NHS Workforce Alliance

Workforce Alliance Workforce Technology Systems Framework RM6387

Call-off Guidance: Management and Support

Background to the Workforce Technology Systems Framework

Workforce systems have been procured in a fragmented manner, leading to inefficiencies and restricted marketplace engagement. Through the identification of key market challenges, this agreement's strategy has been developed to directly address them. A lack of predefined terms and clarity of pricing models has left customers with costs which are out of control, where the solution benefits and functionality is blurred, systems are incompatible and there is no independent support.

Market sentiment amongst suppliers and customers reflects limited market opportunity and an inability to appropriately demonstrate the benefits of one system over another through both a lack of expertise and understanding across the buying community and the timescales in which contracting authorities have to go to market. Support is needed for both buyers and sellers to create a meaningful marketplace where innovation thrives and value for money is delivered.

To respond to the issues outlined above, this agreement aims to set minimum standards for interoperability in alignment with the Professional Record Standards Body (PRSB) who concluded that: *for organisations to understand how effective job plans are, it would be beneficial for them to be interoperable with rostering systems amongst others. "Person centred" data models in the form of verifiable credentials now exist for the Workforce Programme. Supporting people in the fulfilment of provider requirements through simpler verification of attributes and qualifications and training supports the strategy of the right people in the right place at the right time and allows, in the NHS specifically, for greater patient care and improved patient outcomes.*

Through greater interoperability of locally delivered workforce systems, organisations can position the NHS at the forefront of their product innovation, enabling efficient procurement and implementation of workforce technology which aims to address the long-term strategic needs and enrich user experiences with fully supported deployment and training. The framework will allow for the development, innovation and diversification of products and solution providers throughout the duration of the agreement whilst providing fully compliant and comprehensive contract award mechanisms.

This framework agreement aims to introduce a standardised procurement approach that enhances oversight, collaboration, and best practice implementation predominantly across NHS organisations. It aligns with the NHS People Digital Strategy and facilitates procurement under the Procurement Act 2023 Open Framework process. The Agreement will enable the NHS Workforce Alliance to support both providers and suppliers in the development and delivery of best-in-class workforce technology solutions whilst inclusion will remain an achievable ambition of emerging market entrants and developing technologies.

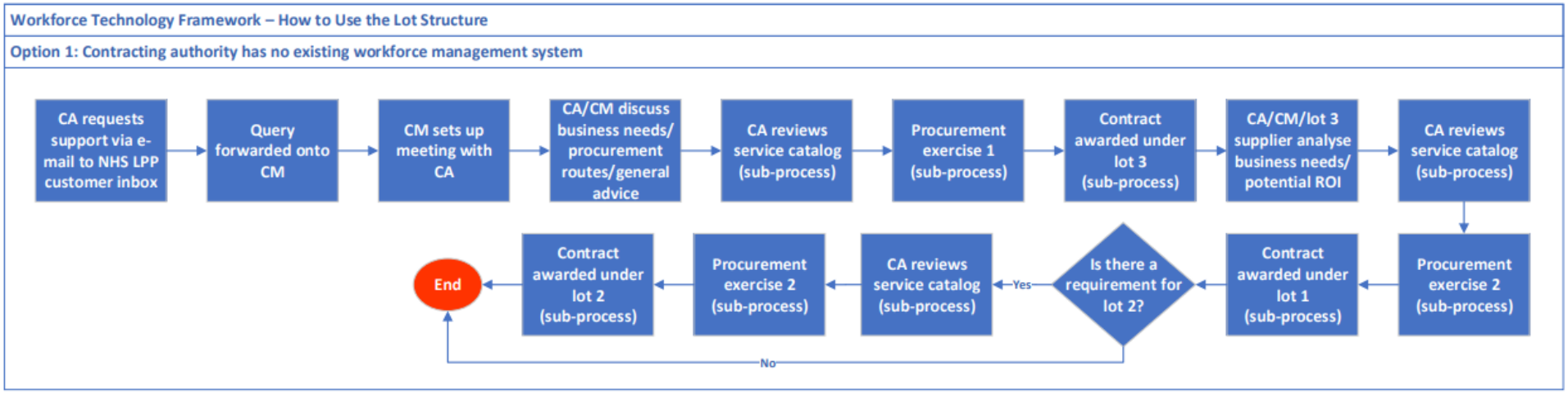
Implementation Planning

Guidance on the sequencing of Call-Offs under the four framework Lots, depending on need:

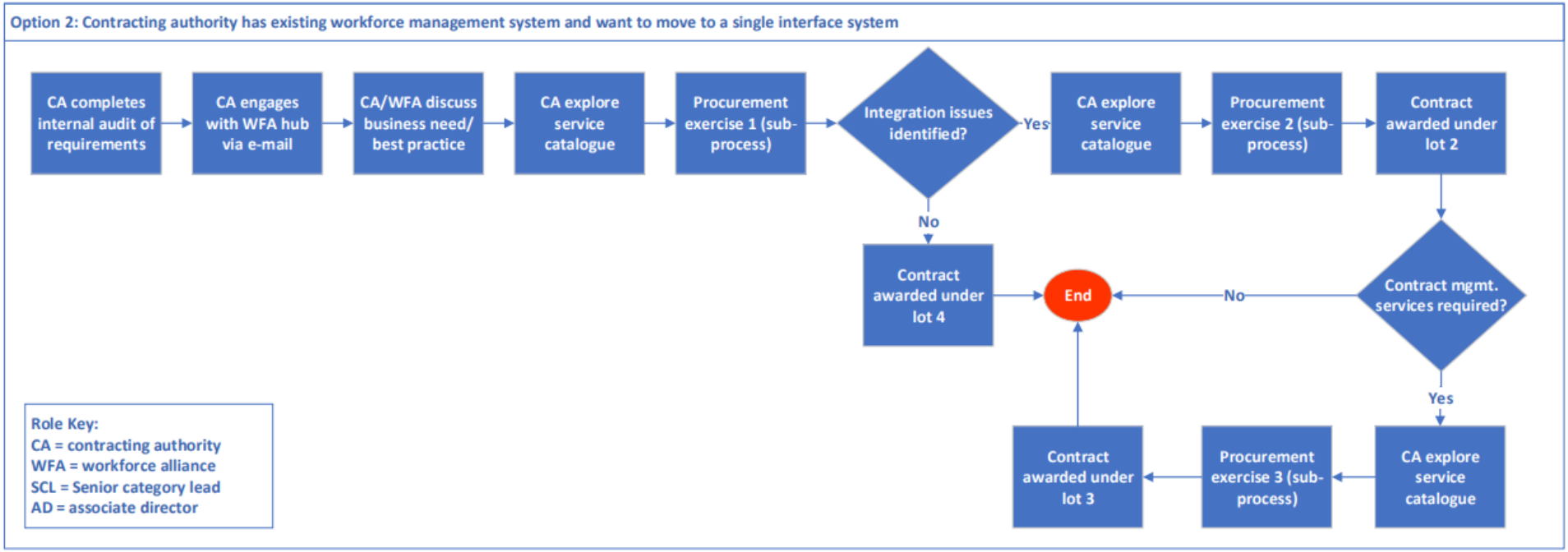
- **Lot 1 - Workforce Systems / Software:** Original equipment manufacturers, software development, and applications
- **Lot 2 - Integration, Deployment and Interoperability Services:** System training, implementation, reporting, and analytics
- **Lot 3 - Professional Services and Consultancy:** Gap analysis, specification design, project management, and change management
- **Lot 4 - Overlay, User Experience and Support:** User interface platforms, support services and system harmonisation

Please see the next page for the process map of utilising the lot structure.

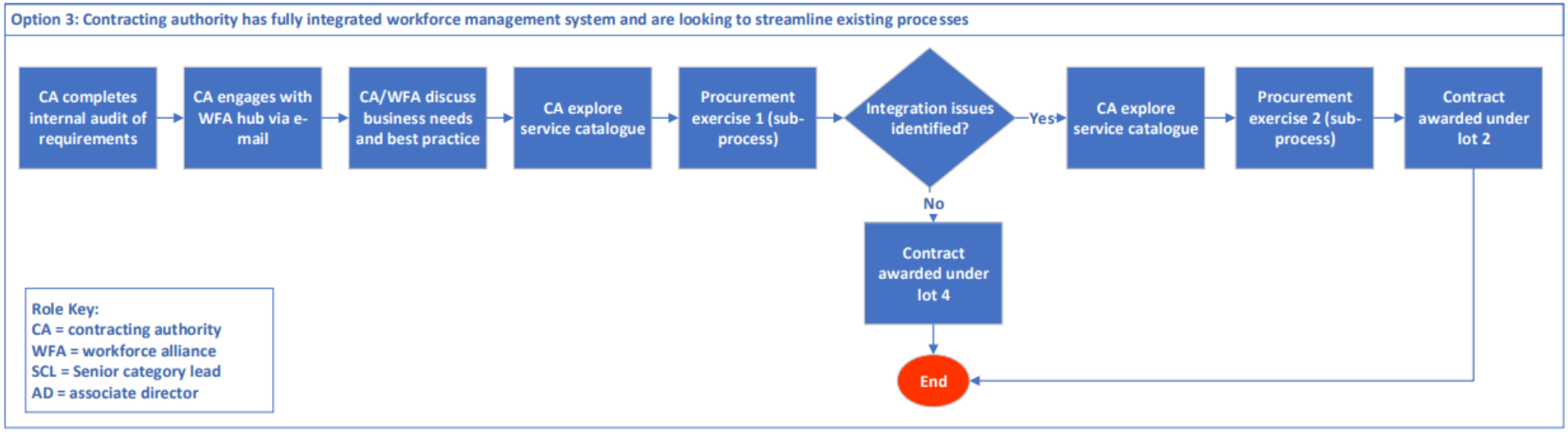
If the Contracting Authority has a defined need that fits appropriately within the remit of Lot 1, Lot 2 or Lot 4 as above, the authority can Call-Off directly from the suitable Lot. Using the process map below, you will find the best route to market to follow when utilising the framework's lotting.



If the Contracting Authority has an existing workforce system and wishes to move to a single interface system, the recommended process with utilising the RM6387 lotting has been included below:



If the contracting authority is unsure of its exact need, and therefore unsure which Lot is appropriate, Lot 3 should be utilised initially to undergo an assessment into the Customer's need. Following this assessment, Lot 1, Lot 2 or Lot 4 can be utilised as recommended by the consultancy firms under the Lot 3 Call-Off.



Risk allocation and responsibilities between the contracting authority and the supplier

Risk allocation must be reviewed and agreed between the contracting authority and the supplier (including dependencies the supplier may have on the customer) to meet the requirements.

Once reviewed and agreed between the contracting authority and supplier at Call-Off level, risk allocation must be presented and agreed with the NHS Workforce Alliance.

Lot 1 **and** **Lot 4**	**Deliverable**	**Risk**	**Responsibility**	
			Contracting Authority	**Supplier**
	Within 5 working days following the award of the contract, the supplier must provide an assessment of the complexity of the programme of work to deliver the solution. The complexity level must be agreed to by the Contracting Authority's project lead.	Complexity assessment is not delivered on time/at all and so the project is delayed and complexities not fully understood. Take longer to realise the saving and may incur time period out of the contract. May have to put in temporary extension and so a premium may have to be paid.	The complexity level must be agreed to by the Contracting Authority's project lead.	Onus is on the supplier to deliver the assessment within 5 working days.
	Based on the level of complexity detailed within the assessment, suppliers must	Failure to deliver the implementation plan on time/at all leads to delays in project implementation, and it may take longer to realise the saving and	Onus is on the Contracting Authority project led to ensure sign off is complete.	Onus is on the supplier to provide an implementation plan within the assigned time frame dependent on complexity.

	provide an implementation plan within: 1 week for low complexity projects 2 weeks for medium complexity projects 3 weeks for high complexity projects. The implementation plan must be signed off by the Contracting Authority project lead.	may incur time period out of the contract. May have to put in temporary extension – may have to pay a premium. Failure to complete sign off means project cannot go ahead, and savings not realised. Loss of money to get the project to this stage of the procurement.		
	For the achievement of specific deliverables as set out by the supplier in the implementation plan and agreed to by the Contracting Authority, any Contracting Authority level dependencies must be clearly outlined and highlighted and agreed to by the Contracting Authority.	Lack of clarification of dependencies, leads to Contracting Authorities not handing over relevant information and data, so supplier cannot achieve its deliverables, causing delays and potential failure of the project.	Onus is on the Contracting Authority to make sure relevant data, and information is available to the supplier.	Supplier must have specified what information will be needed to implement the system.

Lot 2	Deliverable	Risk	Responsibility	
			Contracting Authority	Supplier
	Suppliers must provide a detailed report outlining the data standards required for the systems which are intended to be integrated and ensure the system providers validate the standards identified.	Lack of detail, meaning compatibility checks are insufficient leads to incompatibility of data systems and interoperability work cannot commence preventing project success.	Must sign off the requirements once received.	Provision of the report clearly identifying the requirements.
	Payment must be detailed in the delivery plan and must be aligned to the achievement of specific deliverables as set out by the supplier in the implementation plan and agreed to by the Contracting Authority. Any Contracting Authority level dependencies must be clearly	Lack of payment detail may lead to delay in payment of supplier causing a breakdown in relations and refusal to continue supply. Project would be halted, and savings would not be realised.	Must sign off agreement to dependencies and payment plan.	Must clearly set out payment aligned to the achievement of specific deliverables.

	outlined and highlighted and agreed to by the Contracting Authority.			
	Provide detailed requirements to the Contracting Authority with regards to the sign off and handover of the system and detailing the dependencies regarding data flow and support levels for any breakdown in system integration post sign off.	Lack of efficient data flow and support would lead to operational issues within the system. Data may be inaccessible causing miscommunication on site and errors in workforce assignment.	Must sign off agreement to the requirements detailed by the supplier.	Must clearly set out detailed requirements of dependencies for data flow and support.

Lot 3	**Deliverable**	**Risk**	**Responsibility**	
			Contracting Authority	**Supplier**
	Suppliers must provide a proactive approach to the delivery of any project and present ways to simplify and drive the project / requirement. Dependent on the complexity of the requirement, suppliers	Lack of alternative approaches leads to higher risk of failure if the project cannot be delivered in the specified format. Project may be	Provision of access to systems to that the supplier can undertake a holistic analysis.	Must provide detail and evidence of experience and offer alternative suggestions.

	should provide evidence of experience where alternative approaches can save time and money without compromising the outcome.	discarded. Savings would not be realised.		

Award mechanisms

Competitive Selection Process (Further Competition):

a. Contracting Authorities will have the ability to undertake a Competitive Selection Process. Service providers awarded to the framework agreement will only be invited to take part in competitive selection processes that relate to the specific Lot/s for which they have been awarded and when, following a shortlisting process utilising the catalogue, their organisation is deemed capable to supply the required product or services.

b. Competitive Selection Process documentation / templates are available from the NHS Workforce Alliance, and full support will be provided to Contracting Authorities looking to award a Call-Off under the framework agreement via a competitive selection process. This includes mandatory minimum standards, evaluation processes, service level agreements and key performance indicators.

c. Contracting Authorities can procure across all Lots in a single competitive process utilising this framework agreement.

Desktop evaluation (competitive benchmarking):

a. The framework agreement will consist of a catalogue with list pricing and a user-friendly matrix and filter system to enable shortlisting of capable service providers and the quick and efficient benchmarking of solutions to identify value and provide for desktop evaluation.

b. A separate rate card / cost profile will be required for each of the four Lots outlined. Any public sector Contracting Authority will have the ability to undertake a direct Call-Off (with any capable service provider) using the catalogue and/or rate card pricing. This pricing may be updated when the framework agreement re-opens as per the process outlined under the Open Framework procedure or updated to support competitive pricing or to reflect product amendments.

Direct award:

An award without competition (Direct Award) can only be made in accordance with **Appendix 1: Justification Form** and remains the responsibility of the Contracting Authority.

The rationale (justification) for use of Direct Award must be issued to the NHS Workforce Alliance before a URN is issued for the contract.

General support from the NHS Workforce Alliance for Contracting Authority's during the Call-Off process

Evaluation criteria: please refer to predefined list/criteria in the catalogue. The criteria required will depend on the Contracting Authority's needs and supports the development of specific criteria for your procurement. The Contracting Authority will need to develop fair and transparent scoring methodologies to de-risk the procurement – please contact the NHS Workforce Alliance directly for further support.

Use of payment and incentive mechanisms to secure value for money (VFM) based on pricing provided by suppliers: the scope for negotiation will be based on specific customer needs and priorities, catalogue licensing model type, a minimum fixed term period. There will be VFM opportunities in each procurement, but a unique strategy will need to be developed for each individual Call-Off – please contact the NHS Workforce Alliance directly for further support.

Detail on setting of project-specific KPIs and service credit regimes at appropriate levels and criteria for both use of time and materials pricing, as well as milestones and service charges, depending on the scope and nature of the procured provision – please contact the Alliance team at NHS LPP directly for the most up-to-date version of KPI guidance and support.

Exit strategy:

Specific exit strategies to be put in place to support the Contracting Authorities to ensure timely delivery and smooth transition, across service providers as well as details of how such strategy will be implemented. Such strategy to include both commercial and digital support.

For Contracting Authorities looking to move their current solutions to a new solution procured through the RM6387 framework, the NHS Workforce Alliance will work to support the Contracting Authority where the incumbent supplier being “exited” from is already a provider on the framework.

Contracting Authorities with an existing Call-Off contract under the RM6387 framework wanting to re-procure through the framework and change suppliers, standard terms and conditions apply to all suppliers on the framework so the NHS Workforce Alliance can work with the Contracting Authority to develop an exit strategy.

If a Contracting Authority is currently in a contract with a supplier not on the RM6387 framework but wanting to use the framework, the NHS Workforce Alliance has little influence on exit as the incumbent supplier is not bound by the same terms and conditions, however the Contracting Authority should reach out to the NHS Workforce Alliance team for support on negotiating an exit strategy.