Providers are effectively managed.

Background Guidance

We would wish to be satisfied that your process for Tier Management is fair, open and transparent, and helps to deliver an excellent service to the Framework Users.

Response Guidance

Bidders response must include as a minimum:

- a) Details on how you will deliver this outcome, including how you envisage engaging with and encouraging local and specialist Agencies to sign up to this agreement, ensuring that a fair, equitable and transparent opportunity to supply to the User is offered to all providers. Your plan should reflect previous proven methods adopted in developing and supporting Tier Providers.
- b) Your process for informing Tier Providers of job opportunities, and ensuring the tier provider and candidate has the correct information to provide the best candidate to satisfy the role.
- c) How you ensure compliance with all applicable legislation and employment regulations across the Supply Chain (for Managed Service Provision and Tier Providers)?
- d) Details on how you will engage with local agencies, and promote business and employment opportunities within regions in which you are awarded business under this arrangement.
- e) How you ensure your supply chain embodies the principles of equal treatment, broadness, diversity and accessibility, and ensure it remains accessible to SMEs? Please reference examples with existing users.
- f) Detail on the advice and assistance you provide to SMEs wishing to join your supply chain, and what facilities you offer to attract SMEs into your supply chain.
- g) Your process for ensuring that Tier Providers are paid in an accurate and timely manner, how often they will receive payment, and what arrangements you will make in respect of their requirements to invoice yourselves as the provider? Please detail what contingencies you have for any emergency payments to be made to Tier Providers. Managed Service Providers will be expected to adhere to OGC Policy Note 07/10 25th March 2010 in their payments to tier providers, and it is expected that all tier providers are paid within 5 days of approval of the relevant timesheet.

- h) Details of how you will manage and structure the Tier Providers to ensure continuity of supply, and awarding providers according to performance, including the use of agencies who do not sign up to this arrangement. This should also include details of qualification and acceptance criteria for the Tier Providers and how you will manage performance and movement between the tiers.
- i) Your proposals for recording and reporting complaints and compliments (these should be from both Users and Tier Providers).
- j) Detail how you will work with Tier Providers to ensure that the Agency Fees detailed in your Commercial envelope provides Value for Money and offer Tier Providers reasonable revenue, to encourage engagement and remain sustainable for the duration of the contract.

'Please enter your response here'

Scoring Guidance
Marks available = 40

Section A – Supply Chain Management, Performance and Operational Delivery

[Question 4]: Electronic Ordering & Approval Solution

Bidders should provide a method statement in no more than 1000 words, describing their electronic ordering and approval solution that must be available to all Users, and throughout your supply chain as the primary means in managing the provision of agency workers under this arrangement.

Background Guidance

We would wish to be satisfied that your process for an electronic ordering solution meets all requirements as specified.

Response Guidance

Bidders response must include as a minimum:

- a) Please provide an overview of the way your e-ordering solution would meet this outcome.
- b) Please detail how you would ensure that users are provided with suitable training across both the User and Tier Providers.
- c) Please describe the business continuity procedures you have in place? What are your alternative processes to make booking requests should a User prefer this method of ordering? The minimum information required will be the same as that required for the e-booking system

'Please enter your response here'

Scoring Guidance
Marks available = 20

Section A – Supply Chain Management, Performance and Operational Delivery

[Question 5]: Professional Training

Bidders are requested to explain in no more than 1000 words how they would ensure Training and Continuous Professional Development is provided to their temporary workforce (appropriate to their role), thus ensuring these workers possess the same skills as permanent workers, and enabling them to competently undertake the role they are placed into.

Background Guidance

We would wish to have confidence that all temporary workers (particularly those in a professional role) possess the appropriate training, skills and qualifications to undertake the role they are placed into.

Response Guidance

Bidders response must include as a minimum:

- a) How you will ensure all temporary workers receive training relevant to their role / post / profession, consistent with full-time workers. Include details on whether this training is accredited, and how / by whom.
- b) Health & Safety Training provision
- c) Manual Handling Training provision
- d) How you ensure that where relevant, workers receive specialist training appropriate to their role e.g safeguarding level one etc.
- e) How do you monitor Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for professional roles?
- f) Lot 3: Education – staff are trained in conflict and behavioural management (e.g. Team Teach training)

'Please enter your response here'

Scoring Guidance

Marks available = 20

Section B – Account Management
[Question 6]: Agency Worker Regulations Management Bidders should provide a method statement in no more than 500 words, outlining its ability to meet the specification requirements for advice and guidance on Agency Worker Regulations to both the Client and Users, when requested.
Background Guidance The Client will expect Service providers to provide advice and guidance to Users to ensure that they manage effectively their responsibilities with regard to the requirements of the Agency Worker Regulations
Response Guidance This outline should include but not be restricted to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Details of the process of how you will monitor the duration of assignments, and what information you will provide to ensure Users meet their legal duties in relation to the Agency Workers Regulations.b) How you ensure the User pays the correct contribution under the Working Time Directives.c) Explain your methodology for calculating Working Time Directives contributions.
<i>'Please enter your response here'</i>
Scoring Guidance Marks available = 5

Section B – Account Management
[Question 7]: Extended Hours Provision Bidders must provide a method statement in no more than 1000 words, demonstrating how it will provide a service to all Users under this framework that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
Background Guidance Bidders should be able to respond to all orders and queries, whenever these are placed, in-line with the diverse nature of User requirements and service provision within the Welsh public sector. Certain business areas have a greater need for out of hours service e.g Environmental /Leisure and Social Care Services.
Response Guidance Bidders response should include procedures for the following as a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Please provide details on how you will ensure a service provision 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days of the year.b) Please detail how you will achieve this outcome, with reference to an existing user with similar requirements.c) Please provide details on how you work with Users to identify business areas which require out of hour provision and provide solutions to address these needs
<i>'Please enter your response here'</i>
Scoring Guidance Marks available = 40

Section B – Account Management

[Question 8]: Implementing & Managing Change

Bidders must provide a method statement, including an implementation plan for a model organisation, in no more than 2500 words, demonstrating how it will implement their managed service provision to new Users, and effectively manage this change process.

Background Guidance

Bidders should demonstrate a professional, high quality, thorough and realistic approach to User implementation and change management.

Response Guidance

Bidders response should include the following as a minimum:

- a) Include a sample implementation plan including details of the key steps and milestones. These steps should include a communication plan and training and marketing schedule for Users, how the new processes will be implemented, tier engagement, the roll out for the electronic solutions for ordering, approving, time sheet capture and invoicing etc.
- b) Please indicate by way of implementation timetables, one for a User who is currently operating a managed service and one for a User which has previously not operated a managed service. Detail how you will monitor the implementation programme and activity to ensure you meet the agreed dates, the process is robust and delivered to the satisfaction of the User.
- c) Details on how you will engage with the Users existing agencies to ensure as many of these register with yourselves prior to each user agreement start date.

This should also include your contingency plans for dealing with situations where existing agencies are not prepared to sign up to the new arrangements.

Please explain your process for exiting that Agency and for migration of any workers to ensure continuity of service for the User.

- d) A sample risk register for the project that relates to the Preferred Approach and examines risk pre, during and post contract showing the following:
 - Detail of the risk
 - Project Stage (i.e. Contract Design, Go-live, etc.)
 - Likelihood of occurrence (High, Medium, Low)
 - Impact (High, Medium, Low)
 - Owner (User, Service Provider, Both)
 - Mitigation
- e) How you will mitigate the risk of not sourcing required workers, or workers being placed and not turning up for assignments.

- f) Details on how you will ensure a suitably resourced team to support this framework, including dedicated account managers.
- g) Details of proposals for dealing with multiple organisations with conflicting go- live dates.

'Please enter your response here'

Scoring Guidance
Marks available = 50

Section B – Account Management

[Question 9]: Contract Management

Bidders should provide a method statement in no more than 1000 words describing the systems and processes they have in place to enable them to cope with the Contract management demands of multiple diverse customer organisations.

Background Guidance

Bidders should be able to demonstrate an effective, pro-active approach to contract management, both to the framework overall and in relation to individual User Agreements.

The scope and size of the framework indicates that there will be a need for a significant level of ongoing contract management for all Users.

Some Users will only have a small demand from the Framework, however, we would expect the quality of service and contract management to be consistent across all Users.

Bidders are also requested to provide information on how their Commercial return covers their overheads and other Management Costs.

Response Guidance

Bidders response should include the following as a minimum:

- a) Detail your Contract Management processes and how you will manage multiple/different sized Users throughout the contract term.
- b) Details of how you will work with Users to identify and agree any specific Contract Management issues.
- c) Please explain how you cover the management costs including IT systems for resource provision, staff payment, training costs, marketing costs, staffing costs and profit etc. within the booking fee element of your proposal and how this will be reduced throughout the period of the framework.

'Please enter your response here'

Scoring Guidance
Marks available = 15

Section C – Policy Responses
[Question 10]: Equal Opportunities & Diversity Bidders are requested to explain in no more than 500 words details of their approach to Equal Opportunities and Diversity.
Background Guidance We are keen that Service Providers support the principles of Equal Opportunities & Diversity. The Welsh Public Sector has very high standards of Equal Opportunities monitoring with regard to all opportunities. The same standards will be applied to the recruitment of agency workers. In addition, bidders are required to provide equality and diversity training to staff employed in delivering the Services, and also to all agency workers to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities in relation to Equality and Diversity. Under the various Acts relating to Equal Opportunities, Service Providers must do everything possible to promote equality within their organisation and as part of their recruitment process for Agency workers.
Response Guidance Bidders should include as a minimum: a) What your organisation does to meet equality commitments, both internally and as part of the recruitment process for Agency Workers.
<i>'Please enter your response here'</i>
Scoring Guidance Marks available = 5

Section C – Policy Responses
[Question 11]: Welsh Language Requirements Bidders are requested to explain, in no more than 500 words, details of how they will comply with requirements of the Welsh Language Scheme.
Background Guidance We are keen that Service Providers support the principles of the Welsh Language Scheme. The Welsh Public Sector place significant importance on engaging with Service Providers via the medium of the Welsh Language, with regard to all opportunities. The same levels of importance will be applied to the recruitment of agency workers. In addition, bidders are required to provide Welsh Language service provision to all Users, Tier Providers and Agency Workers/Candidates across this arrangement (where required). Under the Welsh Language Scheme, providers must do everything possible to promote and support the Welsh Language within their organisation.
Response Guidance Bidders should include as a minimum: a) How you ensure that services provided under this agreement are and will remain compliant with the Welsh Language Scheme? b) How you ensure Welsh Language provision throughout your service, for Users, Tier Providers and Agency workers/Candidates wishing to engage via the medium of the Welsh Language.
<i>'Please enter your response here'</i>
Scoring Guidance Marks available = 15

<p>Section C – Policy Responses</p>
<p>[Question 12]: Community Benefits</p> <p>Bidders are requested to explain in no more than 2000 words how they will comply with the community benefits requirements detailed within Part 4 of the Specification.</p>
<p>Background Guidance</p> <p>The Welsh Governments Community Benefits Policy supports the vision that sustainable development will be the central organising principle for Wales. It also contributes to other policy areas such as tackling poverty in Wales and supporting the training and skills development.</p> <p>Principle 4 of the Wales Procurement Policy Statement, announced in December 2012 by Jane Hutt AM, Minister for Finance, stated that the delivery of added value through the Community Benefits policy must be an integral consideration in procurement. The Welsh Public Sector will apply Community Benefits to all public sector procurements where such benefits can be realised, and apply the Measurement Tool to all contracts over £2m to capture and report outcomes to the Welsh Government.</p> <p>Providing opportunities for employment and training to disadvantaged individuals not only transforms their lives but can also have a positive affect on their families and particularly children, as well as the wider community.</p>
<p>Response Guidance</p> <p>Bidders should include as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Your process for identifying, recruiting and training inactive persons, and how you will develop and apply this to the framework. b) Details of your mechanism for supporting effective promotion of employment opportunities for local residents and raising understanding of routes to apply for Agency Worker roles. You shall work closely with the User to target and actively encourage registration from hard to reach groups such as lone parents, older candidates, women returnees, disabled minority groups and those from socially disadvantaged areas. You shall ensure you will actively promote the means by which individuals can register for suitable vacancies, and shall provide evidence of the process to the User on request. c) Explain how you will open up opportunities and work with local SME Agencies to join the tier provision and assist with the supply of agency workers.
<p><i>‘Please enter your response here’</i></p>
<p>Scoring Guidance Marks available = 20</p>

Section C – Policy Responses

[Question 13]: Pension and National Insurance Requirements

Bidders are requested to explain in no more than 500 words how they manage their obligations under the Pension Auto-Enrolment law and how they calculate National Insurance Contribution requirements.

Background Guidance

Pension Enrolment

Automatic enrolment is a Government Scheme to help more people save for later life through a work based pension.

In the past, many workers missed out on valuable pension benefits, because their employer didn't offer them a pension, or they didn't apply to join their company's pension scheme.

Automatic enrolment changes this. It makes it compulsory for employers to automatically enrol their eligible workers into a pension scheme. The employer must also pay money into the scheme.

National Insurance (NI)

We are aware that Service Providers calculate National Insurance in different ways. We expect Service Providers to ensure that the correct National Insurance contributions are made, and that no NI is charged until the free pay limit is exceeded.

We are also aware that Service Providers have different models and methodologies for calculating National Insurance.

Response Guidance

Bidders should include as a minimum:

- a) How you will ensure that sufficient information is provided to your workers regarding their entitlement for a Work Based Pension and the Auto-Enrolment process.
- b) Details on your current Pension take-up across your temporary workforce. (For information only and not scored.)
- c) The arrangements you have in place to comply with the impending changes to the employers minimum pension contributions:

Date	Employer's minimum contribution
Employer's staging date to 30 September 2017	1%
1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018	2%
1 October 2018 onwards	3%

- d) How you ensure the User pays the correct National Insurance.
 e) Explain your methodology for calculating National Insurance contributions taking into account the tax free threshold.

'Please enter your response here'

Scoring Guidance
Marks available = 10