recco

Digital Services
Request for Proposal
26th July 2024

**26th July 2024 and
Version 1.01**

1. BACKGROUND AND RfP PROCESS

The Retail Energy Code Company Ltd ('RECCo') has been established to ensure the Retail Energy Code ('REC') operates and evolves in a manner that facilitates the achievement of our mission statement, ensuring consumers interests and data is protected in the operation of the REC; and to drive continuous improvements and efficiencies in the operation of the REC and the central systems and communication infrastructures it governs.

It delivers these through various services which includes the Code Manager Digital Services. RECCo currently has three service providers who currently deliver the Code Manager services.

The evolving needs of the REC Parties and other stakeholders, since retail code consolidation in September 2021, means RECCo is taking this opportunity to restructure its Code Manager services by consolidating its digital service requirements into a single service solution to be procured as a single Lot delivered by one service provider. The delivery of the Code Manager Services is central to the success of the RECCo Mission and REC Objectives.

1.0. Retail Energy Code (REC) and the role of the REC Code Manager

Overview of the Retail Energy Code (REC)

The Retail Energy Code (REC) is a comprehensive regulatory framework designed to govern the activities and interactions of parties involved in the GB retail energy market. It ensures that market participants comply with defined standards and procedures, facilitating a well-functioning, competitive market that serves the interests of consumers.

The REC comprises a main body agreement with supporting Schedules that detail specific obligations, processes, and protocols. These include but are not limited to:

- **Accession Agreement:** The legal contract for parties joining the REC.

- **Performance Assurance**: Measures to ensure compliance and manage performance risks.

- **Change Management**: Procedures for managing modifications to the REC.

- **Data Access and Transfer**: Protocols for handling and sharing consumer data.

- **Energy Theft Reduction**: Strategies to prevent and address energy theft.

- **Metering Operations and Accreditation**: Standards for metering services.

- **Secure Data Exchange**: Ensures secure communication of sensitive data.

- **Prepayment Arrangements**: Specifics for managing prepayment methods.

- **Central Switching Service**: Processes to facilitate smooth consumer switching between suppliers.

- **Market Exit and Supplier of Last Resort**: Guidelines for orderly market exit and backup suppliers.

Each Schedule contributes to the overall objective of maintaining market integrity, promoting competition, and protecting consumer interests.

Role of the REC Code Manager

The REC Code Manager is pivotal in administering the REC, ensuring that all parties comply with their obligations, and supporting the smooth operation of the market. It is also responsible for managing the evolution of the REC in light of market developments. Its work spans across REC Parties- those who have acceded to the REC- and Non-REC Party REC Service Users. The latter are individuals and organisations who are not required to accede to the REC but wish to be provisioned access to one or more REC Services. The role of the REC Code Manager includes several key responsibilities and is divided into three main service areas and currently provided by three Service Providers: REC Professional Services, REC Technical Services, and REC Performance Assurance. These areas encompass the following responsibilities:

- **Onboarding and Accession**:
  - Facilitate the entry of new market participants and their accession to the REC.
  - Ensure that all entrants meet the necessary requirements and understand their obligations under the code.

- **Performance Assurance:**
  - Analyse market activity and consumer outcomes to identify emerging risks.
  - Monitor parties' compliance with the REC through regular assessments.
  - Implement performance assurance techniques to identify, mitigate, and manage risks associated with non-compliance.
  - Report performance issues and manage corrective actions.

- **Change Management:**
  - Oversee the process of proposing, reviewing, and implementing changes to the REC.
  - Ensure that changes are communicated effectively to all stakeholders and are integrated smoothly without disrupting market operations.

- **Data Management:**
  - Manage the secure exchange of data between parties, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations.
  - Facilitate access to and transfer of consumer data as required by the REC schedules.

- **Issue Resolution:**
  - Address and resolve disputes and issues arising under the REC.
  - Provide mechanisms for parties to escalate and resolve operational queries.

- **Market Assurance and Testing:**
  - Coordinate testing of systems and processes, including those related to the Central Switching Service, to ensure reliability and efficiency.
  - Validate and verify market participants' readiness for market operations.

- **Stakeholder Engagement:**
  - Act as the central point of contact for all REC parties, providing guidance and support.
  - Engage with stakeholders to gather feedback and drive continuous improvement of the REC.

4

- **Audit and Compliance:**
  - Conduct audits to ensure adherence to REC requirements.
  - Implement corrective measures for identified non-compliance and report findings to relevant authorities.

The REC Code Manager plays a crucial role in maintaining the REC's integrity, ensuring fair and efficient market operations, and establishing trust among market participants. By overseeing compliance, managing changes, and supporting data security, the REC Code Manager helps create a stable and competitive retail energy market that benefits all stakeholders, particularly consumers.

Summary of Key Schedules

- **Schedule 1:** *Interpretations*: Provides definitions and interpretations of terms used in the REC

- **Schedule 4**: *Company Governance*: Details governance structures and responsibilities of REC parties.

- **Schedule 5:** *Change Management*: Outlines the processes for managing amendments to the REC.

- **Schedule 6:** *Performance* Assurance: Describes the framework for ensuring compliance and managing performance.

- **Schedule 7:** *Energy Theft Reduction:* Specifies measures to detect and reduce energy theft.

- **Schedule 10:** *Charging Methodology*: Details the methodology for charging and cost recovery.

- **Schedule 11:** *Prepayment Arrangements*: Covers protocols for managing prepayment methods.

- **Schedule 13:** *Transfer of Consumer Data*: Outlines the rules for transferring consumer data securely.

- **Schedule 25:** *Central Switching Service*: Details the processes and requirements for the central switching service, facilitating consumer switching between suppliers.

Each Schedule addresses a specific aspect of market operation, ensuring comprehensive coverage of all necessary regulatory requirements.

Through the obligations and processes set out in the Schedules and the active role of the Code Manager (delivered by the Code Manager Service Providers), the REC ensures that the GB retail energy market operates smoothly, transparently, and efficiently, ultimately protecting and benefiting consumers.

1.1. RfP Process

RECCo is undertaking a procurement exercise to appoint a single Digital Services Partner to deliver a Digital Services solution and is issuing this Request for Proposal ('RfP') pack to potential service providers ('Bidders'). The procurement will be in two stages:

- **Tender Stage**: is to select a short list of service providers to progress to the second stage which will be a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) stage.

- **BAFO Stage - including Supplier Dialogue sessions**: is to select a preferred Bidder who RECCo will contract with. Subject to the terms of this RfP Stage, RECCo proposes to enter a contract ('Contract') with the successful Bidder.

RECCo reserves the right to provide updated versions of the tender documentation at any time, subject to reasonable notice. RECCo reserves the right to terminate its procurement activity at any stage.

1.2. The RfP Response Pack

This RfP has the following Schedules:

- **Schedule 1** – Response Documents (Annexes A and F must be submitted as separate files.)
    - o Annex A: Quality Response Questionnaire
    - o Annex B: Detailed Requirements
    - o Annex C: Design Principles and Policies
    - o Annex D: User Personas and Journeys
    - o Annex E: RECCo Brand Guidelines
    - o Annex F: Pricing and Commercial Response
- **Schedule 2** – Contract and its Schedules
    - o Annex A: Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

The deadline for clarification questions is 17:00 GMT Friday 9th August 2024. All clarification questions must be sent to the following email address: procurement@retailenergycode.co.uk

All responses to this RfP must be received by RECCo by the submission deadline: 17.00 GMT on Friday 13th September 2024 at the following email address: procurement@retailenergycode.co.uk

All information submitted by you in relation to this RfP, must remain valid for 180 calendar days from the submission deadline date laid out above. Any further submission as part of the BAFO Stage must also remain valid for a further 180 calendar days from that submission date.

1.3. Procurement Evaluation Panel

RECCO will establish a Procurement Evaluation Panel (PEP) who will be responsible for evaluating the Bidders' quality responses. The PEP will be chaired by a RECCo employee and will be supported by Technology and Industry Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). The PEP will not have sight of Bidders' commercial responses until the quality evaluation moderation sessions are completed, and the final quality evaluation results are calculated. This ensures that the quality evaluation is conducted independently of any commercial considerations.

1.4. RFP Response Completion Instructions

Your response must be completed in accordance with the following instructions.

We may, in our absolute discretion, refrain from considering any applications that are incorrectly completed, incomplete or fail to comply with these instructions. Any responses received after the submission deadline will not be evaluated.

Responses must be completed legibly in English (United Kingdom). Each Bidder's name must be clearly noted on all documentation submitted.

Schedule 1 Annex A: Quality Response Questionnaire: Answer all questions carefully and as fully as possible. We reserve the right to not seek additional information where a Bidder has failed to answer a question according to the instructions or evaluation methodology given.

Schedule 1 Annex F: Pricing and Commercial Response: Answer all questions. All assumptions should be clearly stated and, where applicable, quantified. Failure to identify the Charges for your preferred solution will be considered a Non-Compliant bid.

Schedule 2 Annex A: Acceptances of Terms of Conditions: The proposed contract for this procurement is based on the Model Services Contract v2.1 dated August 2023. We have amended the model version as we consider appropriate to meet our needs. We expect it to be accepted, without material change, in the attached form by the preferred Bidder. Bidders are required to submit a signed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions form. If Bidders have any comments or proposed changes, they must identify those as part of their response to the RfP in their Commercial and Pricing Response. The degree of proposed changes will be assessed as part of the evaluation process and, if material, may lead to disqualification of the Bidder at the Tender Stage.

Please ensure that all questions in Annex A and F of Schedule 1 are completed in full, and in the format requested. If the question does not apply to you, please state 'N/A'.

Provide full and detailed responses to those questions where weightings and sub-weightings are to be evaluated. Any proposed comments on the proposed contract that indicate a material change to the risk profile could result in a failure.

Provide full and detailed answers for those questions which are 'For Information Only'. Even though these are not scored or pass/fail, RECCo still requires these to be answered.

All page and word limits must be adhered to. Any additional content that is submitted outside of the permitted limit will not be evaluated.

Submission Format

All submissions must be in the following format:

- Header - font size 14
- Main Text - font 12
- Line Spacing - 1.15.

Diagrams, plans, and pictures can be submitted if they are not predominantly text and are included as part of the page limit. Diagrams, plans, and pictures submitted which are predominantly text will be disregarded for evaluation scoring. Tables should use same format as stated above.

- There should be no annexes / appendices provided unless these are explicitly requested.
- Do not include any promotional material or additional company literature.

- There should be no embedded documents within any documents submitted unless these are explicitly requested.

- Where the questions specifically request additional supporting information, the relevant response must refer to the supporting information. Similarly, any supporting information required for the RfP must indicate the part and question number of the response to which it refers.

The Bidder shall ensure, where they are bidding as a consortium, that each proposed consortium member and adviser abides by the terms of these instructions.

Signatures provided in the declaration must be made by a person who is authorised to commit the Bidder to the contract.

1.5. Digital Services Requirements and Scope

The scope of this RfP is twofold: first, to design and implement the digital solutions required by RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers, and second, to support these solutions in live operation, both provided by the Digital Service Partner (DSP). Collectively, these solutions are referred to as the integrated digital ecosystem. RECCo is seeking responses from Bidders at this stage of the RfP to assess capability to deliver and support an integrated digital ecosystem across RECCo and its three Code Manager service functions.

It is crucial for Bidders to fulfil all the detailed requirements set out in within **Schedule 1 - Annex B: Detailed Requirements**. Bidders will be expected to demonstrate their capability in each of the services across the integrated digital ecosystem, as well as at individual solution level defined below. Additionally, Bidders must provide detailed costings for the implementation, running, and support of these services. All costs should be clearly explained, and any assumptions should be emphasised.

The implementation of the integrated digital ecosystem must be completed by 1st September 2026. Following the implementation, the support phase will commence, extending for five years until the 1st of September 2031.

The goal is to ensure that the chosen supplier can effectively implement and then operate a comprehensive integrated digital ecosystem that aligns with one of RECCo's key strategic objectives of ensuring high user satisfaction while meeting user and operational needs.

1.5.0. Introduction to Section 1.5

Within this section, an overview of the Digital Services requirements and the integrated digital ecosystem will be provided. To support the Bidders in digesting the RfP content, a hierarchy of the subsequent sections is provided in Figure 1:

Figure 1: Hierarchy

1.5.0.1.   Why Digital Services?

The REC Code Manager is responsible for delivering the day-to-day activities of the REC and supporting the industry in fulfilling its code obligations. RECCo has procured sector-leading service providers who work together to provide the REC Code Manager Service.

The activities within the consolidated Code Manager Service are currently provided by three REC Code Manager Service Providers, shown in the below figure:

REC Professional Services (RPS)	REC Technical Services (RTS)	REC Performance Assurance (RPA)
• **Party Management:** Provision of party support through the entry and exit process and through assigned Operational Account Managers (OAMs). • **Service Management:** Provision of the REC Service Desk, acting as the primary point of contact for REC Parties. • **Stakeholder Engagement and Committee Management:** Delivering education and training based on stakeholder needs, management of REC events and management of REC Committees and forums. • **Change Management:** End-to-end delivery of the REC Change process.	• **Technical Design Authority:** Maintain the integrity of REC technical documents and products. • **Release Management:** Planning over overseeing the release of REC code release using the Release Management Framework.	• **Performance Assurance:** Designing, implementing, and managing the REC Performance Assurance Framework. • **Assurance:** Ensuring REC Parties, REC Processes, and Service Providers meet required standards.

Figure 2: The REC Code Manager Service Providers

The REC Code Manager Service Providers currently provide digital solutions as part of their Code Manager Service Provider contracts. This arrangement was ideal when the solutions were developed as part of the implementation and go-live of the REC in 2021. As the REC has evolved, and with the initial term of those contracts nearing completion, RECCo sees the next step in the REC journey as the repackaging of the Code Manager service provision to implement a new integrated digital ecosystem solution. This implementation of a dedicated Digital Services operation within the Code Manager Service is a strategic move to support RECCo's key objectives.

Through this procurement process, RECCo will appoint a single Digital Services Partner which will operate alongside the existing Code Manager Service Providers and will be responsible for delivering the digital solutions and the associated services required for the other Code Manager Service Providers to successfully meet REC obligations whilst delivering a high-quality service. By establishing a distinct Digital Services operation, RECCo will increase focus, specialisation, and efficiency in managing the digital aspects of the REC, ensuring that all digital services are optimally aligned with the evolving needs and expectations of the market.

1.5.0.2.   What are the Digital Services operational requirements?

The services that are delivered, referred to as the Digital Services operational requirements, are guided by key goals:

- ensuring users, RECCo, and the other Code Manager Service Providers receive the best services through strong partnerships;

- providing a simple and effective user experience for all stakeholders;

9

- creating an integrated digital ecosystem of sector leading solutions;

- supporting RECCo long-term ownership and control of digital assets for flexibility;

- decreased reliance on the provision of technology by other Code Manager Service Providers; and

- providing financial transparency and cost-value for industry spending.

To achieve these goals, the services are grouped into three service categories: **Client Facing Services**, **Project & Change Management**, and **Technical Operations**.

These services will collectively support the integrated digital ecosystem and are designed to enable the Code Manager Service Providers to execute their daily activities effectively and to provide a simple, user-friendly experience for all who interact with the Code Manager Services and the REC. The current digital services consist of the REC Portal, Digital REC, REC Change and Service Management, Party Management, Committee and Event Management, AI Search & Assistance, Data Analytics & Reporting, and Foundation Technologies including the predefined API Gateway and cloud hosting. Bidders will be expected to outline their preferred solutions that would make up the new integrated digital ecosystem which must at a minimum address all of these digital solutions which will be withdrawn from the current Code Manager Service Providers upon successful implementation.

Client Facing Services will focus on enabling strong relationships with RECCo, the Code Manager Service Providers and end users by providing efficient support through a service portal and a service desk to manage incidents and problems, maintaining a knowledge base, and facilitating continual improvement through feedback mechanisms. Critical to this service is a "train the trainer" approach which provides Code Manager Service Providers with the appropriate training so they can deliver their services effectively and act as ambassadors of the digital services whilst engaging with end users.

Project & Change Management services will oversee the lifecycle of projects and changes to digital solutions and services, ensuring minimal disruption across RECCo, Code Manager Service Providers and end users, ensuring changes are aligned with strategic goals. This includes managing change requests, planning releases, and maintaining clear communication channels to keep all stakeholders informed. These services will support future changes and, when requested, projects within the digital ecosystem. The Project & Change Management services relate to the enduring change and projects once the implementation of the integrated digital ecosystem has been completed. The initial implementation of the integrated digital ecosystem will be part of this RfP, treated as an exceptional programme with its own set of detailed requirements. Full details of the requirements can be found within **Schedule 1 - Annex B: Detailed Requirements.**

Technical Operations will ensure effective management of the environments, applications, API gateway service wrap and solutions within the integrated digital ecosystem. This includes environment management, ensuring robust security measures, optimising system performance, and implementing backup and recovery processes. Continuous monitoring and regular security assessments will maintain the solutions integrity, supporting the evolving needs of the industry.

1.5.0.3.   Who uses the Digital Services?

The Digital Services will cater to two main categories of users: **external users**, comprising a wide range of energy market participants divided into REC Parties and Non-REC Parties and **internal users**, consisting of RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers; and other REC Service Providers such as the providers of the Gas and Electricity Enquiry Services and the Metering Scheme Auditors.

External Users: REC Parties are organisations that include Energy Suppliers, Gas Transporters, Distribution Network Operators, Metering Equipment Managers, and Meter Installers. These stakeholders interact with the digital services to comply with regulatory requirements, provide performance related data to comply with REC obligations, access vital information, request and receive guidance from the REC Code Manager and engage with other market participants.

Non-REC Parties include Third-Party Intermediaries, energy consumers, Trade Associations, Price Comparison Websites, Consumer Groups, Charities, and Government Bodies such as Ofgem and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). These users engage with the digital services to access relevant data, compare energy options, advocate for consumer rights, support industry-wide initiatives, and oversee regulatory compliance.

A key aspect to consider is the varying sizes and types of organisations within both REC Parties and Non-REC Parties. These range from large, global organisations to small, local, independent companies, startups and retail energy consumers. There is no restriction to who can access the REC portal beyond seeing information controlled via the access control protocols. The Digital Services must, therefore, be versatile and scalable to accommodate the needs of all these entities, providing a simple, effective user experience regardless of the organisation's size or scope whether they interact with the Code Manager Services digitally, online or in person.

Internal Users: Internal users include RECCo and the Code Managers Service Providers. Each Code Manager Service within the Code Manager Services framework is currently delivered by a different service provider, all of whom rely on the digital solutions to effectively complete their daily activities. These internal users are crucial for ensuring the efficient operation and management of the REC; providing support to market participants and other stakeholders. The Digital Services Operation will enable these service providers to fulfil their roles, manage interactions, and deliver consistent, high-quality services to benefit the broader market.

Other REC Service Providers: This category includes service providers who deliver REC services outside the Code Manager framework, such as the providers of the Gas and Electricity Enquiry Services and the Metering Scheme Auditors. These providers interact with the Code Manager Service Providers and digital services to deliver their specific services.

By catering to these diverse internal and external user groups, the Digital Services Partner will ensure comprehensive support and engagement across the entire ecosystem, facilitating smooth operations, compliance, and enhanced user satisfaction.

There are two possible ways for all users to interact with the digital solutions:

1. Machine-to-Machine interactions

   These interactions involve automated data exchanges between different systems for activities such as data submission, retrieval, and processing.

2. Human-to-Machine interactions

   These interactions involve individual users browsing via their laptops or other internet connected devices. The primary avenue for these interactions would be via the DXP portal to view information, submit requests, and engage in various activities through a user-friendly interface.

Across the external and internal user groups, key personas have been identified as follows:
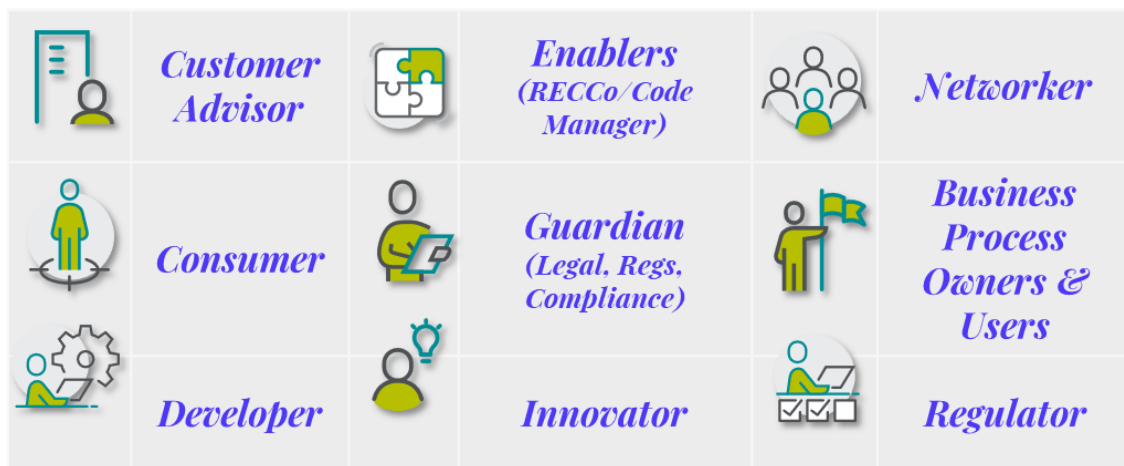
Figure 3: Persona Summary

Full details of the personas and key user journeys can be found with **Schedule 1 - Annex D: User Personas and Journeys.**

1.5.0.4. How are the Digital Services expected to be implemented?

One of the crucial capabilities that RECCo is looking to evaluate is the approach to implementing the integrated digital ecosystem with minimum disruption. Bidders must provide their recommended approach in their RfP response, ensuring the implementation is intuitive, supported by strong design principles, and fulfils all the transition requirements set out in **Schedule 1 - Annex B: Detailed Requirements**. A failure to include a recommended approach will be considered a non-compliant bid. Key considerations for the implementation plan must include:

Mobilisation and Discovery Stage: It is expected that this will last no longer than four months. During this period, a stakeholder group comprised of selected users will be mobilised and facilitated by RECCo. The stakeholder group will be involved in the sign-off process for storyboards and designs of the upcoming sprints and solutions. The storyboards and designs must be finalised at least four weeks before moving into the Design, Build and Test Sprints to ensure the stakeholder group has visibility of what is being built, provide user experience feedback and support user testing.

Co-Selection Process: During the discovery phase, the solutions that make up the new integrated digital ecosystem will be finalised through a co-selection process, with RECCo providing final approval. The bidder will demonstrate how they arrived at their preferred solutions through detailed explanations, demonstrations and their own evaluations. This process should include the rationale behind their choices, consideration of alternatives, and how the recommended solutions align with RECCo's requirements and design principles. Bidders will be required to fully justify, including provision of evidence to support any cost variability, any change from the recommended solution set out in
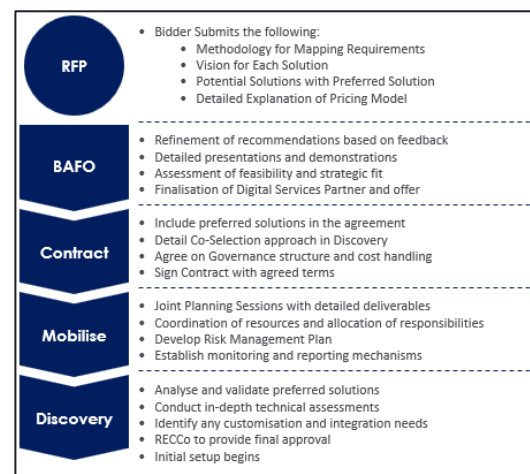
Figure 4: Co-Selection

12

their RfP response. It is crucial that the solutions can fulfil the requirements outlined in **Schedule 1 - Annex B: Detailed Requirements,** and align with the design principles and policies, outlined in **Schedule 1 - Annex C: Design Principles and Policies.**

API Gateway Integration: Relevant integration will occur through the pre-selected Kong Konnect API Gateway, aligning with the API Management Policy & the API Reliability Policy detailed in **Schedule 1 - Annex C: Design Principles and Policies**. The management of the API Gateway is included in the RfP, and it is expected that the service wrap of the API Gateway will be ready within the first six months.

Design, Build and Test Stage: This stage should include short sprint cycles, with additional participation outside of sprints for the stakeholder group to participate in the testing lifecycle. At minimum, monthly feedback sessions will be held with the stakeholder group covering the storyboards and designs for future sprints, as well as feedback review and testing of the most recent sprints.

Soft Launch: A soft launch to a selected number of trusted stakeholders is anticipated. Feedback from these stakeholders will be incorporated into enhancement sprints for the full deployment. The soft launch allows for real-world testing and adjustments before the full launch to all users. During soft launch into full deployment, it is expected that continual improvement based on feedback will be carried out.

Full Deployment: After the soft launch and incorporating feedback, the full deployment will be executed. This phase ensures that all users have access to the fully integrated digital ecosystem, with ongoing support to address any issues and ensure smooth operation.

This approach aims to ensure a structured, collaborative and efficient implementation of the Digital Services, aligning with RECCo's strategic goals and stakeholder needs. The requirements are outlined in **Schedule 1 - Annex B: Detailed Requirements**, which cover not only the services and solutions but also the transition requirements.

1.5.0.5.   When is the Digital Services expected to be deployed?

The programme is expected to start immediately after contract signature (expected to be March 2025) and continue for up to 18 months with full deployment no later than the 1st of September 2026. The following high-level delivery plan provides a suggested timeline and context for bidders to consider when formulating their suggested best approach for deployment. While this plan outlines a structured framework to ensure alignment with RECCo's expectations, Bidders can propose modifications between Stages where they see opportunities for improvements or efficiencies. However, any deviations from the suggested plan must align with the key considerations outlined in section 1.5.1.4 and be justified accordingly.

Suggested Delivery Plan

Stage 1: Mobilisation *(Month 1)*	• Establish project governance and teams. • Finalise detailed project plans and timelines. • Initiate procurement processes for necessary tools and services.
Stage 2: Discovery *(Months 1-4)*	• Conduct detailed requirements gathering and user research. • Develop design prototypes and obtain stakeholder feedback.

13

	• Begin development of core components and integrations.
Stage 3: Design and Development *(Months 5-9)*	• Assemble support teams to initially support the API Gateway by month 6, and subsequently the rest of the Digital Ecosystem. • Conduct a design and development checkpoint. ⬛
Stage 4: DSP Service Management Knowledge Transfer *(Months 4-12)*	• Provide training and support to internal and external users. • Develop and complete local work instructions and processes for Incident, Problem, Knowledge, Change, and Release Management.
Stage 5: Testing and Validation *(Months 10-12)*	• Perform comprehensive testing, including functional, security, and performance testing. • Validate integrations and ensure data integrity. • Conduct user acceptance testing and address any issues.
Stage 6: Soft Launch *(Months 13-15)*	• Roll out the new digital services in a phased manner. • Monitor and address initial implementation issues. • Undertake additional development in response to user feedback. • Execute data migration and cutover processes.
Stage 7: Full Deployment and Optimisation *(Months 16-17)*	• Complete the transition to the new ecosystem. • Optimise performance and resolve any remaining issues. • Establish ongoing support and continuous improvement processes.
Stage 8: Hypercare Exit & Transition *(Months 18-20 / Months 1-2 of Enduring Operation)*	• Continue monitoring and addressing any issues. • Transition to business-as-usual operations.

1.5.1. Digital Services Operations Overview

The Digital Services Operation needs to encompass a range of services to ensure efficient operation, management, and continuous improvement of the new integrated digital solutions. These services are categorised into three main areas: **Client Facing**, **Project and Change Management**, and **Technical Operations**.

14

Currently the Code Manager Service Providers support the solutions they provide internally. Current reports show all solutions to be stable with no major outages and less than 6 incidents raised in the last 12 months.

Client Facing	Project & Change Management	Technical Operations
• Incident Management • Problem Management • Knowledge Management • Service Desk • Relationship Management • Continual Improvement • KPI and Metric Management	• Change Management • Release Management • Empowerment	• Environment Management • Security Management • Performance Optimisation • Backup and Recovery • Monitoring and Support • Security Assessment and Penetration Testing • KPI and Metric Management

All Solutions

Figure 5: Services Overview

1.5.1.1.   Client-Facing

The client-facing services provided by the Digital Service Partner are essential for enabling strong relationships with RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers. These services will focus on delivering simple, efficient, and user-friendly support through a multichannel service desk, which includes a support portal. This service desk will be the primary point of contact for RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers for support and changes related to the integrated digital ecosystem. Key components of this service include the definition and implementation of Incident and Problem Management processes.

Although Change and Release Management fall under the Project and Change Management service group, interactions with RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers regarding these processes will be handled by the Client Facing Services.

 A crucial aspect of the client-facing services is the "train the trainer" program, ensuring Code Manager Service Providers receive effective training to deliver their roles to all users. Feedback mechanisms will underpin all client-facing services, allowing RECCo, Code Manager Service Providers, and market participants to offer insights for continuous user experience improvement.

Overview

The client-facing services directly impact the performance of RECCo and Code Manager Service Providers, who, in turn, support and provide services to all users. As such, these services must be efficient as any inefficiencies will have a ripple effect, ultimately affecting users.

The "train the trainer" service enables the Code Manager Service Providers to effectively represent the digital services and solutions to end users through their direct engagement as part of the Code Manager Service Provider role.

The client-facing service wrap of all solutions will enable effective support and collaboration across the digital services ecosystem, acting as a key enabler for RECCo's moves towards a continuous service improvement culture.

Services Covered

- **Incident Management:** Efficient handling and resolution of incidents to minimise service disruptions, including proactive management.

15

- **Problem Management:** Identifying and addressing the root causes of incidents to prevent recurrence, including proactive problem management to prevent incidents from occurring.

- **Knowledge Management:** Maintaining a knowledge base to facilitate quick resolution of common issues and share best practices.

- **Service Desk:** Providing a service desk for Code Manager Service Providers and RECCo.

- **Relationship Management:** Building strong relationships with Code Manager Service Providers and capturing feedback for continuous improvement.

- **Continual Improvement:** Working in collaboration with RECCo and Code Manager Service Providers, the Digital Service Partner is to use insights gained from the solution and process feedback to identify, or support with the execution of continuous improvement initiatives.

- **KPI and Metric Management:** Delivering the Client Facing Services in alignment with the required KPIs.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
18	15	1
	2	0
	Could – have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria for the client-facing services to be provided by the Digital Service Partner. The goal is to ensure comprehensive stakeholder management, effective communication, efficient service desk operations, and continuous service improvement. The Digital Services Partner will prioritise accessibility, data security, and user support, enhancing the overall user experience for RECCo and its stakeholders.

Stakeholder Management and Communication	**Stakeholder Management Strategy**	*Establish and maintain a strategy to identify or address stakeholder needs and expectations of RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers.*
	Communication and Feedback	*Conduct regular communication and engagement, facilitate tailored communication plans, and implement structured feedback processes to drive continuous improvement.*
Service Desk Operations and Continual Improvement	**Service Desk and Ticketing**	*Provide a service desk solution supporting efficient management of service requests and incident reporting across multiple channels, implementing a robust ticketing system to track, escalate, and resolve tickets.*
	Feedback Process	*Implement a structured feedback process to collect, analyse, and act on stakeholder feedback, driving continuous service improvement across the RECCo eco-system.*

| Data Security and Accessibility | Data Security and Compliance | *Ensure compliance with data protection legislation and maintain strict data security across service desk operations.* |
| | Accessibility | *Provide high accessibility support services, ensuring materials and interactions cater to all users with a culture of service excellence instilled into ways of working.* |

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

1.5.1.2. Project and Change Management

Project and Change Management services focus on structured and efficient handling of projects and changes to the Digital Service environment. This involves overseeing the lifecycle of projects from initiation to completion, managing change requests, and ensuring that all changes are implemented effectively and efficiently with minimal disruption to the end users, RECCo and Code Manger Service Providers.

The Digital Service Partner needs to provide solutions that facilitate project management, clear change management processes, and clear communication channels to ensure all stakeholders are informed and aligned. The design, development and implementation of the Digital Services ecosystem is not included within the scope of this service.

Overview

RECCo aims to ensure that project and change management processes are efficient, transparent, and aligned with strategic goals. The services that are delivered within the project and change management are therefore essential to ensuring that RECCo's digital solutions are able to adapt to industry changes, implement new regulations, and improve operational efficiency.

By enhancing these services, RECCo can ensure that modifications to their Code Manager Digital Ecosystem are managed smoothly, minimising disruptions and ensuring compliance.

Services Covered

- **Change Management:** Defining and managing the lifecycle of changes to the integrated digital ecosystem.

- **Release Management:** Planning and overseeing the release of updates and new features to ensure smooth implementation.

- **Empowerment:** Enabling Code Manager Service Providers to make necessary enhancements while maintaining ecosystem integrity.

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Working in collaboration with RECCo and Code Manager Service Providers to ensure that all required stakeholders are engaged throughout the change management lifecycles**.**

17

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
19	16	2
	1	0
	Could–have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria for project and change management services to be provided by the Digital Service Partner. The goal is to ensure comprehensive project oversight, risk management, change readiness, and continuous improvement. The Digital Service Partner will prioritise transparency, effective communication, and stakeholder engagement to align with RECCo's strategic objectives and drive successful project and change management outcomes.

Project Management	**Project Lifecycle**	*Manage and oversee the entire lifecycle of digital projects, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives.*
	Governance	*Establish clear governance structures and roles for project management, ensuring accountability and effective communication across the RECCo ecosystem, continuing to drive collaboration.*
Change Management	**Robust Risk Management**	*Implement risk management strategies to identify, assess, and mitigate potential risks throughout the project lifecycle, in collaboration with project stakeholders.*
	Flexibility and Monitoring	*Ensure continuous monitoring and evaluation of the change implementation process, prioritising flexibility and adaptability to respond to feedback and challenges.*
Tools and Training	**Project and Change Management**	*Utilise change management tools and software that facilitate effective planning, communication, and monitoring of change initiatives.*
	Training and Support	*Conduct thorough needs assessments, develop training materials, and offer various training delivery methods to accommodate different learning styles and scheduling needs.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

Current Mode of Operations

The Code Manager Service Providers contact their internal support teams for any enhancements required with the existing set of solutions. It is expected that the Digital Service Partner will manage Projects and Change to support any enhancements to the digital solutions. This will involve close collaboration with Code Manager Service Providers in the delivery of enhancements to the user base.

18

1.5.1.3. Technical Operations

The Technical Operation service ensures the effective management of the environments, applications and tools that make up the solutions of the new integrated digital ecosystem.

The Digital Service Partner will be responsible for managing these environments, whether they are SaaS solutions or hosted in RECCo's chosen cloud platform. This also includes managing user authentication and authorisation protocols and tools, as well as the pre-selected API gateway, which acts as the foundation integrating all the solutions in one ecosystem.

In addition, the Digital Service Partner will be responsible for Domain Management. This involves procuring and managing DNS for additional domains, excluding retailenergycode.co.uk, which is out of scope. However, the domain RECManager.co.uk is within the scope of this RfP. The Domain Management responsibilities for this domain also include provisioning, and supporting these accounts for the Code Manager Service Providers to ensure they can interact with the market using a unified identity.

For all solutions and technical operations, design principles have been set out by RECCo which include availability, scalability, reliability, and performance. These are defined to ensure the solutions are maintained and working in the best possible way for the Code Manager Service Providers and end users.

Overview

RECCo needs to ensure that its technical infrastructure is secure, compliant, and capable of supporting the evolving needs of the industry. Through the Technical Operations service, the Digital Service Partner will maintain security, compliance, and operational excellence across the best-of-breed solution within the new digital ecosystem.

The technical operations will safeguard the solutions through regular audits and penetration tests. With these measures, and by conducting regular Business Continuity (BC) and Disaster Recovery (DR) procedures with appropriate policies in place, RECCo can be confident that the Technical Operations service ensures secure management of its new integrated digital ecosystem.

Services Covered

- **Environment Management:** Overseeing the maintenance and performance of all technical environments.

- **Security and Certificate Management:** Ensuring robust security measures including certificate management are in place to protect the ecosystem.

- **Performance Optimisation:** Regularly updating and optimising systems to ensure high efficiency and reliability.

- **Backup and Recovery:** Implementing backup and recovery processes to safeguard data and ensure business continuity.

- **Monitoring and Support:** Continuous monitoring and support to quickly address any technical issues.

- **Security Assessments and Penetration Testing:** Conducting regular security assessments and penetration testing to identify and mitigate vulnerabilities.

- **KPI and Metric Management:** Delivering the Technical Operations service in alignment with the required KPIs.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
42	42	0
	0	0
	Could–have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria for the Technical Operations service provided by the Digital Service Partner. The goal is to ensure continuous monitoring, optimal performance, data security, and robust backup and recovery strategies. The Digital Service Partner will prioritise proactive maintenance, security measures, event management, and scalability to support dynamics and evolving needs.

Monitoring and Maintenance	**Continuous Monitoring and Management**	*Ensure continuous monitoring and management of all hosted environments to maintain optimal performance and availability.*
	Proactive Maintenance	*Implement proactive maintenance and update schedules to minimise downtime and ensure currency with the latest security patches.*
Security and Continuity	**Incident Management**	*Establish effective incident event management processes and conduct regular security assessments to protect hosted environments against threats.*
	Backup and Recovery	*Implement effective data backup and recovery strategies, including automated backup scheduling and monitoring of backup jobs.*
Integration and Scalability	**API Gateway Management**	*Manage the pre-selected API Gateway solution to ensure seamless integration and dynamic data exchange between services.*
	Capacity Planning	*Implement capacity planning and scalability strategies to accommodate growing demands.*
User Authentication	**Authentication and Security**	*Manage the implementation of all authentication and authorisation systems and frameworks to ensure secure access control and utilise relevant security measures to provide comprehensive protection for authentication and authorisation systems.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

Current Services Overview

The Code Manager Service Providers manage their own technical operations for the solutions they provide. It is expected that the Digital Service Partner will manage the technical operations of the digital services.

1.5.2. Solution Overview

This section will cover the foundations upon which the solutions that make up the new integrated digital ecosystem needs to be built. They will align with the design principles, and as part of the implementation, it is within scope to design, build, and then support these via the technical operations services moving forward.

Key Elements

The Data Model:

- **Overview:** The data model will encompass the GB retail energy market, its market participants, and all users including potentially consumers. This will include their interactions with the REC and in the case of the market participants, their interactions with the wider Retail Energy Market.

Key Components:

- **Organisation Structure and Attributes:** This includes multiple organisations that can have several entities as market participants with different or the same roles, and their relationships with others. For example, energy suppliers using different meter equipment managers to manage their assets based on factors like meter types or location.

- **Users and Services Access:** Details of users within organisations and the services they are allowed to access.

- **Service Mapping:** How services are mapped to access control and the roles of users and organisations.

- **Solution Data Mapping:** Each solution's data should be mapped to the data model, clarifying where data is collected and processed and the relationships between data points for insight design.

- **Access Control and Automation:** Access control and service provision will be driven by the data model, with a future goal of automation.

Authentication:

- **Current State:** All authentication and authorisation for the Code Manager services is currently managed by one of the Code Manager Service Providers.

- **Future State:** As the new ecosystem is deployed, authentication and authorisation will be delivered by the Digital Services Partner. The design will aim to establish a foundation not only for the Code Manager Services but also for the wider RECCo services.

API Gateway:

- **Preselected Gateway:** The RECCo chosen API Gateway, to be used for all integrations, is KONG Konnect.

- **Initial Usage:** The solutions below will be the first to use the API Gateway, designed to align with the API Management and API Reliability policies shared in **Schedule 1 - Annex C: Design Principle and Policies**.

- **Service Wrap:** The API service wrap must be available within the first six months, allowing RECCo to evaluate and plan the onboarding of other services via the API Gateway, in collaboration with the Digital Services Partner.

Hosting Environment:

- **Current State:** All solutions currently use the Code Manager service providers' hosting environments.

- **Future State:** A cloud-based hosting service will be designed and managed for RECCo by the Digital Services supplier. The services listed below will be the first to potentially leverage this environment, depending on the selected solutions.

These foundational technologies are critical to ensuring the effective, scalable, and secure operation of the New Integrated Digital Ecosystem. By aligning with RECCo's design principles, they will provide the relevant infrastructure needed to support the digital transformation and ongoing operations of the Code Manager Services and beyond.

1.5.2.1. All Solutions

This section encompasses the objectives, aims and requirements associated with all the solutions that make up the integrated digital ecosystem.

RECCo wants to implement a new integrated digital ecosystem composed of sector leading, cloud-first, and SaaS solutions which are co-selected between RECCo and the Digital Services Partner. These solutions will be targeted to its operational needs as demonstrated within Figure 6 below. The solutions and their associated services must be proportionate to the nature of RECCo's services, ensuring they meet the required performance, reliability, scalability, and availability.

Code Management (Change & Service)

- Providing a streamlined solution for the handling of the REC Change/Issue and query processes, inclusive consultations.

Data Analytics and Reporting

- Providing advanced real-time analytics and reporting tools which enables technical and market performance insights to help inform decisions.

Foundation Technology

- Providing robust and central infrastructure services which are modern with scalability and reliability.
- This includes the API Gateway.

User Experience

REC Portal (DXP Solution)

- This will act as the primary interactive channel which users will engage with, enabling a streamlined and user-powered digital ecosystem.

Party Management

- Providing a solution to support streamlined party registration and account interaction(s) and navigation.

Digital Code Master Management, Technical Specs, and Interaction

- The 'Digital REC' which provides efficient management of digital code documentation, including the repository of Technical Data specs for the industry to follow.

AI Search & Assistance

- Providing intuitive user searching capabilities, with search requests originating within the portal but spanning across all solutions.
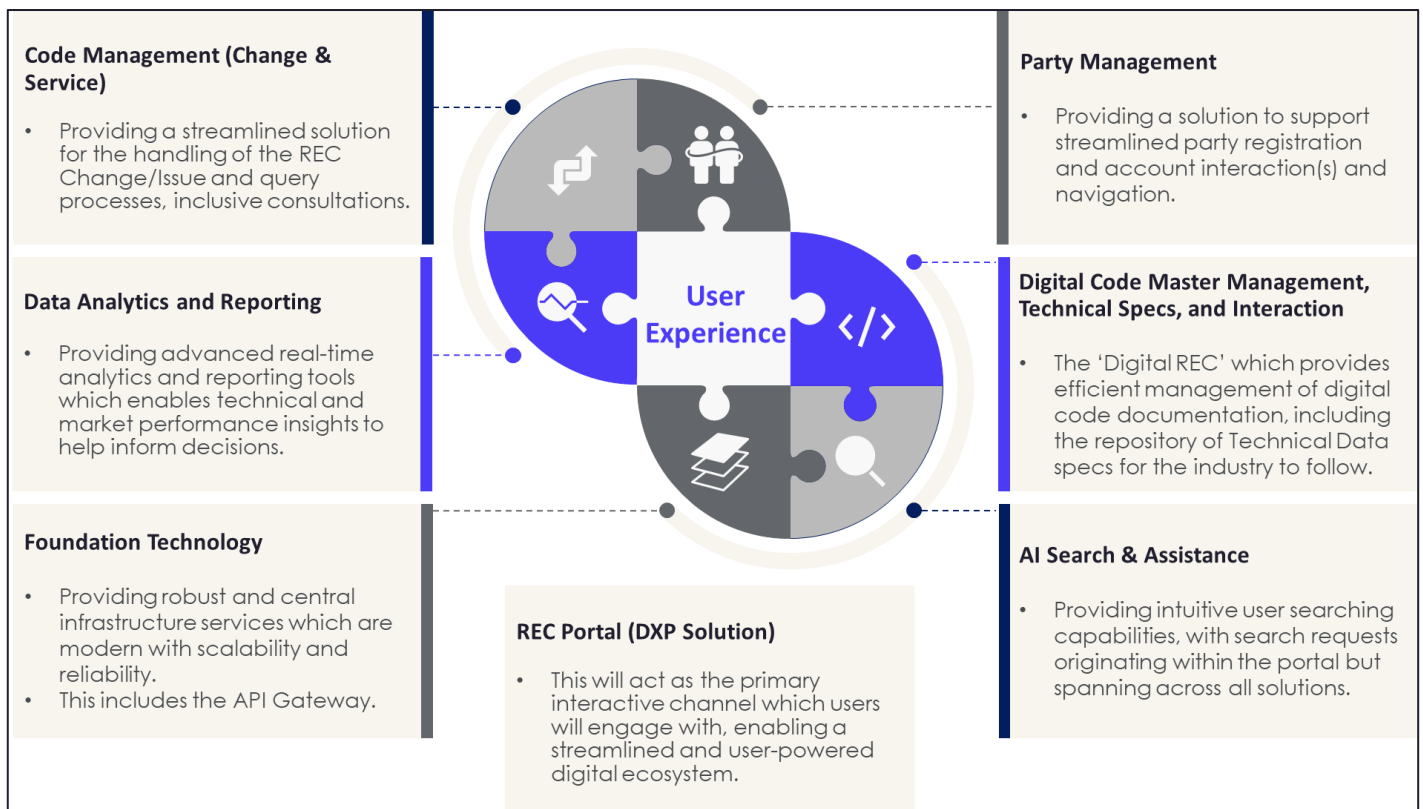
Figure 6: Solutions Overview

The Digital Service Partner will deliver these solutions to meet all required functional and technical aspects of the ecosystem. All solutions must align with RECCo's key design principles and policies, the full details of these can be found within **Schedule 1 - Annex C: Design Principles and Policies**.

Although each solution is identified separately, there is no restriction to these being delivered by the same platform provided it is the best platform to enable RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers to deliver their services effectively. All solutions must be designed to integrate smoothly through the pre-selected API gateway, providing a cohesive and user-friendly experience which is accessible to end users through the DXP Portal. By integrating the solutions and maintaining an open data layer to avoid vendor lock-in, RECCo enhances user experience, operational efficiency, and compliance while retaining control over its assets and data. These solutions will include capabilities for user authentication and authorisation, data security, API management, and compliance monitoring to ensure a secure and efficient ecosystem.

Key Component Functionality for All Solutions

Integrated Platforms	Solutions that integrate various functional modules into a cohesive platform.
User-Friendly Interfaces	Design interfaces that are intuitive and accessible for all users.
API Connectivity	Flexible API connectivity that allows all data to be accessible by API.
Digital Bulletins	Support account relations with digital daily, weekly, and monthly bulletins to keep market participants informed about relevant updates and activities.
Data Integration	Ensure smooth data integration and transfer between different solutions and modules.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
27	20	6
	1	0
	Could – have	**Won't-have**

These requirements outline the essential criteria and standards for all digital solutions selected and implemented by the Digital Services Partner in collaboration with RECCo. The goal is to ensure that these solutions are best-in-class, excelling in performance, user experience, security, scalability, and cost-effectiveness. The solutions will support complex business processes, integrate seamlessly with other systems, and adhere to robust data management and security practices.

Design and Architecture	**Simple User Experience**	*Provide a simple, flexible, and adaptive interface, ensuring seamless navigation, personalised experiences, and positive user experiences.*

23

24	**Microservices Architecture**	*Built on modern microservices architecture, supporting containerised deployment and integration capabilities, scalable with demand, and aligned with RECCo's design principles and policies.*
Security and Compliance	**Security Measures**	*Demonstrate security measures for data storage, processing and service continuity including encryption and intrusion detection/prevention systems.*
	GDPR Compliance	*All data management and security policies should adhere to GDPR and relevant UK legislation, ensuring protection of personal data, secrets, cipher keys and RECCo service information.*
Integration and Accessibility	**API Gateway Integration**	*Integrate using the pre-selected API gateway to enable seamless interactions and real-time updates, enhancing user experience.*
	Accessibility and Personalisation	*Adhere to WCAG 2.2 AA standards for accessibility and support features like screen readers and keyboard navigation. Personalisation settings should be easily modifiable by users.*

The full detailed requirements are in **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

1.5.2.2.   DXP Portal

RECCo wants to establish a centralised Digital Experience Platform (DXP portal) that serves as the primary interface for all users interacting with the new integrated digital ecosystem.

This portal will streamline access to the required services, improve user engagement and provide a unified user experience.

By implementing the DXP portal, RECCo seeks to improve operational efficiency, facilitate easier access to information including self-service, and ensure consistent communication and support across all market participants.

Solution Overview

The DXP Portal is a critical component of the new digital integrated ecosystem, serving as the central hub for all user interactions. This is the one-stop shop for all business processes and provides the ability for users to get on-demand updates through data, information and knowledge displayed in the portal.

The portal acts as the primary user interface for all solutions, integrating all core solutions in the digital ecosystem. The Code Manager Service Providers may use the core solutions to manage and execute the business logic and business processes end-to-end, yet the output and transparency of progress or updates will be shared with users through the presentation layer; the DXP Portal. This is crucial in making it the interactive channel for all users.

Key Component Functionality

Flexible Content Management	Enable RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers to manage and present data, information and knowledge (including that from core solutions) to end users.
Integrated and Standalone Content	Support the display of content from core solutions, standalone content, or a mix of both.
Personalised Notifications	Allow end users to manage their notification preferences and follow subjects of interest, using the notifications as a core navigation tool through capabilities such as deep linking.
Digital Bulletins	Support account relations with digital daily, weekly, and monthly bulletins to keep end users informed about relevant updates and activities.
Updates, Search and Navigation	Ensure the updating, search and navigation of the solution is intuitive and is easy to maintain, helping to find relevant information quickly and easily, including integration through machine-to-machine communication.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
24	22	2
	0	0
	Could –have	**Won't-have**

These requirements outline the criteria and standards for implementing the DXP Portal within the RECCo new integrated digital ecosystem. The goal is to provide a user-centric, flexible, and adaptive interface that supports personalised experiences, efficient content management, and seamless integration across various devices. The portal will facilitate effective communication, real-time updates, and self-sufficient content management for Code Manager Service Providers, RECCo, authorised third parties and other users.

User Experience	Adaptive and Responsive Design	*Offer a simple, flexible, and adaptive interface that dynamically adapts to user roles and preferences, ensuring a seamless experience across desktop, tablet, and mobile devices.*

25

	Personalisation and Intuitive Navigation	*Provide personalisation features for landing pages and navigation, with an intuitive and user-centric interface to minimise the need for training and support, ensuring positive user experiences.*
Content Management and Notifications	**Content Management System (CMS)**	*Include a CMS that facilitates a controlled self-sufficient content update, including creation, editing, reviewing, and publication of various multimedia forms, enabling efficient content management by authorised parties.*
	Notification and Alerts	*Provide a user-friendly notification and alerts area, allowing users to subscribe to updates, manage notification preferences, and interact with notifications in near real-time for timely information dissemination.*
Integration and Security	**Unified User Interface**	*Act as the primary interface for end users, providing a unified user experience and consistent branding across all digital solutions, ensuring operational efficiency and user engagement.*
	Secure Access and Authentication	*Enforce authentication, authorisation and session timeouts for security, with seamless authentication and authorisation across integrated solutions through APIs, ensuring secure and convenient access for all users.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

Current Mode of Operations

The current platform for the REC Portal is LifeRay (https://recportal.co.uk), and it is expected that the new DXP Portal will replace this.

Current Solution Volumetrics

The following volumetrics are provided to aid bidders in sizing and selecting the right solutions for the DXP Portal. These figures represent the current usage and are indicative of the expected loads and interactions within the portal:

- Unique Visitors per Month:

- Circa 300 unique visitors with an account who have logged in.

- Circa 4,500 unique anonymous users who did not log in.

Top 5 Visited Sections per Month:

- My Dashboard: 22,463 visits

- Change Register: 14,587 visits

- Search Page: 12,598 visits

- Control Panel: 11,097 visits

- Party Management: 8,302 visits

26

1.5.2.3.   Digital REC

RECCo wants to provide a comprehensive and user-friendly Digital Code; 'the Digital REC'. This is the solution that enables and manages the Digital Code. This includes the digital REC documents, facilitates user interaction with the Digital REC, and maintains up-to-date technical specification catalogues.

By doing so, RECCo seeks to ensure that the information from the Digital REC is accessible, easy to navigate, and securely managed, thereby enhancing operational efficiency and stakeholder engagement.

Solution Overview

> The Digital REC is a crucial solution of the digital ecosystem, comprising of legal documents with a main body of the Code, relevant schedules, associated catalogues and data / technical specifications.
>
> The Digital Service Partner is expected to deliver a solution that manages the Digital REC documents with version control, which integrates seamlessly with REC Change and Release Management process, and allows users to search, filter, and interact with the REC based on their needs and roles. The solution should also feature a data and technical specification catalogue that is easy to update and navigate, with human-user and machine-to-machine access.
>
> Personalisation and search functionalities should be enhanced with metadata to cater to both market participants familiar with the REC and those who need simple navigation and explanations.
>
> The Digital REC will aide and assist with the interpretation and understanding of the legal documents by presenting the user with relevant information such as defined terms, source data from references and more.

Key Component Functionality

Version Control and Integration	Implement version control to maintain the integrity of Digital REC documents with pre-releases integrated with Change & Release.
Maintain Baseline	Ensure the right version of the REC is used as the baseline, aligned with the release roadmap and change proposals in development.
Personalised Experience	Use metadata to personalise the user experience, making it easier for users (market participants) to search, filter and interact with the content that matters to them.
Collaborative Assessments	Empower collaboration to complete Impact assessments across multiple areas.

Updates, Search and Navigation	Ensure the updating, search and navigation of the solution is intuitive and is easy to maintain, helping to find relevant information quickly and easily, including integration through machine-to-machine communication.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
27	20	5
	2	0
	Could – have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria and standards for implementing the Digital REC solution within the RECCo integrated digital ecosystem. The aim is to provide a centralised platform for managing the digital code master, including document storage, version control, metadata management, and advanced search capabilities. The solution will ensure ease of use, user-friendly interfaces, secure access, and seamless integration with other processes and tools within the RECCo ecosystem.

Platform Management	Centralised Platform	*A solution will be provided for managing all aspects of the digital code master, including file storage, version control, and updates, personalised to different user roles.*
	Technical Specifications Repository	*Maintain a centralised repository for technical specifications with versioning, notifications, and secure access, ensuring data consistency and integrity.*
User Interaction	Advanced Search and Navigation	*Implement advanced search functionality, including filtering and user-friendly interfaces for easy navigation and management of code files.*
	User-Friendly Interface	*Feature an intuitive and user-friendly interface that simplifies navigation and access to all REC code documents, minimising the learning curve with help and onscreen guides.*
Document Management	Version Control and Metadata	*Support version control, allowing users to access previous versions of documents and see changes over time, with metadata fields for enhanced retrieval.*
	Interactive and Visual Elements	*Include interaction sequence diagrams and business process diagrams, providing a visual representation of process steps, and will support the download of documents in various formats, including PDFs.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

Current Mode of Operations

The 'Digital REC' today is made up of two components:

The solution for the digital code, known as EMAR, is IBM Jazz [(Project Dashboard: EMAR Project Dashboard - Requirements Management (RM) (energycodes.co.uk).](#)

The solution to support a user interface to navigate the code and technical specifications, known as Digital Navigator, is an Azure web services custom development ([digital-navigator.azurewebsites.net](#)).

Current Solution Volumetrics

The following volumetrics are provided to aid bidders in sizing and selecting the right solutions for the Digital REC. These figures represent the current usage and storage details and are indicative of the expected loads and interactions:

Documents:

- Total number of downloadable documents: 67 (includes Schedules, Operational documents, Data Specification documents, and Service Specification documents).
- Total number of document versions: 279 different version since 2021 across the 67 downloadable documents.
- Market scenarios (business process diagrams) versions: 108 different versions since 2021.
- Market message downloadable word documents: 516.
- The average size of metadata tagging per document: 1mb

Technical Specifications:

- REC Data Specification stored in a single central SQL database.
- Separate MHHS pre-release database.

Formats for REC Data Specification:

- Digital Navigator GUI Data Specification
- DTN Access Database
- Full REC BACPAC format
- HTML Format

Monthly Downloads:

- Technical Specs downloaded 655 times
- DTN Access Database downloaded: 297 times
- Full REC BACPAC format downloaded: 101 times
- HTML Format downloaded: 257 times

1.5.2.4.   REC Change Management

RECCo is required to provide an efficient REC Change Management process to implement changes to the REC. This process is to be underpinned by a digital solution that facilitates the management of the REC Change Process and should be able to handle multiple change paths as outlined in Schedule 5 of the REC.

29

This includes managing self-governance changes, regulator (Ofgem) governed changes, and issues that become change proposals. The solution needs to support alternative change proposals, impact assessments and consultations with market participants and other stakeholders, and the ability to track and manage changes effectively. By doing so, RECCo ensures transparency, efficiency, and effective stakeholder engagement in the change management process.

Solution Overview

> The REC Change Management solution must support multifaceted change processes that includes handling multiple types of changes. The change lifecycle can start with an issue (same as a pre-change or request for change) that develops into a change proposal.
>
> The change paths could lead at any time to several alternative change proposals, allowing different solutions that address the same issue to be evaluated and tracked side by side. It will support impact assessments, stakeholder consultations, and provide a change register that allows market participants to easily find and track changes.
>
> Although it may seem an ideal time to fully digitalise the impact assessments and consultations, it is necessary to allow these documents to be downloaded by organisations for market participant internal collaboration and sharing. This ability to download change information is also key for the change proposal itself to keep organisations up to date. The solution must integrate with the DXP portal to enable this as a central hub of interaction for the market participants.

Key Component Functionality

Change and Issue Raising	Allowing any user to raise issues and change proposals, with the entire lifecycle being effectively and transparently managed.
Tagging and Assigning	Allow users to tag or assign changes to people within their organisation.
Bulletins and Notifications	Include change updates in daily, weekly, and monthly bulletins.
Collaborative Assessments	Empower collaboration to complete Impact assessment across multiple areas.
Stakeholder Consultations	Facilitate consultations with all stakeholders, including handling consolidated responses from larger organisations once they have been internally collaborated.

30

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
33	31	1
	1	0
	Could – have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria and standards for implementing a REC Change Management solution within the RECCo integrated digital ecosystem. The goal is to streamline the process for capturing, prioritising, and managing change requests, ensuring active stakeholder engagement, transparency, and efficient communication. The solution will support multiple workflows, provide extensive reporting capabilities, and integrate seamlessly with other systems to maintain data consistency and real-time updates.

Change Request Management	**Submission and Prioritisation**	*Provide a streamlined process for capturing change requests and issues with unique identifiers, using intuitive submission forms on the DXP Portal. It will also include the ability to prioritise change requests based on criteria such as impact, necessity, and feasibility.*
	Workflow Management	*Implement a configurable workflow management system that facilitates the change request lifecycle stages, including the ability to handle multiple change paths and provide transparent progress details with near real-time updates.*
Stakeholder Engagement	**Notifications and Feedback**	*Ensure active stakeholder engagement through notification and feedback mechanisms through the DXP Portal, supporting broad participation and efficient communication throughout the change request lifecycle.*
	Consultation and Collaboration	*Facilitate consultations, allowing stakeholders to access proposed change requests, submit responses, and collaborate on reviews. It will also integrate with communication platforms to distribute consultations widely and gather responses.*
Integration and Reporting	**End-to-End Management**	*Enable end-to-end management of the change process, from initial request to final implementation, integrating seamlessly with release management processes to ensure coordinated deployment of updates.*
	Reporting and Tracking	*Provide comprehensive reporting capabilities, including a downloadable change register with filtering and search functionality, and visual representations of change statuses and release roadmaps, ensuring transparency and efficient tracking of changes.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

31

Current Mode of Operations

The current solution for the existing REC Change Management solution is delivered through a custom-made module of the cloud based LifeRay REC Portal (https://recportal.co.uk) and it is expected that the new solution will replace this.

Current Solution Volumetrics

The following volumetrics are provided to aid bidders in sizing and selecting the right solutions for the REC Change Management. These figures represent the current usage and are indicative of the expected loads and interactions within the REC change management process:

REC Issues (Pre-changes):

- Number of REC issues raised per month: 7

Change Proposals:

- Number of Category 3 Change Proposals raised per month: circa 4

- Number of Category 1 and Category 2 Change Proposals in progress per month: circa 75 live changes

- Number of Category 1 and Category 2 Change Proposals implemented per month: circa 4

Consultations:

- Number of Consultations issued per month: circa 5

1.5.2.5.   REC Service Management

RECCo wants to enhance the REC Service Management solution to ensure efficient handling of queries and requests raised by service users. By improving the integration and functionality of a service management solution, service users can be provided with better access to information to facilitate management of service requests. The goal is to provide user-centric and simple service management which enables a simple user experience, avoiding unnecessary complexities.

Solution Overview

The REC Service Management solution is essential for managing queries and service requests from service users. This solution will ensure efficient management and tracking of queries, providing transparent visibility to market participants on progress.

Key functionalities should include query and ticket logging and tracking, categorisation, access requests, and comprehensive reporting capabilities.

Key Component Functionality

Efficient Query and Request Management	Ensure queries are effectively managed, tracked, and resolved by the Code Manager Service Providers. Including visibility to customers who raise them.

Master Data Management	Ensure that the master data used to raise a request is easily configurable.
Request History	Provide the capability to report the history of requests, including comments and status changes.
Reporting	Develop tools to generate reports on the number of requests, their types, and statuses.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
14	13	0
	1	0
	Could–have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria and standards for implementing a REC Service Management solution within the integrated digital ecosystem. The aim is to provide a centralised service channel for managing REC-related queries and incidents, ensuring efficient handling, real-time updates, and seamless integration with other systems. The solution will prioritise user experience, responsiveness, and transparency, while supporting extensive reporting and continual service improvement.

Service Integration and Response	Centralised Service Channel	*Integrate with the DXP Portal to provide a centralized channel for users to submit queries, enabling near real-time progress reporting and a primary interaction channel.*
	High Responsiveness	*The service channel will offer high responsiveness, aiming for minimal wait times for end users and providing a unique reference number immediately upon contact.*
Query Handling and Automation	Query Tracking and Management	*Capture, track, and manage REC-related queries and their resolution status, with interactions managed through the DXP Portal.*
	Workflow and Automation Tools	*Use workflow and automation tools to streamline query handling and resolution, ensuring clarity on ticket progress and responsible personnel.*
	Service Improvement Initiatives	*Facilitate continual service improvement initiatives by capturing feedback, analysing performance data, and identifying opportunities for enhancing service.*

Continuous Improvement and Feedback	Automated Notifications and Status Updates	*Facilitate continual service improvement initiatives by capturing feedback, analysing performance data, and identifying opportunities for enhancing service quality, efficiency, and customer satisfaction.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

Current Mode of Operations

The current solution for the existing REC Service Management solution is delivered through a cloud-based Microsoft Dynamics solutions which enables the Code Manager Service Providers to raise queries and issues through a portal. It is expected that the new solution will replace this.

Current Solution Volumetrics

The following volumetrics are provided to aid bidders in sizing and selecting the right solutions for the REC Service Management. These figures represent the current usage and are indicative of the expected loads and interactions within the service management process:

Total Calls to the REC Code Manager Service Desk:

- Circa 1,000 total calls per month.

Calls Assigned to 2nd Level Teams:

- Circa 190 calls per month assigned to the REC Code Manager 2nd Level teams for resolution.

1.5.2.6. Party Management

To support market participants, RECCo wants to provide a comprehensive Party Management solution within the REC Digital Services ecosystem. The Party Management solution will streamline the management of REC Party registrations, account interactions, performance assurance and stakeholder engagement, ensuring a secure, efficient, and user-centric operation.

By providing a solution that will enhance these processes, RECCo can improve operational efficiency for end users, provide near real-time control and visibility to stakeholders, and ensure data integrity across the REC. This includes a private area for companies to upload confidential and sensitive information, and receive notifications, in relation to their performance assurance obligations.

Solution Overview

The Party Management Solution within the new digital ecosystem will be responsible for efficient management of party registrations, account interactions, and stakeholder engagement. This includes party registration, dynamic account interaction, and associated digital register, for REC Parties and for all operational contacts. Due to the user landscape, key users will need to manage different types of organisational groups and the ability to have parent and child / linked accounts. The Digital Service Partner will need to design an access control framework to align to this for the Code Manager Service Providers to use.

The Party Management solution will be integrated across the digital ecosystem which will enable the DXP portal to act as the central hub of interaction for the users to access the Party Management solution. All solutions will align with the Data Model, which serves as the cornerstone for building the Party Management solution. The ability to validate entire performance templates and provide detailed error reports is crucial for improving user experience and operational efficiency.

Key Component Functionality

Dynamic Account Interaction	Intuitive tools for account management, activity tracking, and personalised service provision, ensuring stakeholders can manage their profiles and interactions.
Organisational Linkage & Hierarchy	Clearly defined organisational structures with Access Control mechanisms, ensuring stakeholders have appropriate access and control within their organisational details.
Market Entry & Qualification	The area where users apply to enter the market. Once entry is completed, they can be qualified for multiple roles within the market.
Data Upload & Integration	Provide an area for users to upload their data using agreed templates which will then be integrated into the Data Analytics & Reporting solution.
Data Validation	Implement steps of validation for the performance templates to ensure the data loaded into the Data Analytics & Reporting solution is accurate and in the correct format.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
20	16	3
	1	0
	Could – have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria and standards for implementing a Party Management solution within the new integrated digital ecosystem. The aim is to automate data validation, ensure real-time updates, provide user-friendly account management tools, and establish a centralised party register. The solution will prioritise accuracy, efficiency, security, and ease of use, while accommodating future REC framework changes and ensuring high interoperability with existing and future systems.

35

Party Registration and Onboarding	Market Entry and Assessment	Provide market entry and entry assessment qualification forms to support the REC Party registration process, including workflows for market entry, entry assessment qualification, and REC services onboarding for REC Parties and Non-REC Parties.
	User and Account Management	Include user-friendly tools for managing individual profiles and organisation profiles, activity tracking, and reporting based on user and organisation interactions.
Performance Assurance and Data Management	Performance Data Templates	Provide areas to upload performance data templates individually or in bulk, validate each template through a defined schema, and promptly report validation errors to the submitter.
	Confidential Information Exchange	Support the exchange and retention of documentation related to various user journeys, including market entry/exit, role qualification, and performance assurance, with secure upload and access control mechanisms.
Notifications and Access Control	Push Notifications and Subscriptions	Enable push notification requests to relevant organisations for legitimate purposes and allow RECCo and Code Manager Service Providers to query subscription settings to determine which users and organisations have subscribed to receive notifications.
	Secure Access and Data Integrity	Will enforce strict security measures with flexible access control for organisational self-administration, ensuring data integrity and real-time updates across the REC ecosystem.

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

Current Mode of Operations

The current solution for the existing Party Management solution is delivered through the REC Portal, LifeRay (https://recportal.co.uk) and it is expected that the new solution will replace this.

Current Solution Volumetrics

The following volumetrics are provided to aid bidders in sizing and selecting the right solutions for Party Management. These figures represent the current usage and are indicative of the expected loads and interactions within the party management process:

Applications:

- Number of applications per month: Between 5 to 20

- Percentage of applications for requalifying or modifying access: 80%

1.5.2.7.   Stakeholder Event and Committee Management

RECCo aims to establish an efficient Event and Committee Management solution to support RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers in the management of the various committees, forums and the events they hold; and market participants in gaining access to crucial information to support in the fulfilment of their obligations. While Event and Committee activities may be managed through different core solutions, it is expected that those activities will be integrated into a unified calendar within the DXP portal.

This will streamline access to provide a simple and effective user experience. By having a centralised calendar for Event and Committee activities, users can easily navigate to the relevant event or committee, where specific details and documents will be provided by the respective solutions. This approach ensures efficiency, and improved access to information which enables stakeholder engagement.

Solution Overview

> The Event & Committee Management Solutions will feed into a unified calendar on the DXP portal, showcasing all scheduled events and committees in an intuitive manner. For events, users should be able to understand which events have been held and are planned. They will be able to register, add events to their personal calendars, and access related materials both before and after the event.
>
> For committees, the solution should allow users to view committee details and public files, while committee members can access both public and private files. Committee members will also have access to a collaboration and voting space relevant to the business of that committee. This functionality is crucial for maintaining transparency, facilitating collaboration, and ensuring stakeholders have access to necessary files and committee materials.

Key Component Functionality

Event Management: Create & Register	Allow users to register and unregister for events.
Calendar Integration	Enable users to add events to their personal calendars.
Pre & Post Event Files	Provide access to event details and related files before the event and recordings, minutes, and other materials after the event.
Committee Details	Allow users to view committee details and public files associated with these committees; and committee members to view private files.
Collaboration Space	Provide committee members with access to a collaboration space where they can see both public and private files and vote on relevant business for their committee(s).

37

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
15	13	2
	0	0
	Could–have	**Won't-have**

These requirements outline the criteria and standards for implementing a Committee Management solution within the integrated digital ecosystem. The aim is to provide comprehensive tools for managing committee-related activities, such as maintaining committee lists, scheduling meetings, storing documents, and communicating outputs. The solution will ensure ease of use, accessibility, and integration with the DXP portal and other systems.

Committee Management	**Overview and File Management**	*Provide a comprehensive overview of all committees and forums, including details like names, purposes, and membership, with storage for essential files such as terms of reference, member lists, meeting minutes and Committee voting functionality.*
	Communication and Access Control	*Inputs to and outputs from committees and forums will be communicated to users interested in specific committees through the DXP portal, with controlled access based on user roles. The solution will also link committee members to their account profiles and ensure user-friendly tools for easy participation and management.*
Event Management	**Scheduling and Registration**	*Allow Code Manager Service Providers and RECCo to manage and schedule events, populate a unified calendar on the portal, and enable registration and booking capabilities for events, allowing users to express interest, reserve slot, unregister and send in comments.*
	Notifications and File Management	*Ensure updates and information about events are communicated automatically to registered participants, link event participants to their profiles, and implement a file management system for storing essential event-related files, ensuring user-friendly tools for easy participation and management.*
Unified Calendar Integration	**Centralised Calendar**	*Integrate event and committee activities into a unified calendar within the DXP portal, streamlining access and providing a simple and effective user experience.*
	Comprehensive Event and Committee View	*Present past and upcoming committees and events in a user-friendly and intuitive manner within the DXP portal, ensuring that users can easily navigate to relevant events and committees.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

Current Mode of Operations

The current solution for the existing Stakeholder Event and Committee solution is delivered through the REC Portal, LifeRay (https://recportal.co.uk). Committee management uses a custom-made module for collaboration and file management, whilst Events are managed offline. It is expected that the new solution will replace this.

Current Solution Volumetrics

The following volumetrics are provided to aid bidders in sizing and selecting the right solutions for Event and Committee Management. These figures represent the current usage and are indicative of the expected loads and interactions within the event and committee management process:

Events:

- Average number of events per month: 1

- Average attendance per event: ~50-100

Committees:

- Total number of committees: 12 (not including additional working groups established from time-to-time)

- Average number of documents uploaded per month: 140

1.5.2.8. AI Search and Assistance Services

RECCo aims to implement AI Search and Assistance across the integrated digital ecosystem, including the DXP Portal, Digital REC and all other core solutions, to provide intuitive and efficient search capabilities for users. This solution will utilise natural language queries or equivalent to provide a simple user experience. The goal is for users to share in plain English what they are looking for or need assistance to understand further, and for the AI system to provide accurate answers along with the source of the information from the REC. This approach leverages AI technology to improve access to information and offer AI-driven insights.

Solution Overview

The ability for users to search for information across the entire integrated digital ecosystem using AI Search & Assistance will be critical. The solution will be designed to offer an advanced, intuitive, and user-friendly search experience where users can engage with plain English queries directly through the DXP Portal and have accurate and relevant returns of information from the full integrated digital ecosystem. This solution will differentiate when customers are searching for content vs. asking a question or seeking advice, therefore the system solution will be powered by AI technologies, ensuring stakeholders can access information and knowledge quickly and efficiently.

AI Search & Assistance is not just a tool but a gateway to a more engaged, efficient, and satisfying user interaction, leveraging the power of AI to transform how stakeholders' access and utilise information within the REC and improve the interaction on a day-to-day basis.

The system solution will provide accurate results and relevant links to key parts of the REC based on user questions. Accuracy is crucial, as incorrect information could imply non-compliance with the REC, potentially leading to severe consequences such as losing the license to operate in the GB retail energy market.

Key Component Functionality

Plain English Search	Use AI algorithms to deliver accurate and relevant search results based on plain English queries.
Search Recommendations	Offer AI-driven recommendations and insights based on user behaviour and preferences.
Personalised Searches	Enhance user experience through personalised search and assistance, this should include context to conversations.
User Behaviour Analytics	This feature plays a pivotal role in understanding and anticipating user needs. By analysing user behaviours, the system can offer tailored assistance and content, ensuring that users receive the most relevant information.
Query Support	Provide users with contextual information and insights to engage in and support their queries to increase their understanding.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
8	7	1
	0	0
	Could–have	**Won't-have**

These requirements outline the criteria and standards for implementing AI Search and Assistance solutions within the integrated digital ecosystem. The aim is to leverage Natural Language Processing (NLP) technologies to provide users with an intuitive, efficient, and contextually relevant search and assistance experience. The solution will ensure high performance, accuracy, and scalability while continuously learning and adapting to interactions.

40

AI Search Capabilities	**Natural Language Processing**	*Accurately interpret user intent from natural language and plain English inputs and outputs, providing relevant and contextually appropriate information or actions.*
	Deep-Linking and Access Control	*Highlight relevant content in search results and provide direct links to specific locations within files, ensuring secure access based on control principles.*
Integration and Personalisation	**Integration with Digital REC Ecosystem**	*Allow users to query content across key solutions in the Digital REC ecosystem, including Digital REC documents, user guides, change proposals, and the knowledge base, while excluding performance dashboard data.*
	Personalised Responses	*Provide personalised responses based on the context of the conversation, enhancing the relevance of the information provided.*
	User Behaviour Analytics	*Implement user behaviour analytics to track and analyse user actions, searches, feedback, and interactions, aiding continuous learning and accuracy of responses.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

Current Mode of Operations

The current solution for AI Search and Assistance is a bespoke platform called ERIN. This platform is built around OpenAI technology and is designed to interact exclusively with REC documents, including the main body and its schedules. The model has restrictions on its automated learning to minimise hallucinations, as it primarily handles questions from Market Participants on how to understand and comply with the REC. It is expected that the new solution will replace ERIN, maintaining or improving its capabilities, expanding across the integrated digital ecosystem while adhering to the necessary restrictions to ensure accuracy and reliability.

Current Solution Volumetrics

The following volumetrics are provided to aid bidders in sizing and selecting the right solutions for AI Search and Assistance. These figures represent the current usage and are indicative of the expected loads and interactions within the search and assistance process:

Search Queries:

- Circa 445 search queries per month.
- Average response time to searches: 1.7 seconds.

User Statistics:

- 316 unique users have used the current solution in the last 8 months.

Common Request Types:

- Most common requests are "What does..." and "Where can..."

41

1.5.2.9. Data Analytics and Reporting Services

RECCo wants to use Data Analytics & Reporting to generate strategic insights and operational reports. This solution will empower stakeholders to make data-driven decisions and enable near real-time monitoring of key performance indicators. The scope of this solution includes the analysis of data from all digital solutions, the performance uploads referenced in Party Management and from reports/data extracts from external centralised data repositories.

Examples of the nature of the data and reporting include:

- Market Performance Analytics: Monitoring market trends, participant performance, and compliance with regulatory requirements.

- Operational Efficiency Analytics: Assessing the efficiency of internal processes and identifying areas for improvement within the REC operations.

- User Engagement Analytics: Tracking user interactions and engagement with the DXP Portal and other digital services to enhance user experience.

- Compliance Reporting: Generating reports to ensure adherence to REC standards and regulatory obligations.

Solution Overview

The Data Analytics and Reporting solution within the integrated digital ecosystem will enable RECCo, the Code Manager Service Providers and end users to leverage data for strategic insights, operational efficiency, and performance assurance. It combines analytical tools and technologies to provide stakeholders with clear and actionable understanding of both internal operations and external market dynamics.

By categorising technical analytics and market performance analytics, the solution will ensure a comprehensive approach to data analysis of the end users' behaviour and interactions with the REC (Technical Analytics) and how the market participants perform against their obligations (Market Performance Analytics).

RECCo's data and analytics needs are not considered complex by modern standards, however there are various datasets received in different formats that will require a storage and insights solution for a combination of structured, semi-structured and unstructured data.

Key Component Functionality

Strategic Insights & Analysis	Use advanced analytics to identify trends, patterns, and opportunities for improvement and areas of risk.
Actionable Insight	Provide actionable insights to support strategic planning and decision-making.
Reporting	Generate detailed reports on various aspects of the integrated digital ecosystem.
Success Metrics	Provide timely monitoring of key performance indicators and metrics.

Empowerment for Decision Making	Empower stakeholders with tools to analyse data and make informed decisions.
Continual Improvement	Support continuous improvement through data-driven insights and recommendations.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
10	9	0
	1	0
	Could–have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria and standards for implementing Data Analytics and Reporting solutions within the integrated digital ecosystem. The aim is to provide advanced analytical tools and real-time reporting capabilities to help stakeholders gain deep insights into REC market performance and internal system operations. The solutions will be scalable, user-friendly, and capable of integrating various data sources to deliver comprehensive, actionable insights.

Market Performance and Compliance Analytics	**Monitoring and Compliance**	*Implement a Data Analytics & Reporting solution to monitor market trends, participant performance, and compliance with regulatory requirements using performance data uploaded by market participants.*
	Risk Management and Reporting	*Generate reports for regulatory adherence and risk management, supporting both individual users and the market with scenario analysis and forecasting capabilities.*
Operational Efficiency Analytics	**Process Improvement**	*Deploy tools to analyse internal system data, assess REC operations efficiency, and identify areas for improvement by understanding usage patterns, technical logs, and user interactions.*
	Historical Benchmarking	*Provide the ability to draw on historical data to benchmark industry performance against established standards, enabling insights into operational efficiency over time.*
User Engagement Analytics	**Interaction Tracking**	*Provide stakeholders with dashboards and data analytics to track user interactions and engagement with the DXP Portal and other digital services, enabling data-driven decisions to enhance user experience.*
	Visualizations and Insights	*Support complex data visualizations to transform data into actionable insights, facilitating a user-friendly interface for stakeholders with varying levels of technical expertise.*

43

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

Current Mode of Operations

The current solution for Data Analytics and Reporting is managed by the existing Code Manager Service Providers. These providers currently host the data for Market Performance within their own environments. Data is uploaded monthly through centralised data sources in the form of CSV reports, flat files on the DTN network, or performance templates as specified by the Party Management solution. These files are transformed and loaded into the Code Managers Service Providers' data pool, and access is provided via Power BI interfaces on the DXP portal. It is expected that the new solution will replace this existing setup, offering enhanced capabilities and integration within the new digital ecosystem as well defining the user engagement analytics on how users interact with the new Integrated Digital Ecosystem.

Current Solution Volumetrics

The following volumetrics are provided to aid bidders in sizing and selecting the right solutions for Data Analytics and Reporting. These figures represent the current usage and are indicative of the expected loads and interactions within the data analytics and reporting process:

Dashboards:

- Number of dashboards produced each month: 4 (dashboards are available to a variety of users, with row level security used to limit information shown to each user/organisation based on their relevant permissions)

- Number of endpoints in the portal: 6

- Average number of times dashboards are refreshed per month: 3-5

- Dashboards use PowerBI via the Embed for your Customer option.

- Row-level security is used to limit information shown in the dashboards based on the user context accessing the dashboard.

Data Storage:

- Total data size of the SQL server database: 350GB (allocated space, including data processing/preparation, analysis, etc.)

Power BI Plan:

- Current Power BI plan/package: A1 SKU with auto-scaling based on demand.

- Percentage of time scaled above A1: < 5% based on recent performance/activity.

Requests for Information (RFI):

- Number of RFI (or equivalent) requests issued per month via the REC Portal: 186 over the last 12 months (approximately 15.5 per month).

- Number of notifications done via email rather than the portal: about 70 out of the 186.

Performance Assurance Related Actions/Activities:

- Number of Performance Assurance related actions/activities raised/assigned on the Portal per month: approximately 40

- Service provider data provision: 372 files received per year from 31 organisations (approximately 1 per month per organisation), with occasional resubmissions bringing the total to approximately 375-380 files per year.

1.5.3. Transition Summary

Clear transition requirements provide a roadmap for stakeholders, facilitating effective communication and alignment of expectations. They help identify potential challenges, dependencies, and milestones, enabling proactive planning and resource allocation. With clear requirements, RECCo can minimise disruptions to services, ensure compliance with regulatory obligations, and uphold its commitment to stakeholders.

Overview

The Digital Services Partner will provide some of the responsibilities traditionally fulfilled by a Systems Integrator. It must lead RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers through the transition to the new integrated digital ecosystem with minimal disruption to users, especially REC Parties, ensuring that benefits are realised, and stakeholders are brought on the change journey. By addressing the transition requirements, it is expected there will be a clear communication plan to keep stakeholders informed and engaged, it is vital to ensure transparency and build confidence. The testing and validation procedures are crucial to validate new systems or processes, while training and capacity building initiatives ensure stakeholders are equipped with the necessary skills.

Within transition planning, there should be focus applied to contingency planning to address potential risks, adopting change management strategies to promote acceptance of changes, and post-transition support ensures ongoing assistance and resolution of any issues.

Key Component Functionality

People and Training	Providing training and support to RECCo and Code Manager Service Provider employees and other stakeholders to ensure they are prepared to use new systems and processes effectively.
Stakeholder Engagement and Communications	Establishing clear communication channels and engaging stakeholders to keep them informed and involved in the transition.
Process Transition	Updating or redesigning business processes and workflows to align with new systems or regulatory requirements.
Post-Transition Support	Providing ongoing support and assistance to address any issues or challenges that arise after the transition is complete. Ensuring a seamless flow of knowledge from the implementation team to the Digital Services Partners' ongoing Operations team, which includes detailed documentation of all processes, comprehensive training sessions, and the establishment of a knowledge base.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
22	22	0
	0	0
	Could –have	**Won't-have**

These requirements outline the criteria for the Digital Service Partner to implement the solutions, design, and set the services for the transition phase. The goal is to ensure a structured and efficient mobilisation process, focusing on programme management, stakeholder engagement, testing, communication, and risk management.

Programme Management	**Programme Structure and Planning**	*Define a comprehensive programme structure, establish early milestones, and ensure approvals, signoffs, and stage gates throughout the lifecycle.*
	Resource Management	*Provide clear roles and responsibilities, robust resource planning, and implement comprehensive staff training and onboarding programs.*
Stakeholder Engagement	**Stakeholder and User Group Engagement**	*Facilitate stakeholder engagement for design signoffs, support User Acceptance Testing (UAT), and develop a specific plan for user group engagement.*
	Communication Strategy	*Establish and maintain a clear and transparent communication strategy, using multiple channels to keep stakeholders informed about transition progress, key milestones, and changes.*
Testing and Risk Management	**Testing Lifecycle**	*Manage the entire testing lifecycle with a detailed testing strategy and plan, ensuring comprehensive coverage and validation.*
	Risk Management	*Implement risk management strategies and be responsible for identifying and managing risks and issues.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

As outlined within **Section 1.5.1.5**, the implementation programme is expected to span up to 18 months, starting immediately after contract signature (expected to be March 2025), with full deployment no later than 1 September 2026. Within **Section 1.5.1.5** a high-level delivery plan has been provided for Bidders context to consider, however RECCo are open to Bidders suggesting the approach they see best, so long as the end date is not compromised at this RfP stage. The below figure of the Transition Timeline aligns with this suggested delivery plan and outlines the timescales associated with critical milestones.

The pricing model requires Bidders to align their total Implementation Charges against the Milestones.

Figure 7 below, outlines the Transition Timeline.

Transition Timeline

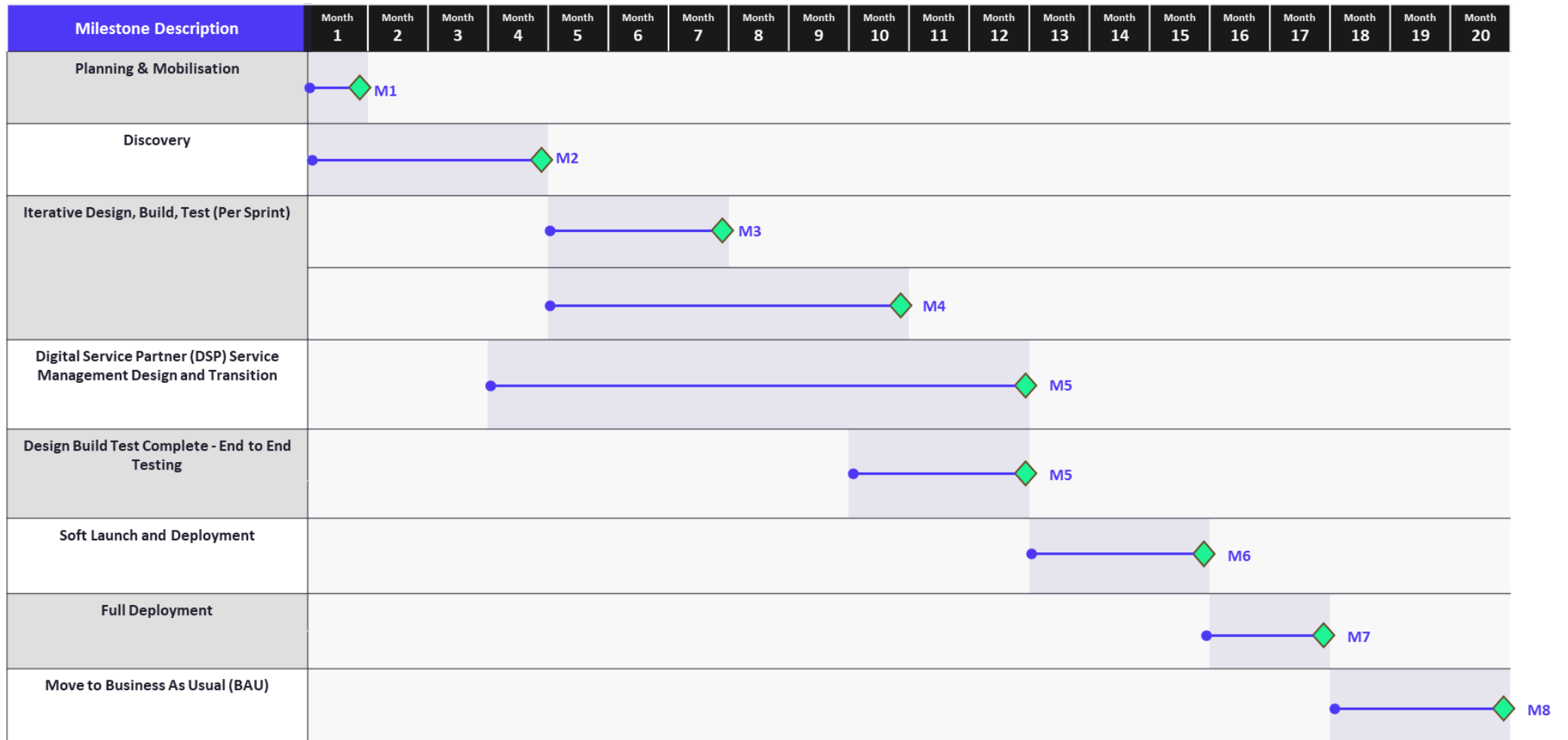| Milestone Description	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12	Month 13	Month 14	Month 15	Month 16	Month 17	Month 18	Month 19	Month 20
Planning & Mobilisation	◆ M1																			
Discovery				◆ M2																
Iterative Design, Build, Test (Per Sprint)					◆ M3															
							◆ M4													
Digital Service Partner (DSP) Service Management Design and Transition											◆ M5									
Design Build Test Complete - End to End Testing											◆ M5									
Soft Launch and Deployment														◆ M6						
Full Deployment																◆ M7				
Move to Business As Usual (BAU)																		◆ M8		

Figure 7: Transition Timeline

48

Transition Requirements Milestones Overview

Milestone 1: Planning and Mobilisation

Description: Establish project governance, define detailed project plans and timelines. Begin with risk management, stakeholder engagement, and communication planning. Establish the foundation for successful project execution.

Outcome: A clear and organised plan for project execution, including defined governance, stakeholder engagement, and initial risk management strategies.

Milestone 2: Discovery

Description: Conduct detailed requirements gathering and user research. Approval of the solutions to be used and initiate procurement processes for these. Develop design prototypes and obtain stakeholder feedback. Begin mapping requirements and traceability matrices and create initial UX wireframes and information architecture.

Outcome: Agreements of the solutions that make up the New Integrated Digital Ecosystem, comprehensive understanding of requirements and stakeholder needs, with initial design concepts and a solid foundation for development.

Milestones 3 and 4: Iterative Design, Build, Test (Per Sprint)

Description: Implement short sprint cycles for design, development, and testing. Conduct regular feedback sessions with stakeholders and perform continuous integration and testing to ensure alignment with requirements.

Outcome: Progressive development of the ecosystem with regular stakeholder feedback, ensuring that the solution evolves according to user needs and expectations.

Milestone 5: Digital Service Partner (DSP) Service Management Design and Transition

Description: Finalise designs and transition plans for DSP service management, including API Gateway, incident management, problem management, change management, release management, and knowledge transfer. Conduct end-to-end testing to ensure system readiness.

Outcome: A well-defined service management framework and a tested, robust system ready for soft launch.

Milestone 6: Soft Launch and Deployment

Description: Execute the soft launch to a select group of stakeholders. Perform technical and business cutover and gather feedback to address any initial issues. Prepare for full deployment by refining the system based on feedback.

Outcome: Initial deployment to a controlled group, identifying and resolving any issues before wider rollout.

Milestone 7: Full Deployment

Description: Complete the transition to the new integrated digital ecosystem. Ensure all functionalities are operational and optimise performance. Provide ongoing support and continuous improvement processes.

Outcome: Full operational deployment of the digital ecosystem, with all components functioning as intended.

49

Milestone 8: Move to Business as Usual (BAU)

Description: Transition from project mode to business-as-usual operations. Establish ongoing support, monitoring, and improvement processes to ensure the system continues to meet the needs of RECCo and its stakeholders.

Outcome: Seamless transition to regular operations, with a focus on stability, support, and continuous improvement.

Summary of Outcomes

M1: Establishes the foundational governance and planning needed for project success.

M2: Develops a thorough understanding of requirements and initial design concepts.

M3 & M4: Ensures iterative development with stakeholder feedback, progressively building and refining the ecosystem.

M5: Finalises service management and transitions plans, ensuring system readiness through comprehensive testing.

M6: Conducts a controlled soft launch to identify and resolve issues before full deployment.

M7: Achieves full deployment, ensuring all functionalities are operational and optimised.

M8: Transitions to business-as-usual operations, establishing ongoing support and improvement processes.

1.5.4. Governance Summary

This section encompasses the Service and Account Management, Key Performance Indicators, Ways of Working and requirements associated with all governance of the digital service partnership.

1.5.4.1.　Service and Account Management

Effective governance in account and service management is vital for RECCo to maintain efficient and reliable service delivery, ensure compliance with regulatory standards, and achieve strategic objectives.

This involves setting clear policies, defining roles, monitoring performance through KPIs, managing risks, conducting regular audits, and engaging with stakeholders. These practices help RECCo to enhance operational efficiency, ensure accountability, and foster customer satisfaction.

Overview

Service management and account management are vital components of RECCo's operations, ensuring efficient service delivery and maintaining strong customer relationships.

This involves effective incident and problem management, ensuring minimal downtime and high service levels. On the other hand, account management involves nurturing relationships with customers, understanding their needs, and addressing concerns to enhance satisfaction and loyalty.

50

Key Component Functionality

Policies and Procedures	Work with RECCo to identify, establish, and then enforce relevant policies for the integrated digital ecosystem.
Roles and Responsibilities	Define clear roles within account and service management teams to ensure accountability.
Risk Management	Identify and mitigate risks associated with service delivery and customer relations.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
22	18	3
	1	0
	Could –have	**Won't-have**

These requirements outline the criteria for effective reporting for service and account management within the new integrated digital ecosystem. The aim is to ensure timely, accurate, and transparent reporting to support decision-making, performance monitoring, and continuous improvement. The solution will facilitate data access, reviews, and proactive risk management.

Reporting Cycles and Methods	**Monthly and Annual Reporting**	*Implement a calendar monthly reporting cycle and deliver comprehensive monthly and annual service review reports to RECCo.*
	Rolling Average and Real-time Data	*Utilise a rolling 3-month average for reporting KPIs and provide dynamic dashboards with near real-time access to performance measures.*
Data Access and Transparency	**Data Sharing and Access**	*Ensure access to and transparent sharing of all information needed for RECCo and Code Manager Service Providers to discharge their obligations.*
	Dynamic Dashboards	*Provision of dynamic dashboards with near real-time access to performance measures, including uptime, security, user engagement, user satisfaction, and scalability.*
Risk Assessment and Proactive Management	**Risk Assessment**	*Conduct and provide risk assessment reports throughout the lifecycle, enabling proactive risk mitigation strategies.*
	Performance Obligations	*Enable RECCo, Code Manager Service Providers, and end users to achieve their performance-related obligations.*

Knowledge Management	Knowledge Management	*Maintain knowledge to ensure critical service information, expertise, and documentation are accessible to all.*
Roles, Responsibilities	Defined Roles and Responsibilities	*Clearly define roles and responsibilities for Digital Services Partner, RECCo, and Code Manager Service Providers and users to ensure clarity and accountability in project and service delivery.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

1.5.4.2.   Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs are essential for RECCo as they provide quantifiable metrics to measure success, monitor performance, and drive strategic decision-making. By defining clear KPIs across various areas such as financial, operational, and customer satisfaction, RECCo can track progress towards its strategic objectives and prioritise resources effectively. KPIs are set out in **Schedule 1 - Annex B: Detailed Requirements** and in **Schedule 3 of the Contract**.

Overview

The Digital Service Partner needs to ensure seamless user experiences by delivering intuitive interfaces, responsive support, and personalised interactions. They must also maintain service performance and uptime through robust infrastructure, proactive monitoring, and rapid issue resolution to minimise disruptions.

Effective ticket and response management require prompt identification, escalation, and resolution of issues, along with transparent communication and continuous improvement efforts to prevent future incidents. By focusing on these areas, the Digital Service Partner can not only meet but exceed the KPIs, fostering trust, satisfaction, and success in their partnership with RECCo and Code Manager Service Providers.

Key Component Functionality

Service Performance and Uptime	Service performance and uptime KPIs are critical for ensuring that RECCo's digital services operate reliably, efficiently, and effectively, ultimately contributing to enhanced user satisfaction and organisational success.
Ticket and Response Management	Ticket and response management KPIs are essential for ensuring that RECCo can promptly address and mitigate service disruptions, minimise downtime, and maintain a high level of service reliability and availability for its users.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
27	21	4
	2	0
	Could – have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria for developing and implementing KPIs within the integrated digital ecosystem. The goal is to track and improve aspects of service delivery, including user satisfaction, service desk performance, system uptime, and project milestone adherence. These KPIs will help monitor efficiency, effectiveness, and overall service quality.

User Satisfaction and Service Improvement	**User Satisfaction**	*Track user satisfaction with service interactions and feedback mechanisms, aiming for continuous improvement, including conducting an annual survey to gather comprehensive feedback and measure user satisfaction.*
	Continual Service Improvement	*Leverage user feedback and service performance data to track progress towards improving user satisfaction and addressing key stakeholder pain points.*
Service Performance and Uptime	**Service Uptime**	*Ensure minimum uptime targets for various service levels and track maintenance window compliance.*
	Continual Improvement	*Monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of continual improvement processes, aiming to reduce duplication of effort.*
Incident and Response Management	**Response Times**	*Establish ticket response and resolution, differentiated by priority levels and communication channels.*
	Disaster Recovery	*Evaluate the readiness and response effectiveness of the disaster recovery plan, tailored to different service levels.*
Project and Performance Monitoring	**Project Milestone**	*Monitor adherence to project milestone targets, ensuring timely completion of project phases.*
	User Adoption	*Track user adoption rate of the DXP Portal and the utilisation rate of each digital solution.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

1.5.4.3.   Ways of Working

Establishing clear ways of working is essential for RECCo's successful digital transformation journey. By aligning with strategic objectives, optimising efficiency, ensuring quality, promoting collaboration, fostering agility, enhancing the customer experience, and enabling data-driven decision-making, effective ways of working lay the foundation for RECCo to thrive in the digital age.

Overview

The Digital Services Partner must set out clear ways of working as it helps to ensure that all activities align with strategic objectives, maintain high quality standards, and foster strong, long-term partnerships among all stakeholders. These structured processes enhance operational efficiency, support informed decision-making, and build trust with stakeholders.

By establishing and adhering to effective ways of working, RECCo can achieve its goals, continuously improve its services, and ensure stakeholder satisfaction, ultimately leading to sustained success and stability in an ever-evolving industry.

Key Component Functionality

Promoting an Innovative Culture	Well-defined ways of working promote collaboration by establishing clear communication channels, fostering teamwork, and encouraging knowledge sharing. Additionally, they create a conducive environment for innovation by enabling experimentation and idea exchange.
Clear Responsibilities	Clear ways of working ensure that initiatives are closely aligned with RECCo's strategic objectives. This alignment helps prioritise investment and effort towards achieving business goals.

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
11	10	1
	0	0
	Could–have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria for effective collaboration and alignment. The goal is to ensure that the Digital Service Partner and Code Manager Service Providers adopt ways of working that support RECCo's strategic objectives, prioritise quality assurance, compliance, and continuous improvement, and foster long-term partnerships and stakeholder engagement.

Strategic Alignment and Quality Assurance	**Strategic Objectives**	*Align with RECCo's strategic objectives and provide annual input into the RECCo Strategy / Forward Work Plan and Data & Digitisation Strategy.*
	Quality Assurance	*Prioritise quality assurance measures, ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, industry standards, and best*

54

55	**and Compliance**	*practices, and implement mechanisms for continuous improvement.*
Long-term Partnership and Stakeholder Engagement	**Long-term Partnership Mindset**	*Focus on developing a long-term partnership mindset, seeking opportunities for innovation and value creation across the RECCo ecosystem.*
	Stakeholder Engagement	*Contribute to the development and implementation of a stakeholder engagement strategy and provide a tailored communications strategy to meet diverse stakeholder needs.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

1.5.5. Legal Summary

Legal compliance, intellectual property protection, confidentiality, and regulatory documentation are crucial for RECCo with the introduction of these digital services. Ensuring that these expectations are agreed at the outset and continually managed through the lifecycle of the digital services, ensures regulatory compliance and mitigates risks to RECCo and industry. Full requirements relating to these areas can be found in the Contract.

Overview

A key benefit for RECCo introducing a Digital Services Partner is to retain long-term control over assets and data, as such a key element of the legal requirements is to protect intellectual property for RECCo and ensure licensing reflects these expectations which will in turn, mitigate future risks. This will also provide RECCo with more flexibility around the delivery of their solutions in the future.

Additionally, RECCo needs to ensure that there is compliance with relevant laws and regulations, such as data protection and privacy laws. The Digital Services Partner will need to comply with these requirements and incorporate clear provisions for data protection, confidentiality, and liability allocation.

Key Component Functionality

Industry Regulations	Ensuring compliance with energy industry regulations and standards. Adhering to legal requirements related to energy codes and retail energy operations.
Asset Ownership and Control	Control of assets is essential for RECCo to protect its interests, ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and optimise the value and utilisation of its resources

Requirements Summary

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
	5	0
5	0	0
	Could – have	Won't-have

These requirements outline the criteria for ensuring legal compliance. The goal is to safeguard intellectual property, ensure data protection, and uphold confidentiality. This will ensure that RECCo retains ownership and control over all solutions, complies with applicable laws and regulations, and maintains accurate regulatory documentation.

Intellectual Property and Licensing	**Ownership and Control**	*Ensuring that RECCo retains full ownership and control over all developed or implemented solutions, excluding the solution the bidder utilises to provide a support portal and a service desk.*
	Licensing	*Ensuring that all solutions, except those designated for internal service management, are licensed to RECCo.*
Compliance and Confidentiality	**Data Protection and Compliance**	*Compliance with strict compliance with applicable data protection laws, such as GDPR, to safeguard sensitive information and maintain trust with stakeholders.*
	Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure	*Upholding strict confidentiality and non-disclosure obligations, protecting confidential information shared during the partnership.*
	Regulatory Documentation and Reporting	*Maintaining accurate and up-to-date regulatory documentation and reporting to ensure compliance and facilitate regulatory audits or inquiries.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

1.5.6. Financial Summary

As RECCo is a not-for-profit organisation, meeting financial requirements is crucial to ensure operational stability, manage risks, and gain stakeholder confidence. These financial needs are set out to mitigate unexpected costs, and build trust among regulators, REC Parties, users and consumers.

Overview

The financial elements to be considered include cost transparency, cost tagging, detailed financial reporting and variance management. It is also expected that the Digital Service Partner will identify opportunities for cost optimisation and efficiency. These are set out to ensure feasibility, effective resource allocation, risk management, operational efficiency, and providing value for money to industry.

Key Component Functionality

Budgeting	Conducting financial forecasting to anticipate revenue, expenses, and cash flow needs through establishing financial targets and performance metrics to track progress and evaluate financial performance.
Risk Management	Implementing mitigation strategies and controls to safeguard assets and exposure to financial risk.
Cost Optimisation	Opportunities for revenue cost optimisation, and strategic partnerships to enhance financial resilience and competitiveness.

Requirements

No. Mapped Requirements	Must-have	Should-have
5	4	1
	0	0
	Could–have	**Won't-have**

These requirements outline the criteria for ensuring comprehensive cost transparency and efficient financial management for the new integrated digital ecosystem. The aim is to provide clear visibility into costs, optimise resource allocation, and enhance budgeting and cost control measures.

Cost Transparency and Visibility	**Cost Transparency**	*Offering full visibility of all costs related to services and solutions.*
	Granular Cost Breakdown	*Providing detailed breakdowns of all digital solutions and services for enhanced financial clarity.*
Financial Management	**Robust Cost Tagging System**	*Accurate attribution of costs to specific service lines, enabling precise tracking and resource allocation.*
	Opportunities for Cost Optimisation	*Actively seek and implement cost optimisation and efficiency improvements in collaboration with RECCo and Code Manager Service Providers.*
	Audit Trails	*Maintain and share audit trails for all financial transactions related to digital services to support audits and reviews.*

The full detailed requirements can be found within **Annex B: Detailed Requirements**.

1.6. Clarifications Process

Bidders can ask clarification questions ('CQs') during the Tender and BAFO stages. CQs should be submitted in writing and sent to procurement@retailenergycode.co.uk by the deadline stated in Section 1.2.

Bidders can submit questions where they require clarification on any element of the procurement documentation before submitting a response.

All CQs and responses will be anonymous and shared amongst all Bidders, unless commercially confidential to a Bidder. Where a Bidder considers that a CQ is commercially confidential they should indicate this when submitting the CQ. If RECCo considers the CQ is not confidential and the (anonymised) response would be of equal benefit to all Bidders, it will communicate the intention to publish a response to the submitting bidder before responding, offering the submitting Bidder the option to withdraw the CQ.

1.7. Clarifications about the contents of responses

RECCo reserves the right (but shall not be obliged) to seek clarification of any aspect of a Bidders response during the evaluation phase. Bidders are asked to respond to these no later than within 2 Working days and to avoid vague or ambiguous answers.

2. SERVICE PROVIDER SELECTION PROCESS AND TIMETABLE

Bidders are invited to submit a response to this RfP as part of the Tender Stage. Following evaluation, a short-list of up to three (3) Bidders ('BAFO Bidders) will be taken forward to the BAFO stage.

2.1. Procurement Timetable

This RfP will follow a clear, structured and transparent process. RECCo intends to conduct the procurement according to the following indicative timetable. Activities and dates in italics represent future stages of the procurement and may be subject to change:

Activity	Stage	Date
Issue Request for Proposal (RFP) pack	**Tender**	**Friday 26th July 2024**
Confirmation of intent to bid deadline	**Tender**	**Friday 2nd August 2024**
Market Briefing Webinar	**Tender**	**Wednesday 7th August 2024**
Deadline for Clarification Questions	**Tender**	**Friday 9th August 2024**
Publication of Clarification Answers to Bidders	**Tender**	**Friday 16th August 2024**
Deadline for submission of RfP responses	**Tender**	**Friday 13th September 2024**
Bidder Presentations	**Tender**	**7th – 11th October 2024**
Shortlisted Bidders selected and invited to BAFO	**BAFO**	**28th October 2024**

Dialogue Phase	**BAFO**	**Monday 4th November – Friday 15th November**
Issue BAFO Requests	**BAFO**	**Friday 15th November 2024**
Deadline for receipt of BAFO Clarification Questions	**BAFO**	**Friday 9th November 2024**
Deadline for submission of BAFO responses	**BAFO**	**Friday 29th November 2024**
Preferred Bidder status confirmation	**BAFO**	**Monday 20th January 2025**
Contract Award	**BAFO**	***March 2025***

Any changes to the above timetable shall be notified to all Bidders as soon as practicable.

2.2. Tender Stage: Evaluation Process

We will complete a mandatory review to make sure that you have answered all questions in line with our instructions. If any submission is incomplete and/or appears to contain errors, we may, at RECCo's absolute discretion, clarify this with the relevant Bidder. At RECCo's discretion, we may allow the Bidder to submit any missing or corrected material after the deadline, where it can be demonstrated that this was a genuine error and can be rectified within 24 hours.

If your response does not set out your preferred solution or your pricing response does not reflect your preferred solution, then your bid will be considered Non-Compliant.

Evaluation of Quality Response Questionnaire

Each PEP member will independently, and without collusion, assess and score the Quality Response Questionnaire responses. Each evaluator will independently assess your responses to the quality questions using the response guidance and the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 3 of this document. The PEP Chair and the SMEs will read, but not score, the Bidders responses.

As part of their evaluation, the PEP will note any areas requiring Bid Clarification.

Each PEP member will give a score and a reason for their score for each question they are assessing in a document which will be sent to the Procurement Team. The Weighting between the Quality scores and Pricing is set out in Section 3.1.

Quality Response Questionnaire (RQ) moderation

The purpose of the Quality Response Questionnaire moderation process is to ensure that the award of scores is accurate and consistent and, if feasible, to define a single, consensus score for each criterion.

Once the evaluators have independently assessed your answers to the questions, and submitted their scoring to the procurement team, the Response Questionnaire (RQ) moderation process will be initiated.

A RQ moderation meeting will be facilitated by the PEP Chair, who will not have scored the RQ submissions, and be supported by the SMEs and Procurement team. At this meeting, the evaluators will discuss their scores and the rationale for them. Where possible, discussion will seek to reach a consensus regarding the score, and reason for that score, for each question. If consensus cannot be reached, then the original independent scores will be maintained, and the moderated score will be a weighted average of the original scores.

59

RECCo reserves the right to clarify aspects of the RQ submissions with Bidders.

Quality Threshold

Following moderation, if you have not met the minimum acceptable score for any question, a moderated score of 2, you may be excluded from the competition. We will provide outline feedback as to why you have been excluded on conclusion of the procurement.

Commercial & Pricing Evaluation

The RECCo procurement team will independently evaluate your price submission and calculate your overall Commercial score using the evaluation criteria specified in section 3. Your acceptance and/or comments on the contract will be assessed as part of the Commercial submission and will be scored as pass or fail. The price responses will be evaluated separately from the quality/service proposals, up to the point at which they are combined to produce the Initial Tender final score. Pricing scores will not be shared until RQ Responses have been moderated. This is to avoid undue influence on the respective price and quality assessments.

Tender Stage Combined Score

The moderated scores of the Evaluation of RQ will be combined with the Commercial & Pricing Evaluation score to give a final Tender Stage score for the RfP Responses. The 3 Bidders with the highest Tender Stage Combined Scores will be the short-list BAFO Bidders taken forward to the BAFO phase, including Dialogue Sessions.

Tender Bidder Presentations

Bidders will be invited to deliver a presentation to provide RECCo with a deeper understanding of each Bidder's proposal. If invited, Bidders will be expected to present their solution and address any areas of clarification on their commercial proposal. Presentations will not be scored as part of the evaluation.

The presentations will be led by the procurement team, with attendance from the PEP, including the SMEs. RECCo reserves the right to invite other attendees at its absolute discretion.

A list of clarifications points may be shared with the individual Bidders prior to the meeting.

BAFO Bidders may also be invited to deliver a further presentation to provide RECCo with a deeper understanding of each BAFO Bidder's final proposal.

Note that RECCo may choose not to receive presentations and at its discretion may choose to seek clarifications in writing.

2.3. BAFO Stage: Evaluation Process

The BAFO Bidders will be invited to participate in dialogue sessions prior to submitting their BAFO responses. BAFO Bidders should keep the dates set out in the Timetable above for Dialogue sessions free, as RECCo will not reschedule due to unavailability of Bidders.

Dialogue Sessions Process

During the dialogue sessions, we may choose to discuss all aspects of the procurement with each individual BAFO Bidder. The dialogue process will be structured and managed to ensure that all BAFO Bidders will be treated equally. Our procurement team will lead the dialogue, with input from relevant subject matter experts, as required.

The agenda for each session will specify the topics to be covered to ensure that the appropriate members of the BAFO Bidders will be available.

Each BAFO Bidder will be allowed an equal amount of time during the process with RECCo. Dialogue meetings will not overrun the time scheduled unless to compensate for any delay to the start time caused by RECCo.

The sessions will be chaired by RECCo, though may, depending on the stage of the dialogue and topics to be discussed, in some part, be led by the BAFO Bidder. We retain the right to set and control the agenda.

We will reserve the right to hold additional dialogues or to reduce the number of dialogues or to alter the timing or location of the dialogues.

We will not reveal to the other BAFO Bidders' confidential information communicated by a BAFO Bidder participating in the dialogues without the short-listed Bidder's agreement.

Where questions/issues are raised which may be applicable or of interest to all Bidders, we may circulate the questions and the answers to all BAFO Bidders. Such circulation of questions and answers will be subject to, in so far as will be possible, such information not being commercially sensitive in relation to a bid.

Dialogue Sessions Purpose

During dialogue sessions with individual BAFO Bidders, we may choose to clarify or specify elements of the service and get further details on the BAFO Bidders' submissions. The purpose of the dialogue sessions is to enable a two-way discussion to:

- Clarify further the requirements;

- Answer clarifications required by RECCo or the BAFO Bidders;

- Clarify any contract matters with RECCo or for Bidders to provide rationale for any proposed variations;

- Enable refinement of the service and standards required by RECCo from the service;

- Ensure any post tender discussion with the selected Bidder is on points of clarification, specification or optimisation.

- Discuss the range and complexity of the potential options available to RECCo in delivery of the services;

- Establish those potential options and alternatives available and capable of meeting RECCo's requirements and likely to be acceptable or not to RECCo;

- Discuss the potential of those options in meeting RECCo's requirement in the most economically advantageous manner; and

- Identify the quality, technical, financial and affordability implications of those options and narrow down those options for consideration.

BAFO Proposal Submission

Following the Dialogue sessions, we will then invite the BAFO Bidders to submit Best and Final Offers (BAFO). We will invite all BAFO Bidders to update their responses to reflect any amendments to solutions developed against the requirements. To note, the BAFO is a procurement document but can only be finalised during the dialogue phase and as a result is not included in this Bid Pack.

RECCo do not expect to receive wholesale changes to Bidders' original submission but rather a track changed version of the original submission addressing the outcome of the Dialogue sessions, any BAFO clarifications and any updated Commercial & Pricing proposal.

Service Provider Selection is subject to the formal approval process of RECCo. Until all necessary approvals are obtained, no decision will be made.

BAFO Clarifications

If the PEP wishes to clarify any areas of your BAFO, bid clarification questions will be issued via email. BAFO Bidders will be required to issue a response to these questions within two (2) working days such that the PEP can complete their scoring.

BAFO Evaluation

All BAFO proposals will be evaluated for quality and commercial criteria in the same manner as for the Tender Stage. The award of contract to the Preferred Bidder will be based on the 'Most Economically Advantageous Tender' (MEAT). The weighting for the Quality and Commercial evaluation is as set out in Section 3.1.

Reporting Evaluation Outcome

The PEP Chair will produce a report detailing the results of the evaluation for presentation to the REC Board for decision. This will record:

1   The scores achieved by each bid on each criterion and in aggregate;

2   The rationale for the award of the scores;

3   The relative ranking of all BAFO bids evaluated and the highest-ranked Bidder;

4   The recommendation to award a contract based on the evaluation (which will be the MEAT bid unless there is a compelling reason for it not to be);

5   Any issues with the bids, including the highest-ranked, which require resolution before or after award of contract (assuming these are not serious enough to preclude award of contract in the case of the recommended bid).

2.4. Debrief Sessions

RECCo intends to offer a debriefing to any unsuccessful applicant who submits a response (Tender or BAFO) to this document, to provide feedback on the reasons why their response was not successful. RECCo reserves the right to control the format and content of any debriefing, and to limit it in any way believed by RECCo to be appropriate (which includes the right to refuse a briefing without giving any reason).

3. INITIAL TENDERS AND BAFO EVALUATION SCORING METHODOLOGY

3.1. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria for the Initial Tender are illustrated visually in Table 1 below, shown with their absolute weighting as a percentage at each tier.

Each Level 3 Quality criterion has an associated question related to it in the **Schedule 1 - Annex A: Quality Response Questionnaire**. The pricing will be assessed through the **Schedule 1 - Annex F: Pricing Response** and the Contractual terms will be assessed in the **Schedule 2 - Annex A: Acceptances of Terms and Conditions** form.

Level 1 Criteria and Weight	Level 2 Criteria and Weight	No.	Level 3 Criteria	Level 3 Weight	Level 3 Absolute
Quality 70% Via the RQ Template	Executive Summary 0%	1A		N/A	N/A
	Solution Selection 50%	2A	Part A: DXP Portal & AI Search Assistance	25%	8.75%
		2B	Part B: Digital REC	25%	8.75%
		2C	Part C: REC Change Management	20%	7%
		2D	Part D: Party, Committee, Event & REC Service Management	15%	5.25%
		2E	Part E: Data Analytics & Reporting	15%	5.25%
	Implementation and Transition 30%	3A	Part A: Implementation Plan	20%	4.2%
		3B	Part B: Plan & Deliverables	20%	4.2%
		3C	Part C: Iterative Stages (Design, Build, Test & Feedback)	20%	4.2%
		3D	Part D: Soft Launch & Deployment Strategy	20%	4.2%
		3E	Part E: Resources	20%	4.2%
	Digital Services 20%	4A	Part A: Proposal for Digital Services Operation	16.70%	2.3%
		4B	Part B: Client Facing	16.66%	2.3%
		4C	Part C: Project & Change Management	16.66%	2.3%
		4D	Part D: Technical Operations	16.66%	2.3%
		4E	Part E: Ways of Working	16.66%	2.3%
		4F	Part F: Resources	16.66%	2.3%
Price 30%	Total 5-year price via Pricing and Commercial Response: 100%		Assessment of total implementation cost and the 5 years support costs.	100%	30%
Terms and Conditions 0%	Contractual Terms and Conditions via Acceptance of Terms and Conditions Form: Pass / Fail		Review of Bidder comments on contract	Pass / Fail	Pass / Fail

Table 1: Evaluation criteria and weighting

The responses will be scored according to the scoring methodology in the section below.

63

3.2. Scoring Methodology

Initial Tender and BAFO responses from Bidders will be scored in accordance with the methodology described in this section, for:

- Pass/fail assessments;
- Pricing, including total 5-year price including implementation and support; and
- Scored quality question responses (including the provision of minimum thresholds).

Pass/Fail Scoring Method

For those requirements which are stated as pass/fail criteria, there are two possible categories under which they can be scored:

Pass – the requirement is met or partially met but with an acceptable justification / workaround provided (either provided by the Bidder or via clarification).

Fail – the requirement is not met or partially met but without an acceptable justification / workaround provided (either provided by the Bidder or via clarification).

Where requirements are assessed to be a Fail, RECCo may exclude that bid from further participation in the procurement if the deficiencies in the response are considered to represent a significant risk to delivery of the Digital Services.

Quality Question Scoring Method

Responses to the quality questions will be scored according to the degree to which the approaches proposed in the responses provide confidence that the Bidder will meet the requirements.

The guidance for awarding a score corresponding to the degree of confidence provided is as set out in the following table.

Score	Degree of confidence	Scoring guidance
4	High level of confidence	Very thorough response that answers all parts of the requirement for the criterion fully, no gaps in the information provided and not even any minor issues of concern with the proposed approach.
3	Good level of confidence	Thorough response that answers almost all parts of the requirement for the criterion fully, with only a few points not answered fully, no gaps in the information provided and only a few minor non-material issues of concern with the proposed approach.
2	Adequate level of confidence	Response that answers most parts of the requirement for the criterion fully, with some points not answered fully, and some gaps in the information provided and a few material issues of concern with the proposed approach.
1	Low level of confidence	Limited response that only answers a few parts of the requirement for the criterion fully, with many parts not answered fully and many gaps in the information provided and multiple material issues of concern with the proposed approach.
0	No confidence	No response, or the response is irrelevant and does not answer a significant part of the requirement at all.

Table 2: Quality scoring approach

Each question score will then be multiplied by the weighting of the question and the sum-total of all these questions will give a total quality score.

The total quality score will then be normalised to rank the submissions, in a similar manner to the price evaluation.

Overall quality score = [Weighting %] * [Bidder's quality score/highest quality score]

Example:

	Weighting 70%	Company A	Company B	Company C
Quality (score out of 100)		75	60	80
Normalised quality score	70	65.62	52.5	70

Table 3: Quality scoring method example

Minimum thresholds

Responses to the Quality Response Questionnaire also need to achieve minimum thresholds. If a bid receives a final moderated score of less that '2' on any criterion RECCo will exclude that bid from further participation in the procurement if the deficiencies in the response are considered to represent a significant risk to delivery of the Code Manager services regardless of the Bidders total overall score.

Price Scoring Method

The scores for each of the pricing criteria will be calculated by:

- Step 1: identifying the Bidder with the lowest price;

- Step 2: calculating the relative difference between this price and the price submitted by each of the other Bidders; then

- Step 3: calculating the score by applying the weighting according to the following formula.

Pricing score = [Weighting %] * [lowest price submitted/Bidder's price]

Example for illustrative purposes only:

	Weighting 30%	Company A	Company B	Company C
Price (£)		140,000	160,000	200,000
Normalised price score	30	30.00	26.25	21.00

Table 4: Total price scoring method

3.3. Worked example

The following is provided as an example of how the quality and price criteria are combined to show the highest Bidder:

	Weighting	Company A	Company B	Company C
Quality (score out of 100)	*70%*	*75*	*60*	*80*

Price (£)		140,000	160,000	200,000
Normalised quality score	70	65.62	52.5	70
Normalised price score	30	30	26.25	21
Total score		95.62	78.75	91
Rank		1	3	2

Table 5: Worked example

4. BIDDER PROPOSAL COMPLETION

4.1. Formalities

Responses must be clear, concise and complete. Bidders should submit only information that is necessary to respond effectively to this RfP. Bidders will be evaluated based on information submitted by the deadline. Any submissions received after the deadline will be rejected.

4.2. Contract

Any contract resulting from the tender process, will be based on the terms and conditions contained in Schedule 2 (Terms and Conditions) of this RfP Pack. Please note that the contract is based on the Government Model Services Contract v2.1 dated August 2023.

Please confirm that you are happy to work on this basis by completing and returning the Acceptance of Terms and Conditions including any mark-up of comments and changes (contained in Schedule 2 Annex A).

RECCo shall be under no obligation to accept any proposal and reserves the right to place a contract for only some of the services covered by this procurement exercise or not to award a contract at all.

4.3. Changes affecting a Bidder

Bidders must inform RECCo in writing of any material change in control, composition or membership of that Bidder or its consortium members. In these circumstances, RECCo reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder from any further participation in the procurement process.

4.4. Consortia and subcontractors

RECCo requires all Bidders to identify in their Response Questionnaire (RQ) which subcontracting, or consortium arrangements apply in the case of their Tender, and precisely which entity they propose to be the contracting Service Provider.

For the purposes of the Services, the following terms apply:

A. **Consortium arrangement:** Where groups of companies come together specifically for the purpose of tendering for appointment as the Service Provider and envisage that they will establish a special purpose vehicle as the prime contracting party with RECCo.

B. **Subcontracting arrangement:** Where groups of companies come together specifically for the purpose of tendering for appointment as the Service Provider but envisage that one of their number will be the Service Provider, the remaining members of that group will be subcontractors to the Service Provider.

4.5. Disclaimers

While the information contained in this RfP Pack is believed to be correct at the time of issue, neither RECCo, its advisors, nor any other awarding entities will accept any liability in any circumstances for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness, nor will any express or implied warranty be given. This exclusion extends to liability howsoever arising in relation to any statement, opinion or conclusion contained in, or any omission from, this RfP Pack (including its Schedules) and in respect of any other written or oral communication transmitted (or otherwise made available) to any Bidder. No representations or warranties are made in relation to these statements, opinions or conclusions. This exclusion does not extend to any fraudulent misrepresentation made by, or on behalf of, RECCo

All Bidders should note that any quantities or volumes contained in this RfP Pack, or the accompanying presentation, are for indicative purposes only, and any future quantities or volumes may vary from those stated.

If a Bidder proposes to enter a Contract with RECCo, it must carry out its own due diligence enquiries and rely only:

A. on its own enquiries and judgment in relation to this procurement, including the preparation of its Tender; and

B. on the terms and conditions set out in the Contract (as and when finally executed), subject to the limitations and restrictions specified in it.

Neither the issue of this RfP Pack, nor any of the information presented in it, should be regarded as a commitment or representation on the part of RECCo (or any other person) to enter a contractual arrangement.

This RfP Pack should not be regarded as an investment recommendation made by RECCo or its appointed advisors. All Bidders are recommended to seek their own financial and legal advice.

4.6. Confidentiality

The procurement documentation is made available on condition that its content is kept confidential by the Bidder and is not copied, reproduced, distributed or passed to any other person at any time, except for the purpose of enabling the Bidder to submit a proposal. RECCo shall treat all Bidders' responses received during the procurement process as confidential.

4.7. Publicity

Bidders must not publicise the deliverables or the award of any contract unless we have given written consent. For example, you are not allowed to make statements to the media about any bid or its contents.

4.8. Conflicts of Interest and Disqualifications

 All Bidders will need to confirm whether potential, perceived, or actual conflicts of interest exist and explain how they intend on mitigating them. If you do not tell us about a known conflict, we may exclude you from the competition. We may also exclude you if a conflict cannot be adequately mitigated. RECCo will assess all other conflicts of interest, and the Bidders' planned mitigations, and may make discretionary disqualifications at that point.

The situation where mandatory disqualification will occur is if any Bidder is found to:

- be (i) a REC Party, (ii) an Affiliate of a REC Party, (ii) an employee of a REC Party, or (iv) an employee of an Affiliate of a Party (Retail Energy Code clause 7.2).

- has sought to influence the Bidder selection or contract award process; or

- has failed to disclose a known conflict of interest.

4.9. RECCo's Rights

RECCo reserves the right to:

- provide updated versions of the selection / tender documentation;

- waive or change the requirements of this RfP Pack from time to time without notice;

- verify information, seek clarification or require evidence or further information about your response;

- withdraw this procurement exercise at any time, or re-invite bids on the same or alternative basis;

- choose not to award any contract as a result of the competition; and

- make any changes to the timetable, structure or content of the competition.

4.10. Tender Costs

RECCo will not in any circumstances be liable for any tender costs, expenditure, work or effort incurred by a Bidder in carrying out enquiries in relation to, proceeding with, or participating in, this procurement, including if the procurement process is terminated or amended by RECCo.

4.11. Intellectual Property

All intellectual property rights in this RfP Pack and all materials provided by RECCo or its professional advisors in connection with this Supplier Selection Pack are and shall remain the property of RECCo and/or its professional advisors.