

RECCo Code Manager Digital Services Request for Proposal - Clarification questions

Questions raised during the webinar held 07 August 2024:

Qu	Question	RECCo Response
1	Is there an expectation that the service wrapper and provider delivers first line support?	Yes, it is expected that the Digital Service Provider will provide first line support for the integrated digital ecosystem, and it is expected that the Code Manager Service Providers and RECCo will be the primary users of this first line support service. However, the Digital Service Provider will also be expected to engage with end users if they have issues with solutions, but this will be routed in through the Code Manager Service Providers.
2	When reviewing technologies for the integrated digital ecosystem, there are Magic Quadrant leading enterprise technologies that can do everything that you need to do however there are also less enterprise technologies which may also be opensource who can do everything required here. Can you give us any steer as to the types of vendors you're likely going to be wanting to be engaging with through the lens of cost but also value risk and things like that as well?	Whichever solutions are provided as preferred fundamentally need to meet the requirements as set out. All assessed and preferred solutions must also meet required quality standards and align with the design principles as well as being able to operate with the licensing expectations to ensure RECCo ownership, with cost-effectiveness.
3	Will the budget be shared as part of this RfP?	No, the budget for this particular RfP will not be disclosed. The overall budget mentioned in RECCo's Forward Work Plan includes multiple procurements, of which this is one. Therefore, this procurement's budget is a proportion of that total figure, but the exact amount will not be shared to maintain a competitive procurement process.
4	To confirm understanding, the co-selection process enables the Digital Service Provider to identify what they believe are the best digital platforms that meet the requirements that you have laid out and this will be a process where the chosen partner will work with RECCo to evidence that this requirements are really met and if they are the right platforms before those platforms are procured?	The co-selection process sets out the framework by which the Digital Service Provider can evidence the steps and assessment that has been taken to identify preferred solutions to ensure that they meet the requirements as laid out, as well as alignment with the design principles and cost-effective nature outlined. Any RfP response submitted without preferred solutions will be identified as a non-compliant bid as this is required within the pricing response.

5	During the co-selection process, after the Digital Service Provider has been selected with the preferred solutions, if it is then identified that the solutions do not meet these requirements for some reason, then they and RECCo will look at a new set of solutions?	The Co-selection process and procurement process looks for you to provide feedback as to how you would address the activities required in the event the preferred solutions do not in fact meet the outlined requirements.
6	Already some work has been done in terms of devising defining user personas and journeys, yet there is mention of doing user research in the discovery phase. What stage are the user personas and journeys currently, is there an expectation to add onto the work done already and if so, how much or what part of that would fall into the user discovery phase?	Although there has been core user personas and journeys identified, it is expected that as part of discovery the Digital Service Provider will continue to expand on this work to inform the expected design of solutions. This is also important as part of the implementation of the Digital Services may adjust the user journeys, so these will need to be clearly outlined and documented. We would like to see how you propose how to validate the baseline work that is completed today and what your recommendation is for expanding these further with user research for design and development.
7	Do you expect us to take on data migration from your existing set up into the new ecosystem?	Yes, data migration is a key element to the success of the implementation and we are looking to leverage your expertise in this area.
8	Is there an expectation that the Digital Service Provider would be providing foundational technical services (e.g. Active Directory, email hosting etc), such as full stack solutions, or would they need to be deployed on top of existing?	<p>RECCo expects the Digital Service Provider to support the full stack, ensuring alignment with RECCo's design principles, particularly around licensing and avoiding vendor lock-in due to the environment created.</p> <p>There are a few key points to note:</p> <p>End User Services: There is a requirement to manage end user services, including email hosting for a current domain used by RPA, RPS, and RTS. [Note: This is outlined in requirement DSR_Serv_TechOps_0025.]</p> <p>API Gateway Setup: With the ongoing API Gateway setup, some foundational technology will be introduced. This is currently in the design phase with the API vendor (Kong), and RECCo will ensure that the Digital Service Partner is involved during the discovery phase. RECCo sees this as having a non-material impact on the requirement for the Digital Service Partner to build and support the full stack.</p>
9	In relation to the service desk, can you please provide expectation on availability and hours of operation?	It is expected that there is a support portal which is available and can be accessed 24x7, and the Service Desk will be available for business hours which is defined as Monday – Friday 0800 – 1800. Out of these hours, it is expected that there will be an escalation approach in the event of any major issues.

10	Regarding resources location and delivery model, is RECCo open for a model where resources to be based at onsite / offshore? For both implementation & support services.	<p>The data for all RECCo services must be stored within the UK. Regarding the resourcing, we are open to the Digital Service Provider feedback through BAFO dialogue sessions to what delivery model will provide the most simple and effective user experience as well as value for money.</p> <p>Any resourcing model must ensure effective collaboration with RECCo. It is essential that RECCo is integrated into the team, enabling a close partnership throughout the project.</p> <p>[Additional note: For the submission at this stage of the RfP, all costs should be provided in GBP, and the proposal should be based on an onshore model. During the dialogue sessions in the BAFO phase, RECCo and the Digital Service Provider will have the opportunity to explore this in more detail, ensuring alignment with the contract requirements.]</p>
11	Is there flexibility to challenge any of the mandatory 'must have' requirements if we think we have a better alternative that we can justify?	Yes, there is some flexibility. While the "must have" requirements are established to meet existing processes or needs, the team is open to understanding alternative approaches as long as they are justified. However, some requirements are less negotiable than others due to their critical nature.
12	Are there any security clearances required for resourcing?	There is no SC level of vetting necessary.
13	Please can you confirm if you are looking for a single supplier or multiple suppliers for this?	RECCo are looking to appoint a single Digital Services Provider.
14	Collaboration, strategy and empowerment has been referring to in terms of ways of working. For clarity does the Digital Service Provider need to be embedded as part of the overall programme, for instance do you see RECCo teams fulfilling any roles within the implementation for instance?	RECCo is looking for a collaborative and embedded partnership with the Digital Service Provider. The expectation is for an embedded team that works closely with RECCo's team throughout the process, ensuring minimal disruption to users and fostering a strong partnership. This includes mutual trust, continuous collaboration, and shared objectives.

Further clarification questions raised:

Qu	Question	RECCo Response
15	Is it permitted to outsource specific requirements?	<p>Yes, outsourcing specific requirements is permitted within the procurement process for the Code Manager Digital Services. However, there are certain conditions and considerations that must be adhered to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership and Control - RECCo must retain full ownership and control over all developed or implemented solutions, which means that while certain tasks or components can be outsourced, the overall solution and its management must remain under RECCo's control. • Compliance – any outsourced service must comply with the requirements which include data protection laws and confidentiality obligations to ensure that all aspects of the service meet the necessary regulatory standards. • Quality Assurance – any outsourced service must meet the same quality standards as those provided in-house. This includes adherence to industry standards and best practices. • Transparency and Reporting – we would expect that there would be clear communications and reporting mechanisms in place to monitor the performance of the outsourced services to ensure that they align with the contractual obligations under the contract. • Sub-Contractor/partner Information – Information on sub-contractors requested through the Selection Questionnaire (SQ) must be disclosed if not already submitted as part of the SQ response. Information for all sections of the SQ must be provided for each sub-contractor, with the exception of section 3a.
16	In the contract, it references Quality Policy, IT strategy and Equality & Diversity Policy – can these be provided?	The referenced Quality Policy, IT strategy, and Equality & Diversity Policy will be shared upon successful contract award. However, please be assured that all policies adhere to industry best practices and comply with relevant legislation.
17	Can you please advise when RECCo expect to measure the KPI relating to achieving 75% customer satisfaction? Will this be from the outset or following implementation and user training?	The first service period will begin on the Operational Service Commencement date, this being 1st September 2026 following completion of the soft launch and full implementation. KPI13 relates to CSAT, with performance measured on a monthly basis. Please see paragraph 1.1 of Schedule 3 for more details about the reporting of performance against KPIs.

18	Will RECCo be able to assist with recruiting participants for user research and usability testing, through introductions to contacts at customer organisations?	Yes, RECCo will support with recruitment of participants for user research and usability testing. RECCo will establish and facilitate engagement with the stakeholder group, which will be involved in the sign-off process for storyboards and designs of the upcoming sprints and solutions, as well as feedback review and testing of the most recent sprints. Where additional stakeholder engagement and involvement is required by bidders, this should be detailed within proposals.
19	How many people do you anticipate being part of the stakeholder forum, can you give any more details of the likely composition?	At this stage we do not have a specific number in mind, but would anticipate this to be fewer than 20, including representatives from the Code Manager Service Providers.
20	Is there an expectation for the collaborative activities during discovery and design (workshops, reviews, forums etc) to be conducted in person? If yes, is the preferred location to be RECCo's offices?	Yes, we do expect there to be collaboration activities throughout the life of the project. The decision on whether collaborative activities should be conducted in person and where they should be held should be guided by the objectives of the sessions, the participants' preferences, and any logistical considerations. RECCo's offices may be the most appropriate location for in person activities, however, open communication with RECCo regarding these preferences and any constraints will ensure that the chosen approach aligns with project goals and stakeholder expectations.
21	Can you confirm what technologies are in use by the Code Manager Service Providers?	The listed technologies can be found in the Current Mode of Operations for each solution in the RfP Document.
22	Can you please advise whether “embedding agency resources” includes working physically at RECCo's offices on a hybrid or full-time basis or whether RECCo will consider remote working?	RECCo is predominantly a remote working organisation, therefore, we do not expect day to day activity to be completed at RECCo's offices. There will be a need for collaboration sessions and specific activity where face to face sessions would facilitate more effective interactions and communications.
23	What RECCo resource will be provided during the contract?	RECCo is committed to establishing a strong transitional team to support the mobilisation and transition phases of this project. The details of this transitional team and the specific roles will be provided at the point of selection. This team will be embedded throughout the project, working day-to-day to ensure a seamless transition and effective collaboration with the Digital Service Provider. In parallel to the project delivery, RECCo will establish the enduring operational team, which will assume full responsibility for ongoing operations once the transition is complete. The handover from the transitional team to the operational team will be supported by comprehensive training and knowledge transfer sessions, ensuring a smooth transition to full operational control.

24	Is the intention that existing contracts with code manager service providers will be terminated by RECCo and then concluded/negotiated between the digital service provider and the code manager service providers? If so, what is the intended timing for this and is the digital service provider free to negotiate the terms or will it be expected to contract on terms similar to existing contracts.	RECCo intends to partially terminate those elements of the existing contracts with the Code Manager Service Providers that relate to the provision of the current digital solutions. There will be no contracts between the Digital Service Provider and the Code Manager Service Providers, although there are co-operation requirements set out in the draft contract. RECCo will facilitate and enable intra-party working relations between the Digital Service Provider and other RECCo service providers including the Code Managers.
25	Could you confirm the security clearance requirements and restrictions for bidder staff? Specifically, can the bidder provide services in the scope of the contract using staff based offshore (e.g., India, Bulgaria), nearshore, or onshore?	Security clearance is not required. For the submission at this stage of the RfP, all costs should be provided in GBP, and the proposal should be based on an onshore model. During the dialogue sessions in the BAFO phase, RECCo and the Digital Service Provider will have the opportunity to explore this in more detail, ensuring alignment with the contract requirements.
26	Could the you share vendor name and version of your existing ITSM Tool, Monitoring tools(e.g. Host OS, DB, Middleware, Application) or platforms you currently use or would prefer to continue using?. Also would you want the bidder to leverage your existing solution or are you comfortable for the bidder to integrate with your current solution?	As highlighted through the RfP and webinars, the creation of Digital Services is not intended to migrate and enhance existing digital capabilities from across the Code Manager Service Providers; we are, therefore, expecting the successful bidder to build a new ecosystem.
27	If SIAM support is needed, is it to be included in scope of this RFP?	SIAM is not required. As such, it is not included in the RfP document or the associated requirements.
28	Do you expect the bidder to propose their ITSM tooling, or will you provide access to your ITSM tooling along with the necessary licenses for the bidder to operate?	We expect the bidder to propose the most appropriate solutions to meet the requirements for both the REC Service Desk and the Digital Services Operations Client-Facing Support Portal. If your proposal includes using the same solution or providing different solutions for these services, please provide a clear explanation of your approach in the response questionnaire. It is important to note that RECCo does not currently have a solution in place for these services. The existing ITSM solution provided by the relevant Code Manager Service Provider will be withdrawn when the service is terminated. Therefore, your proposal should outline whether you intend to provide a solution specifically for RECCo or utilise an existing solution.

29	Can we assume that if needed, due to the volume of tickets, the bidder will be expected to build an ebond integration?	The volumes have been shared within the RfP document. eBonding is not expected at this time.
30	Please can you provide one year's of ticket dumps for the CI volumes that need to be covered by the bidder? Please can the tickets include Incident, Change, Problem, and Service Requests, with a brief description, open and close timestamps, severity, priority, and total count for each.	We are unable to share the CI volumes as these are part of the Business Process Contracts. Additionally, this data may not be relevant, as a new ecosystem is being implemented. The expectations for CI volumes should be based on the specifications and requirements of the new ecosystem outlined in your proposal.
31	Could you provide the P1 & P2 Incident counts in year?	Similar to question 30, the expectations for P1 & P2 Incident counts would depend on the ecosystem being implemented. These figures should be based on the new ecosystem's specifications and operational parameters outlined in your proposal.
32	Could the your provide the details of the service level agreement, including the resolution and response times, as well as the priority and severity mappings?	The required KPIs and Metrics can be found in the "Governance" detailed requirements and in Schedule 3 of the draft contract shared.
33	Do you expect the bidder to propose their Non-Standard Service Request (NSSR) tooling, or would you provide access to your Non-Standard Service Request (NSSR) tooling for the bidder to work on it?	RECCo does not have an NSSR tooling to provide access to. All tools and solutions that you believe should be provided as part of a competitively priced bid should be included in your proposal.
34	How is the service desk expected to function in respect of the code managers: a. Will the service desk only need to handle items relating to the operations of the Digital Services themselves? b. Or will the service desk need to act as a single-point of contact for RECCO contacts (including their partners and externa users), distributing items relating to the Code itself to the relevant code managers to resolve?	There are two separate service desks to be aware of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The REC Service Desk is the outwardly facing service desk managed by one of the Code Manager Service Providers. The Digital Service Provider will implement a REC Service Management solution, integrated with the DXP Portal for a centralised service channel for external users (and internal users to a lesser degree) to submit queries related to the REC. The Code Manager Service Provider will use the solution implemented by the Digital Services provider to deliver the REC Service Desk processes and services. The Digital Services service desk is the client facing service desk to be implemented and managed by the Digital Service Provider. Providing a service desk for Code Manager Service Providers and RECCo to raise requests and incidents in relation to the Digital Services only. If an external user needs an incident to be raised, this will initially come through the REC Service Desk, at which point the Code Manager Service Provider will raise a ticket through Digital Services service desk.
35	In the RFP, you have requirements relating to development of a data model and analytic tools to operate on the data. Apart from	The data model and analytics capabilities are designed to comprehensively manage and utilise a wide range of data.

	<p>the Code itself, and the metadata which supports the code, can you provide high-level view of:</p> <p>a. The types of information which you would expect the data model to be able to include as part of the initial platform implementation.</p> <p>b. The sort of information/views etc which you might expect to be able to extract from the data.</p>	<p>This includes detailed information on elements such as DXP users, wider REC Service users, REC parties, REC Code documents, and associated metadata, along with their characteristics and attributes. The data model supports personalised user experiences, manages access and permissions, and facilitates subscriptions to information and events. The analytics capabilities leverage data from the model and other sources, including performance metrics, market trends, and external sources, to generate actionable insights and reports. This ensures efficient operational management and provides strategic insights into user interactions, compliance, market dynamics, and REC Party performance, driving informed decision-making and continuous improvement.</p> <p>The data model will be aligned with the solutions proposed by bidders, taking into account the interactions and interfaces, as well as findings from the discovery stage.</p> <p>Please ensure your proposal reflects this alignment and includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of the data model in Operations Part D of the Quality Response document.</p>
36	<p>Are there any existing technical services being supplied by the current code managers which you would expect us to transition and incorporate as part of Digital Services or are you asking for essentially a new 'greenfield' platform which will replace all CMO services? Will we be expected to migrate data from CMO and, if so, apart from the Code itself, can you provide an overview of the main types of data which will need to be migrated.</p>	<p>This request is for a new integrated digital ecosystem composed of "greenfield" solutions to replace the systems currently used by the REC Code Manager Service Providers. The methodology and techniques to identify what data can be reused should be detailed in your proposal under Implementation and Transition - Part A: Implementation Plan of the RQ.</p>
37	<p>Can the bidder assume all of the following are in scope for this round of the procurement:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AI Search and Assistance solution 2. A committee management solution 3. A data analytics and reporting solution 4. A Digital REC solution 5. A DXP portal solution 	<p>Points 1 to 9 are in scope. For point 10, this includes all cloud networking required for the integrated digital ecosystem. Point 11 will only be required if your soft launch and deployment necessitates integration with the current provider, which is not expected. Points 12 to 16 are also in scope. For point 17, the UX design of each service is in scope; however, the provision of staff to supplement the RECCo team for feedback gathering is not required. You will need the capability to action any feedback received from RECCo and/or the REC Code Manager Service Providers.</p>

	6. An event management solution 7. A Party Management solution 8. A REC change management solution 9. A REC service management solution 10. All cloud Networking 11. Network integration into the current environment 12. All infrastructure hosting required (storage, back up etc) 13. Selection and design of application COTS products as deemed needed for 1-9 above 14. Procurement of all products in 1-9 above 15. Implementation and building of all of the above 16. All required security for hosting and services being deployed 17. Appropriate UI UX design for each service, and should the solution include the provision of staff to supplement the RECCo team to support the gathering of feedback on systems as mentioned in DSR_Serv_Client_0004?	
38	Is the Kong API a product that needs to remain or can the bidder propose an alternative product?	Kong Konnect is the chosen API Gateway to be used for all integrations.
39	For 1-9 above (in Qu 37) is the bidder expected to build only, and that there would be a separate phase for future customisations? Would you want an estimate of potential future costs for this customisation at this time?	There will not be a separate phase for future enhancements and changes. However, your proposal should include how you will manage future enhancements and ensure the integrated digital ecosystem remains relevant. This should be detailed in Operations - Part C: Project & Change Management.
40	The bidder assumes it will build the solution and that the onboarding of each type of persona (users) is out of scope, is this correct? If it is in scope can you let the bidders know what the responsibility share is between the parties for each type of integration?	Building the solution is in scope. The detailed requirements in DSR_Trans_Prog_0004 include supporting the organisational change management for the programme. Additionally, to avoid any doubt, onboarding is also in scope as part of the listed requirements, including working with RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers to ensure a smooth transition.
41	In Sch 1 Annex F of the pricing excel sheet in Note 8 it says additional rows can be added but we have not been able to do this as the sheets appear to be protected, notably in the year 1 tab.	Version Schedule 1 - Annex F - Pricing Response_Final_Version12.08.24.xlsx has been updated.

42	In Sch 1 Annex F, the Implementation tab 4 of the pricing sheet the formula in cell e74 is in cell d74 so the total in e82 is not correct. Can this be corrected ?	Version Schedule 1 - Annex F - Pricing Response_Final_Version12.08.24.xlsx has been updated.
43	In the 'Initial Usage' sub-section under Section 1.5.2, it is mentioned "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." Please list out the solutions and the number of APIs that needs to be deployed / operationalised in the API Gateway	<p>The number of solutions and APIs will be determined by your proposal for the makeup of the integrated digital ecosystem and how you design them to be integrated together.</p> <p>Currently, there are an estimated 20 additional services that will be onboarded, though this number could change based on RECCo's evolving business needs.</p>
44	Recco is currently using good tools for the implementation of portal, AI based search and Digital REC. What is the reason for replacing the existing tool set?	The current solutions have not received the desired scores in CSATS or in the annual survey. These solutions are not integrated, were developed and are managed independently and are licensed to the current Code Manager Service Providers. Now is the right time to address these issues by implementing an integrated digital ecosystem that is owned by RECCo.
45	How many APIs needs to be deployed as part of the initial setup?	The number of APIs is dependent on the solution design from the successful bidder
46	Do you have a preferred cloud hosting provider and if so who is that?	<p>The bidder should determine the best provider for the recommended solution, ensuring requirements and data residency needs are fully met.</p> <p>Additionally, the solution must be aligned with RECCo's Design Principles.</p>
47	Please provide the details of the process and workflows that needs to be implemented for onboarding the service providers?	All requirements for onboarding any service providers will be gathered during the discovery stage.
48	Please provide the count of services that needs to be integrated using the API Gateway?	The total number will change in line with RECCo's business need but is currently estimated to be in the region of 20 in addition to any required for Digital Services.
49	Please can you provide details of the Central Switching Service and Data Transfer Network that is being used?	<p>The Central Switching Service (CSS) is a cloud-based service hosted on the Microsoft Azure Platform. All interaction with the CSS is via real-time messaging, based on a predefined JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) format. Messages are sent by calling pre-determined URLs. New or amended Switching Operation Data is sent through to the CSS to ensure that switches can be appropriately facilitated. The Digital REC contains this Switching Operation Data. The Code Manager Service Provider pushes this information to the CSS using the standard defined API interfaces.</p> <p>The Data Transfer Network (DTN) facilitates the exchange of data between.</p>

		various parties involved in the electricity and gas markets. Access to the DTN is needed and used as part of Market Entry external testing, the aim of which is to prove the Market Entry applicant's ability to connect and interact with the DTN across a designated set of Market Scenarios relevant to their business and participant type. Testing is completed through the DTN VPN, browser-accessible AWS hosted platform and SFTP.
50	What is the count of pages that needs to be built on the portal?	The number of pages to be built on the portal will be determined based on the agreed customer journeys and further clarified during the discovery stage. Currently, there are around 700 unique pages on the portal; approximately 300 of these are wiki items and old news articles.
51	How are the market participants and code manager service providers being onboarded? Is the Onboarding in scope for the Digital Service Provider?	Supporting the onboarding is in scope as per the detailed requirements. How they are to be onboarded should be outlined in your proposal.
52	Please can you explain what is meant by service wrap in the API Gateway scope?	The service wrap is set out in the Detailed Requirements. It includes the same services outlined in Client Facing, Project and Change Management, and Technical Operations, but is specifically tailored for a predefined API solution: Kong Konnect.
53	We understand that DXP Portal is the interface through which the services provided by Market participants can be accessed. Can you provide an example of the services that market participants provide?	<p>The DXP Portal is the interface through which the services provided to market participants can be accessed. Market participants (stakeholders) are made up of REC Parties and Non-REC Parties.</p> <p>Non-REC Parties range from energy Consumers, Trade Associations, Price Comparison Websites through to Government Bodies such as Ofgem and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. These users will engage with the Digital Services, through the DXP, for things such as access to relevant information, to apply for access to wider REC Services, support industry-wide initiatives, and oversee regulatory compliance.</p> <p>REC Parties consist of various organisations that have specific obligations and responsibilities under the REC, such as Energy Suppliers, Gas Transporters, Distribution Network Operators, Metering Equipment Managers, and Meter Installers. REC Parties provide services direct to energy Consumers or to other market participants through their own systems, solutions and processes. For REC Parties, the DXP will be the primary interface into the Digital Services, which will enable them to fulfil their obligations under the REC by providing access to relevant</p>

		information, keeping them informed and engaged about changes to the REC, their own obligations or other areas of interest. It will also provide a route enabling them to apply for access to REC services and to receive and submit data and information across a number of areas.
54	Could you specify the preferred cloud platforms (e.g., AWS, Azure, Google Cloud), and are there any restrictions on vendor selection?	The bidder should determine the best provider for the recommended solution, ensuring requirements and data residency needs are fully met. Additionally, the solution must be aligned with RECCo's Design Principles.
55	What are the detailed requirements for the technical architecture, particularly regarding hybrid or multi-cloud setups?	As defined by the design principles, we adopt a cloud native first approach.
56	Are there specific architectural frameworks (e.g., microservices, serverless) that you prefer or mandate?	As defined by the design principles, we specify a microservices approach, leverage cloud native technologies whilst designing to avoid vendor lock-in.
57	How should the system integrate with existing on-premises infrastructure, including any specific technologies or protocols?	This is a new ecosystem and therefore, other than API integration which will be in accordance with the API policies shared as part of the RfP, there is no requirement to integrate with existing on-premise infrastructure or specific technologies.
58	What are the expectations around system redundancy and disaster recovery in the context of the chosen architecture?	Redundancy and resilience should be designed in order to meet the service qualities defined in the RfP.
59	Could you clarify the expected support model, including SLAs for on-call support, incident response times, and escalation procedures?	It is expected that there is a support portal, which can be accessed 24 hours a day, and the Service Desk will be available for business hours which is defined as Monday to Friday 0800 – 1800 (excluding bank holidays). Out of these hours, it is expected that there will be an escalation approach in the event of any major issues. The escalation process will be defined within the Incident Management process, which will be developed in conjunction with, and approved by, RECCo. KPIs 3 to 6 of Schedule 3 of the draft contract set out the target performance levels. Requirement DSR_Gov_KPIs_0020 sets out the first response rate targets.
60	What are the requirements for monitoring and logging, and are there preferred tools or platforms for these purposes?	All requirements can be found within the detailed requirements. RECCo does not specify preferred solutions/tools for monitoring and logging. Bidders are welcome to propose any solution that aligns with the requirements outlined in the tender.
61	Are there specific operational standards or certifications required (e.g., ITIL, ISO 20001)?	Required standards and/or accreditation are set out in Schedule 4 of the draft contract. The Digital Service Provider is expected to comply with these, or equivalent standards where permitted.
62	How should incident management be handled, particularly in a multi-cloud or hybrid environment?	It is within the scope of your proposal to design and implement a comprehensive Incident Management process that includes all solutions and supporting infrastructure.

63	What are the detailed requirements for data migration, particularly in terms of tools, data validation, and migration strategies?	<p>At this stage, specific details about the types and volumes of data to be transferred are not available. The exact nature of the data and the appropriate migration strategies will be determined following Mobilisation and Discovery. During this phase, the Digital Service Provider will conduct a thorough assessment of the existing market data to identify its scope, format, and quality. This will be followed by the development of detailed data mapping to ensure accurate and consistent data transformation from the existing systems to the new solution(s). Necessary data cleansing activities will be undertaken to remove duplicates, correct errors, and ensure data consistency and accuracy. Additionally, the Digital Service Provider will ensure that all migrated data is hosted within RECCo licensed or owned environments, in accordance with RECCo's Design Principles and policies. Handling data will be a key component of the solution selection process and methodology. The future solution assessment will include evaluating how each option impacts the data migration strategy. This ensures that the chosen solution aligns with the migration needs and facilitates a smooth transition. The data migration strategy will also be a critical part of the Mobilisation Governance, ensuring that it is effectively managed and integrated into the overall project governance framework.</p> <p>We expect the Digital Service Provider to deliver a detailed migration plan, outlining each step of the process to ensure a structured and efficient migration. This plan will include timelines, responsibilities, risk management strategies, and validation procedures to ensure data integrity and minimal disruption.</p>
64	Can you provide more information on data ownership and management, especially in multi-tenant environments?	<p>RECCo will own all data generated and managed within the digital ecosystem, except for data that is owned by other energy industry bodies or organisations. Data received from these external bodies or organisations will remain their property. Regardless of ownership, RECCo will have the freedom to use all data required for the delivery of all services. The Digital Service Provider will be responsible for managing all data environments, provided they adhere to the established Design Principles and Policies. As per these principles, all data must be secure by design.</p>
65	What are the expectations around data lifecycle management, including policies for archival, deletion, and compliance?	<p>The data lifecycle will be agreed upon as part of Service Transition, which will be ready for Day 1 on 1st September 2026.</p>

		Until then, the data lifecycle for migration to implement the integrated digital ecosystem is a requirement for the mobilisation deliverables as outlined in the detailed requirements.
66	Are there specific requirements for data backup and recovery, especially concerning RPO and RTO?	RTO and RPO are covered in requirement DSR_Gov_KPIs_0017.
67	Are there additional compliance requirements beyond those mentioned, such as industry-specific regulations or standards?	All compliance requirements are included in the detailed requirements or shared as part of the draft contract and schedules.
68	What are the expectations for regular auditing, compliance reporting, and certification maintenance?	All reporting expectations and requirements will be agreed upon with RECCo as part of Service Design for Year 1 (1st Sept 2026).
69	Could you clarify the security requirements for APIs, data integrations, and third-party systems?	It is the bidders responsible to ensure the security and integrity of the recommended solution.
70	What are the requirements for identity and access management, including any specific tools or protocols?	The relevant Access and Identity management tools and protocols that you recommend for your solutions should be included in your proposal. These should be guided by the Design Principles as well as the API Management Policy.
71	What are the detailed performance metrics and KPIs expected for the system, and how will these be measured?	All key performance metrics and KPIs are included in the detailed requirements and in Schedule 3 of the draft contract.
72	Are there specific load testing or performance benchmarking tools you require us to use, and what scenarios should be tested?	There are no specific benchmarking tools mentioned in the requirements; however, we would be open to hearing about your experience and/or recommendations as part of any proposal, in the context of the requirements set out. There is a requirement to implement the Apdex scoring framework. If you believe there is a benefit to including any specific load testing or performance benchmarking tools as part of your competitively priced proposal, please do so. The scenarios will need to be agreed upon, but the user journeys shared in Schedule 1 - Annex C provide a good foundation for understanding how end users would interact, though we acknowledge that more work is required on these during the discovery stage.
73	How should the system handle scaling under peak loads, and are there specific strategies or technologies you prefer?	We are looking for the bidder to recommend an approach.
74	What are the performance expectations in terms of latency, throughput, and system responsiveness?	The minimum performance characteristics are detailed in the RfP. However, RECCo is open to improved performance where that would be cost effective.

75	Could you provide more details on the expected user interface design standards, guidelines, and accessibility requirements?	<p>All user interface requirements are included in the detailed requirements shared with the RFP pack.</p> <p>The webinar also highlighted our objective for a simplified user experience, noting that current satisfaction scores are not at the level RECCo desires. We are seeking a partner who can help elevate these satisfaction scores to the desired level. We believe that a simplified user experience is key to achieving this goal and to increasing interaction with end users.</p>
76	What are the specific accessibility standards (e.g., WCAG 2.1) that the system must comply with?	Required standards and/or accreditation are set out in Schedule 4 of the draft contract.
77	Are there particular usability testing methodologies or tools that you would like us to follow or use?	<p>No specific testing methodology will be prescribed; we are looking for your proposal to include your recommendations.</p> <p>Regarding the tool, there is a requirement, DSR_Serv_TechOps_0042, for you to use RECCo's JIRA instance for managing defects, bugs, testing, and requirements tracking. You will be expected to assist RECCo with any configuration needed to set up the project/workflow area.</p>
78	Could you clarify the key milestones, deliverables, and decision points expected at each phase of the project?	<p>The programme is expected to start immediately after contract signature and continue for up to 18 months with full deployment no later than the 1st of September 2026. The high-level delivery plan provided within the RfP document (see pages 13, 48 and 49) 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, justified accordingly, between Stages where they see opportunities for improvements or efficiencies.</p> <p>The key requirements relating to the deliverables, and approvals of deliverables, are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DSR_Trans_Prog_0003 DSR_Trans_Prog_0005 DSR_Trans_Prog_0008 DSR_Trans_Prog_0010 DSR_Trans_Data_0001 DSR_Trans_ProgL_0004

		Schedule 14 of the draft contract sets out the procedures to determine whether a Milestone has been Achieved.
79	What are the dependencies on other projects or systems that we should be aware of, and how might they impact timelines?	Currently, we do not anticipate any dependencies on specific projects or systems that would affect the timeline. However, the development of Digital Services requires the Kong Connect API Gateway, which we expect to have in place ahead of any potential impacts on the project. After the contract is awarded, we will provide the successful bidder with an up-to-date overview, including any dependencies that may arise, to ensure alignment and address any potential impacts promptly.
80	Are there any hard deadlines, regulatory requirements, or external factors that could affect the project schedule?	The hard deadline for implementation is 1st September 2026. There are regulatory changes between now and this date which may impact some of the user journeys, such as the Qualification/Migration workstreams of the Market Wider half Hourly programme, Smart Secure Electricity Systems (SSES) and Ofgem's Consumer Consent solution. However, we do not believe these will materially impact the scope of the solutions or timeline of the project at this stage.
81	What are the expectations for change management and communication throughout the project lifecycle?	The Change Management and Communication strategy for the programme will be agreed upon during the Mobilisation phase. As per requirement DSR_Trans_Prog_0004, it is expected that your proposal includes SME support to assist with the change management and communications agreed upon in the implementation plan.
82	Branding - Do you have a Design System that could be reused for this project? OR Is the chosen digital partner expected to create one? Could you please share details?	RECCo has the basis of a design system used for the enhancement of current solutions. While parts of this could be suitable for re-use / evolution to support the design of the new solutions, the bidder would still be responsible for establishing a new design system to best meet our needs and project objectives.
83	Do you have any internal/external research and design teams that we will be collaborating with as part of the design efforts or in any stage of the project? If so, could you please share more about their roles and the nature of our collaboration with them?	We do not currently have an internal or external design team in place. It will be the responsibility of the Digital Service Provider to propose and refine the UX designs for approval by RECCo. RECCo will have internal resource in our project, technology and marketing teams to support this activity.
84	Is it assumed that the content per flow, journey and validation messages for the application will be provided by RECCo team?	These will be developed as part of the discovery phase and through the sprints, in collaboration with RECCo, the Code Manager Service Providers and with input/validation from the stakeholder group.

85	Would there be any teams internal/external to RECCo who will ratify the UI design approach & approvals part of this engagement? E.g. Brand & Marketing, Brand design agency etc.	RECCo will review and approve the UI design approach and associated design outputs, such as wireframes, as part of the sprint activity. Internal stakeholders and potentially external partners, such as a brand design agency, will be involved in providing feedback and approvals. This collaborative approach ensures that the design aligns with RECCo's branding guidelines and meets project requirements effectively.
86	Can you please share any user journey documents for key personas/market participants ?	<p>All the work completed to date is summarised in Schedule 1 – Annex D.</p> <p>RECCo acknowledges that more work is required to build upon the user personas and user journeys during the discovery stage. The User Personas focus on two key elements:</p> <p>Familiarity with the REC: Users vary in their familiarity with the REC, which should be reflected in the design of digital services. Designs should focus on a simplified, user-centric experience. Users are categorised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Novice: Limited interaction and understanding of REC processes. - Proficient at some: Familiar with certain aspects but not all functionalities. - Proficient at all: Comprehensive knowledge and frequent interaction with REC functionalities. <p>Interaction with the REC: Users also differ in how they interact with the REC. The design should account for varying levels of interaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st Connections: Direct and regular interaction with REC systems and managers. - 2nd Connections: Occasional interaction, often supported by 1st connections. - 3rd Connections: Infrequent interaction, typically for specific tasks or inquiries. <p>The User Journeys highlight the high-level key interactions. We expect these to be explored in more depth during discovery and design. It is important to note that there are not hundreds, but rather 10 to 20 key user journeys that are critical to the user experience.</p>
87	Can you please share performance benchmarks for key user journeys ? Are their performance benchmarks for key processes?	As mentioned previously, the User Personas and User Journeys focus on the user experience and how users interact with the REC according to their objectives and

		<p>roles.</p> <p>The requirement to implement the Apdex scoring framework will be aligned with the key User Journeys. Currently, there are no performance benchmarks for the key processes within the existing digital ecosystem.</p>
88	Could you please provide the scale /volume/ types of historical data that needs to be migrated to new platform ?	Please see the response to question 63.
89	We have noticed that in the requirement document that Service Desk is within the scope of the RFP. However our assumption is that no voice helpdesk is needed to be set up. Please confirm.	<p>There is a requirement, DSR_Serv_Client_0007, for a voice channel to be available as part of the service desk.</p> <p>However, RECCo does not envision this as a dedicated team solely for RECCo. We foresee a simplified support portal as the primary channel for RECCo and Code Manager Service Providers to submit requests or open incidents.</p>
90	Could you please confirm if Vulnerability Management and SOC function is within the scope of the RFP? Is yes , could you also let us know if there is a Central SOC in place today? Also please let us know if SOC is within the scope of the RFP., do we need to be aware of compliance requirement (from location perspective) before setting up a SOC ?	<p>Vulnerability Management or a SOC function is not in scope of this RFP.</p> <p>As part of the Technical Operations, the overall health and vulnerability management of the environments and solutions is expected. This means that any critical vulnerabilities or security incidents will need to be managed by the Digital Service Provider. A dedicated SOC is not foreseen for this Integrated digital ecosystem.</p>
91	In strategic planning, what specific requirements do you have for scenario analysis and forecasting to support risk management & performance assurance, and the ability to personalise the report?	To effectively support risk management and Performance Assurance, it is essential to have a dynamic analytics tool that allows both RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers to conduct scenario analysis and forecasting. This tool must enable users to run customised queries and scripts that can adapt to emerging trends and evolving business needs. Flexibility is crucial, as the analytical requirements are not static; instead, they may need to be continuously developed and tailored to address specific insights or risks as they arise. Additionally, the tool should offer the capability to personalise reports, ensuring that the analysis is relevant and actionable for different stakeholders.
92	Have you implemented any custom visualizations, extensions, or scripts in your reporting setup?	<p>There are no known custom visualisations or extensions in the current reporting setup.</p> <p>PowerBI is currently used as the presentation layer and for visualisations. The output from the performance assurance reporting scripts will need to be included in</p>

		<p>this presentation layer to enable end users to interact with the data. Maintaining and executing these scripts are not within the scope of this RfP; however, the Code Manager Service Provider will need to be able to interrogate and run their scripts against the reporting data.</p>
93	<p>What are the key performance indicators and metrics you focus on?</p>	<p>The success metrics will focus on two areas:</p> <p>End Users' Behaviour and Interactions with the REC (Technical Analytics): This is a new focus for RECCo, and together with the Digital Service Provider, we will define success metrics to gauge how end users interact with the Integrated digital ecosystem.</p> <p>Market Participants' Performance Against Their Obligations (Market Performance Analytics): These metrics will be agreed upon with RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers and will be based on response time and data quality. The role of the Digital Service Provider will be to ensure that the data analytics and reporting solution can measure these metrics. The Digital Service Provider will not be responsible or accountable for the market's performance.</p>
94	<p>Is Power BI used only for the 4 Dashboards or is it used to generate any other reports. If yes how many.</p>	<p>PowerBI is primarily used for developing the four main dashboards outlined in the project scope. Additionally, it is utilised to generate further reports as required. It is important to recognise that the current analytics solution may not be fully leveraged, so the volume of reports produced today may not accurately reflect future reporting requirements. The specific reports will be identified during the discovery phase and sprint planning sessions. While some existing SQL queries may need to be adapted or migrated, the focus is on establishing a robust reporting capability that can support on-demand insights and adapt to changing business needs.</p>
95	<p>As per existing solution, end user use PowerBI Dashboards via Embed from DXP portal. Can you please confirm if you are expecting the same way end user will be using enhanced dashboard using Power BI from new digital service application?</p>	<p>RECCo is not prescribing how end users should interact with the reporting dashboards.</p> <p>The key objective is to provide a simplified user experience across all solutions. The Design Principles and detailed requirements provided set the guardrails and outline our needs, and we are interested in seeing how the Digital Service Provider will address these through their proposed approach. We envision the DXP portal as the</p>

		centralised channel for interacting with all REC Code Manager services, including access to market performance data. We anticipate the number of interactive dashboards available via the DXP Portal will increase in the future with the increased focus on open data in the market.
96	The RFP document indicates that Stakeholder events are managed offline (page 39 of the RFP). Could you please explain how this is managed and clarify the process involved?	Currently, we use tools like Microsoft Teams and Eventbrite for managing and scheduling stakeholder events, with comms and links to be able to register for events published on the REC Portal. There is no direct link between the events and the REC Portal, with management of registrations being handled outside of the Portal, with the Portal just being a comms channel for news about events. The event management solution should consider how the user journeys relevant to these events are managed through the DXP Portal and, where relevant, integrated with these tools.
97	Could you confirm whether the Kong API layer is already built, and clarify the responsibilities of the winning bidder concerning the API layer, including who will be responsible for producing the technical onboarding documentation and training materials for API integration?	RECCo is currently working with Kong to set up the Production environment and define the onboarding process, including the steps required to bring a service into the API layer. This information will be shared with the Digital Service Provider, who will then manage the registration and onboarding of additional services outside the Integrated digital ecosystem. The onboarding and management of the Integrated digital ecosystem will be handled by the implementation team until successful deployment. The Digital Service Provider will also be responsible for creating any additional technical documentation or training materials needed to ensure an efficient and seamless onboarding process. To set expectations, RECCo anticipates approximately 20 additional services to be onboarded within the next three years.
98	Our reading and understanding of the contract would indicate that you would prefer not to utilise a bespoke solution. Is RECCo open to considering a bespoke solution, provided it adheres to the documented design principles?	Yes - RECCo is outcome focused so bidders should put forward their view of how to best deliver the requirements. Additionally, it is important to ensure that the Integrated digital ecosystem does not unintentionally create a situation where the bidder is the only party capable of providing support, thus avoiding vendor lock-in.
99	During the soft launch period, will any data need to be written back to the old systems or databases from the new system?	RECCo does foresee the need for the current Code Manager solutions and the new integrated digital ecosystem to be synchronised through the soft launch phase, in terms of the data and content, relating to REC and Code Manager Services data (i.e., Change proposals, consultations, Code Schedules and specification etc.). However, the data migration plan will need to consider how to ensure a successful

		<p>cutover of data and content between the solutions ahead of go-live.</p> <p>However, it is not anticipated that this will require integrated write-back. Other modes, such as manual data management, could be considered depending on the estimated volumes. That being said, if you believe that implementing or supporting integrated write-back would not require substantial effort, RECCo is interested in hearing about it. How the data will be synchronised will be part of the data management strategy, which is a key deliverable in the mobilisation stage.</p>
100	Regarding the additional pages that may be used for examples in Solution Selection, are these pages meant to detail potential solutions considered and the reasons they were not preferred? If not, could you clarify what examples are expected on these additional pages?	The additional pages are for examples that help provide a comparison and ultimately rationale for your solution selection. This approach will help RECCo understand the bidder's thought process and the suitability of the proposed solutions for the integrated digital ecosystem.
101	Could RECCo clarify if this tender will introduce any eligibility restrictions on participation for future RECCo tenders?	There will be no mandatory disqualification criteria that would impose eligibility restrictions on participation in future tenders based solely on the outcomes of this tender process. Eligibility for future tenders will be assessed independently based on the criteria set forth in those specific tender documents.
102	Will the Digital Experience Platform (DXP) be expected to provide process-level status updates from activities currently managed by the RPS, RTS, and RPA? Could you confirm that the existing service providers (Gemserve/Deloitte/CapGemini) will engage with the DXP architecturally through the API layer?	<p>The objective of implementing the integrated digital ecosystem is for all process-level activities by RPS, RPA, and RTS to be conducted on the solutions that make up the ecosystem.</p> <p>For these processes to be displayed via the DXP portal, it is expected that they will go through the API layer. For updates such as content updates, articles, or news briefs, it is a requirement that the RPS, RPA, and RTS functions be able to access the DXP portal and manage these content updates themselves. If the RPS, RPA, or RTS have other solutions that also need to interact with the DXP portal, these interactions would also go via the API layer.</p>
103	Are RECCo able to confirm which provider is supplying, designing, building and implementing KONG and when that technical design and associated documentation will be available to successful bidder?	Kong is being implemented by RECCo in conjunction with the manufacturer; technical details will be available to the successful bidder as part of the kick-off phase of the project.
104	Reference page 27 of Contract, 15.13 – How does RECCo plan to administer its right to swap out suppliers considering onboarding and termination time?	RECCo would only act on its right to swap out suppliers having exhausted all other options available under the terms of the contract. As such any decisions on associated costs will be based on discussions and agreed between the parties.

	<p>There are management and administrative costs associated with such changes, are these expected to be at the Supplier's cost?</p> <p>Considering the rights RECCo has with respect to approving sub-contractors together with the need for the Supplier to flow down certain provisions is this requirement necessary?</p>	
105	<p>We interpret "solution", as used in the RFP document, to mean a product, platform or software that enables the delivery of the outcomes. To avoid any ambiguity, please could you confirm our interpretation is correct?</p>	<p>Yes, this interpretation is correct. For the avoidance of doubt a single product, platform or software could be used to meet the requirements of more than one solution where this is appropriate and can deliver against the requirements.</p>
106	<p>Are there any technology platforms in the current landscape that you are looking to retain or maintain?</p>	<p>RECCo does not intend to retain any of the existing technology platforms within the new integrated digital ecosystem.</p> <p>This decision is driven by the objective of having the ecosystem owned and licensed directly to RECCo, rather than any specific shortcomings of the current platforms. Bidders are welcome to propose solutions that utilise the same platforms currently in use. Such proposals will not be evaluated negatively as long as they comply with the design principles and can deliver the streamlined user experience that RECCo considers essential. The primary focus is to ensure a simplified and improved user experience.</p>
107	<p>For the Solution Selection parts, every component has 5 pages limit, except for Data Analytics & Reporting which has a limit of 2. Is this correct?</p>	<p>Yes, this is correct.</p>
108	<p>Can you confirm if there are any contractual vendor lock for example MS Dynamics, Power BI etc. in that we need to take into consideration while architecting the solution?</p>	<p>There are no known vendor lock-in restrictions in place.</p> <p>Currently, all technology platforms and/or solutions are licensed to the Code Manager Service Providers and not directly to RECCo.</p>
109	<p>Can you confirm which digital services provided by Code Manager Services Providers will still exist post the implementation of the DXP ?</p>	<p>RECCo does not foresee any of the current solutions continuing to exist beyond access to legacy data, which will depend on the agreed data migration strategy.</p> <p>However, there are some digital tools and services that may still be required for the Code Manager Service Providers to carry out their duties. Two of these tools are:</p>

		<p>1. Performance Assurance Data Analysis and Scripting: This service is utilised by the RPA to interrogate data within the data analytics and reporting solution to deliver performance assurance services. The RPA is responsible for updating and maintaining these scripts.</p> <p>2. Management of Technical Platforms for DTN Access Database: The Code Manager Service Providers will continue managing the technical platforms used to maintain the DTN Access database format of the Technical Specs. While the ability to download the DTN Access database will be within the scope of the DXP portal, maintaining this database is not included in the scope.</p>
110	Can you confirm if any learning Management Software is currently in use within RECCo to create training course material and conduct trainings, or is this something that you want the bidder to propose?	RECCo does not currently use a dedicated Learning Management Software (LMS) for creating training materials or conducting training sessions. We are open to proposals from bidders, but any suggested solution should be proportionate to our needs and leverage existing capabilities, such as incorporating training materials into the DXP portal. We encourage solutions that enhance training delivery without incurring unnecessary costs associated with implementing a standalone LMS.
111	Can you please share how external and internal user authentication and identity management is carried out today, are you using an IAM solution?	User authentication sits within the existing respective Code Manager functions so a new unified approach is expected. Furthermore, we are increasingly expecting to deliver services to end-consumer so the proposed solution shall be able to support B2B and B2C approaches, with controls commensurate with the type of transaction and nature of data being interacted with.
112	Please confirm: the Digital Services Partner will perform UX design for the DXP portal, detailing out the high-level journeys for the personas listed in Annex D in a user-centric, optimized way. There are no existing target UX designs, wireframes, prototypes or detailed user journeys that are to be incorporated into the solution, these need to be created as part of the contract.	<p>That is correct. There are no existing target UX designs; these will need to be created.</p> <p>The designs must align with RECCo's brand guidelines and will be approved by RECCo.</p> <p>Please note, although the core journeys are listed within the RfP Annex, we do also expect the personas and journeys to be built on further within the discovery stage and therefore the evolution needs to be considered also.</p>
113	Can you confirm if there is a need for data migration from the current Code Manager Service Providers (outside of Analytics and BI reporting) into the new digital ecosystem platform?	Please see the response to question 63.

114	Can you share how you are managing Digital Assets for example images, videos to be used on the portal as of now, should the DSP propose the solution for digital asset management as part of the DXP build?	<p>The current DXP platform is Liferay, which includes Digital Asset Management functionality.</p> <p>We are seeking a simplified user experience, along with an efficient way for the Code Manager Service Providers to operate. These aspects should be included in the proposal from the Digital Service Provider.</p>
115	We are assuming that there will be content migration needed from the current REC portal to the new DXP, can you give an indication of the amount of content that will require migration?	Please see the response to question 63. Content to be migrated from the current REC Portal is part of the overall data migration.
116	Do you see the Digital REC to be a separate user interface with a separate domain or part of the DXP?	<p>Our vision of a simplified user experience is one where the DXP portal serves as the centralised interactive channel for all services provided by RECCo and the Code Manager Service Providers, including the Digital REC.</p> <p>While maintaining the Digital REC could occur outside the DXP portal, the end user's interaction with the Digital REC must be seamless and conducted through the DXP portal (i.e. the user should not know they are interacting with a different solution).</p>
117	Please confirm that all content across the DXP will be in English and we are not catering for any language translations?	<p>To clarify, the primary language for all content across the DXP will be English, as the primary users are industry stakeholders involved in the GB retail energy market. However, we recognise that offering content in additional languages could provide significant value both to stakeholders and to end energy Consumers who may access the platform for industry information.</p> <p>While language translation is not a mandatory requirement for the initial launch of the Digital Services (it is categorised as a 'could have' requirement), we view it as a potential value-added feature that could enhance the user experience for a broader audience. Should bidders choose to include multi-language support as part of their proposal, we expect this feature to be implemented as outlined in their submission. In other words, if you propose language support as a differentiator in your bid, it should be delivered as promised.</p> <p>When considering language translations, it is important to focus on languages that not only serve industry stakeholders but also improve accessibility for the general public. Example languages are:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welsh - Polish - Punjabi - French - German - Spanish - Italian <p>These languages have been highlighted based on their relevance to the energy industry and their ability to improve public accessibility but are not exhaustive. Bidders are encouraged to propose additional languages they consider beneficial based on their market analysis and engagement strategies with both stakeholders and the general public.</p>
118	Do you want us to carry out confirmation / further research / detailing of the User Personas defined in Schedule 1 - Annex D, possibly redefining the personas (e.g. adding new ones)?	While the core user personas and journeys have been identified, we expect the Digital Service Provider to build on this work during the discovery phase. This involves further research and detailing of the personas to inform solution design effectively. As the implementation of the Digital Services may lead to adjustments in user journeys, it is crucial to outline and document these changes clearly. We are interested in understanding your approach to validating the existing baseline work and your recommendations for expanding it with user research to enhance design and development.
119	Are you open for the bidder to suggest alternate viewpoints to the project delivery and implementation plan that will deliver faster value earlier than the current suggested soft launch timeline e.g. agile delivery squads with monthly production releases?	<p>Yes, we are open to alternative approaches.</p> <p>However, it is essential to involve user groups in the design and testing phases to ensure their needs are met, as this is critical to the programme's success. Additionally, please keep in mind that there will be a transition from the current Code Manager solutions, and the services must remain relevant and up to date in both environments until full deployment is successfully completed. A simplified user experience is a key success criterion for the programme, and this should remain consistent throughout the implementation to avoid any confusion for end users interacting with the REC.</p>
120	Given the holiday period in August, will there be another opportunity for the bidders to ask further questions?	Unfortunately, there will not be an additional opportunity to submit questions before the RfP response deadline. The procurement timeline was thoughtfully

		<p>developed to account for the holiday period in August, ensuring all bidders have adequate time to prepare their responses.</p> <p>If there are any remaining areas of uncertainty, please include them as assumptions in your submission. This will help ensure that your proposal accurately reflects your understanding of the requirements and expectations.</p>
121	Do you have a strategic direction or preference to consolidate your cloud infrastructure to any specific cloud service provider e.g. MS Azure, GCP, AWS etc.	The bidder should determine the best provider for the recommended solution, ensuring requirements and data residency needs are fully met. Furthermore, in-line with our design principles, solutions should be designed to avoid vendor lock-in where practicable (including cloud provider).
122	Please share support tickets dump for past 6 months - if available.	Please see answer to question 30.
123	Do you have committed SLA with any agencies that need to be considered for providing managed services support SLA	<p>RECCo assumes that the term "agencies" also includes current suppliers, and vendors.</p> <p>For actual agencies, there are no committed SLAs that need to be considered. Regarding suppliers and vendors, there are agreed SLAs in place in relation to the Kong Konnect API Gateway, for the provision of that platform as outlined in the contract. While this will not impact the service wrapper, it should be considered if any availability or performance SLA is proposed that involves the control plane of Kong Konnect.</p> <p>Additionally, for the Code Manager Service Providers, there are SLAs governing the completion of various operational processes that must be acknowledged and incorporated. For example, these include response times for submissions via the DXP or REC Service Desk response times following a request or ticket.</p> <p>We can discuss these details further with any potential Digital Service Provider during the dialogue phase within BAFO.</p>
124	Will the existing Service Providers (and/or RECCo) provide SMEs during the implementation phase to answer questions and review WIP designs/specifications?	Yes, appropriate Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) will be available during the implementation phase. These SMEs will be on hand to answer any questions and review work-in-progress designs and specifications. This support will help ensure that the implementation aligns with our requirements and expectations.
125	Is there a more detailed prioritisation scoring available than the must-should-could scores? E.g. numerically, or on	There is not a numerical prioritisation score available for the requirements. The Digital Service Provider will be responsible for mapping the requirements to user

	desirability/viability/feasibility dimensions? If not, is the Digital Service Provider expected to perform such a more detailed scoring?	stories in the discovery phase, and mapping these to sprints in the sprint plan / implementation plan. While this will involve some aspect of further prioritisation, the plan will need to ensure that all 'must have' requirements are delivered in accordance with the required timetable.
126	Can you kindly clarify the Initial Term of the Contract? In Annex F Pricing and Commercial response it states the contract initial term is 5 years. However it could also be 6.5 years (from 1st March 2025 to 31st August 2031) which would include the 18 months for Mobilisation to Full Deployment. Which is correct?	The Initial Term of the draft contract is 5 years from Operational Service Commencement Date, this being 1st September 2026. The Mobilisation Period will be from when the contract is signed in February/March to the Operational Service Commencement Date/at full deployment.
127	In Annex F Pricing and Commercial response, #9 says "All prices including the rate card must remain fixed for the initial term (5-years) of the contract". As the Rate Card is used to underpin the Implementation Costs and not the year 1-5 Operate costs, can you confirm that the Rate card should be fixed for 18 months or the full 6.5 years?	<p>The Rate Card / Schedule of Rates needs to be fixed for the initial 5-year term of the contract.</p> <p>Please note that the Rate Card does not link directly to the implementation costs, so these will need to be entered manually. The pricing model spreadsheet allows this. The costs provided for the implementation must be fixed until the start of Year 1 operating costs on 1st September 2026. Any deviation from the Rate Card to the implementation resource rate will need to be explained so that RECCo can understand the reasons for the difference. Where applicable the Rate Cards should be used to create the annual operating charges. The individual Rate Cards need to be fixed for the initial contract term</p>
128	You mentioned in the Webinar that you are open to an offshore delivery model. Please can you explain how you would like the location of resources to be presented and modelled in tab 3. Schedule of Rates. Would you prefer offshore resources to be added in as additional rows?	<p>For the purposes of bidding, the Digital Service Provider should ensure that proposals align with RECCo's operations in the UK to deliver the best service, and that all processing of RECCo's data takes place in data centres situated in the UK. This is the requirement set out in the proposed contract.</p> <p>At this stage of the RfP, all costs MUST be provided in GBP, and the proposal MUST be based on an onshore model. The use of offshore resources as part of any delivery model will be explored and negotiated during the BAFO phase. During these dialogue sessions, RECCo and the Digital Service Provider will have the opportunity to explore the possibilities in more detail, ensuring alignment with contract requirements. Any offshore data processing or other technology facilities, including those involving sub-contractors, must be fully disclosed at the appropriate time, detailing all processing operations, locations, and sub-processors. These will be subject to explicit agreement with RECCo, which may withhold approval at its</p>

		absolute discretion, particularly in cases involving restricted transfers as defined under UK GDPR, or otherwise at RECCo's reasonable discretion. Any deviation in the RFP responses from the contract obligations regarding processing of data location will be considered a non-compliant bid.
129	What languages does RECCo expect on the landing page?	Please see the response to question 117.
130	As part of this procurement are there any existing services in scope where TUPE may apply	RECCo have carried out an initial check and have identified certain services that may come under TUPE; however, further investigation will be needed based on the agreed solution and transition plan.
131	With reference to the Q&A during the Webinar held on 7th August, you articulated that RECCo data will be stored in the UK. Can you confirm if can be accessed from outside the UK, for production and non-production environments	<p>For the purposes of bidding, the Digital Service Provider should ensure that proposals align with RECCo's operations in the UK to deliver the best service, and that all processing of RECCo's data takes place in data centres situated in the UK.</p> <p>At this stage of the RfP, all costs should be provided in GBP, and the proposal should be based on an onshore model. The use of offshore resources as part of any delivery model will be explored and negotiated during the BAFO phase. During these dialogue sessions, RECCo and the Digital Service Provider will have the opportunity to explore the possibilities in more detail, ensuring alignment with contract requirements. Any offshore data processing or other technology facilities, including those involving sub-contractors, must be fully disclosed at the appropriate time, detailing all processing operations, locations, and sub-processors. These will be subject to explicit agreement with RECCo, which may withhold approval at its absolute discretion, particularly in cases involving restricted transfers as defined under the General Data Protection Regulation, or otherwise at RECCo's reasonable discretion.</p>
132	With reference to the Q&A during the Webinar held on 7th August, you mentioned the Security Clearance will not be required for any resources working on this engagement. Please can you confirm this understanding.	Yes, we can confirm that security clearance vetting is not required for any resources working on this engagement. This was discussed during the webinar on August 7th, 2024, and the understanding remains accurate.
133	With reference to the Q&A during the Webinar held on 7th August, you mentioned that support hours will be UK business hours, Monday to Friday 8AM to 6PM. Please can you confirm this understanding and any on call support requirements.	Service Desk support hours will be aligned with business hours, defined as Monday - Friday 0800 - 1800 with a support portal available 24/7. However, the Digital Service Provider is required to publish and maintain an incident management process that ensures critical services, such as the API layers and DXP portal, remain supported outside of normal business hours. This support is expected to be minimal and focused on maintaining the availability of these essential services.

		While the support portal will be available, any requests or incidents submitted outside of business hours will not be addressed until normal support hours resume.
134	Are you required to or able to disclose any tender documents submitted by us to any external parties and organisations? If so, can you disclose the names of these organisations.	Yes, RECCo will disclosure tender documents to external parties or organisations, including but not limited to Procurement Evaluation Panel members, legal advisers and technical advisers. Please refer to the draft contract Main Body Clauses 19.6 and 20.1 and Schedule 25 (Exit Management) Clause 3.2 regarding future disclosure obligations for confidential information.