



# Invitation to Participate

Negotiation reference	LCC10033
Application for	Provision of a Fostering Agency Placements Flexible Agreement
Appendix	Appendix 8 – Application Evaluation Criteria



## Contents

<b>Evaluation Overview</b>
<b>Stage 1.0 Selection Evaluation Criteria</b>
<b>Stage 1.1 Minimum Criteria For The Flexible Agreement</b>
<b>LOT 1</b>
<b>Stage 2.0 Lot 1 Price Assessment</b>
<b>Stage 3.0 Lot/Tier Essential Criteria</b>
<b>Stage 3.1 Lot 1 Tier 2 Essential Criteria</b>
<b>Stage 3.2 Lot 1 Tier 1 Essential Criteria</b>
<b>Stage 3.2.1 Lot 1 Tier 1 Essential Criteria Area A (BBL)</b>
<b>Stage 3.2.1 Lot 1 Tier 1 Essential Criteria Area B (C)</b>
<b>Stage 3.2.2 Lot 1 Tier 1 Additional Criteria Area A and Area B</b>
<b>Stage 3.2.3 Lot 1 Tier 1 Area A and Area B Successful Providers</b>
<b>LOT 2</b>
<b>Stage 3.3 Lot 2 Enhanced Foster Care</b>
<b>Stage 3.3.1 Lot 2 Essential Criteria Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL)</b>
<b>Stage 3.3.3 Lot 2 Tier 1 Additional Criteria Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL)</b>
<b>Stage 3.3.6 Lot 2 Tier 1 Combined Area A and Area B Successful Providers</b>
<b>LOT 3</b>
<b>Stage 3.4 Lot 3 Step Down into Foster Care</b>
<b>Stage 3.4.1 Lot 3 Essential Criteria Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL)</b>
<b>Stage 3.4.3 Lot 3 Tier 1 Additional Criteria Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL)</b>
<b>Stage 3.4.6 Lot 3 Tier 1 Combined Area A and Area B Successful Providers</b>
<b>REOPENING OF THE FLEXIBLE AGREEMENT</b>



## Evaluation Overview

All Applications will be marked over a two stage process before the Flexible Agreement is Awarded.

Applicants must ensure all required information is submitted, if the required Application documents returned are incomplete or missing, the Council may reject your Application.

**Stage 1: Selection Evaluation Criteria** – Acceptance/rejection of Applicants based on business standing, financial standing, technical and professional ability.

<b>Evaluation Stages</b> <i>Please also refer to process chart (at Appendix 1 – Application Process) alongside this document</i>		<b>Criteria</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>SELECTION EVALUATION CRITERIA</b> <i>Exclusion grounds and selection questions</i>	<b>Pass</b> – acceptance on to the Flexible Agreement
<b>1.1</b>	<b>MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR THE FLEXIBLE AGREEMENT</b>	<b>Fail</b> – rejected from the Flexible Agreement
<i>Applicants must pass all sections in the above stages to be given a place on the Flexible Agreement. If an Applicant fails any section their Application will not considered further and will be rejected.</i>		
<i>Applicants will be evaluated for Lot 1 first. If an Applicant meets the Lot 1 evaluation criteria they can then be considered for Lot 2 and/or Lot 3 as applicable. An Applicant cannot be evaluated for Lot 2 and/or Lot 3 if unsuccessful in Lot 1.</i>		
<b>2.0</b>	<b>LOT 1 PRICE ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>Met criteria</b> - can be considered for <b>Lot 1 Tier 1 and Tier 2</b> evaluation (see stage 3) <b>Not met criteria</b> – will be placed in <b>Lot 1 Tier 3</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>LOT/TIER ESSENTIAL CRITERIA FOR ALL LOTS</b> <i>Quality and Price Evaluation</i>	Evaluation for the following places: <b>Lot 1, Lot 2 and Lot 3:</b> <b>Tier 1</b> <b>Tier 1 reserves</b> <b>Tier 2</b>

*Applicants must ensure all required information is submitted, if the required Application documents returned are incomplete or missing, the Council may reject your Application.*

## **Stage 1.0 SELECTION EVALUATION CRITERIA**

### **(Process chart 1.0)**

**Selection Evaluation Criteria** – Acceptance/rejection of Applicants based on business standing, financial standing, technical and professional ability.

In these procurement documents the term "Self-cleaning" is used. This term arises out of Regulation 57(13) of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Self-cleaning allows Applicants to provide evidence that any breaches that may have occurred in the grounds for exclusion outlined in this document have now been rectified and measures have put in place to ensure compliance. The Council reserves the right to consider the measures taken and deem whether the remedial action taken is sufficient

and whether the Council requires the submission of satisfactory evidence by the Applicant prior to appointment.

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>SECTION NUMBERS</b>	<b>DOCUMENT</b>	<b>EXPLANATION OF EVALUATION</b>	<b>CRITERIA</b>
Selection	1 - 8	Appendix 3 - Selection Criteria Questionnaire	Must pass all questions to be eligible to be appointed to the Flexible Agreement	Pass or Fail

Where appropriate, the Council will request evidence of the self-cleaning measures implemented following the evaluation process. If any of the successful Applicants are found to have failed the selection criteria or fail to provide the information required by the Council, they will be rejected from the process.

## Stage 1: Selection Evaluation Criteria

### Part 1: Potential supplier Information

<b>Section 1 - Potential supplier information (1.1), Bidding model (1.2, 1.3, 1.4)</b>	
<b>1.1 (a) – (f)</b>	
PASS	All information has been provided for all questions.
FAIL	Information requested not provided for all questions.
<b>1.1 (g)-(i)</b>	
PASS	A response of 'Yes'; or a response of N/A if not applicable.
FAIL	A response of 'No'.
<b>1.1 (g)-(ii)</b>	
PASS	If response to 1.1 (g)-(i) is 'Yes' all requested information has been provided.
FAIL	If response to 1.1 (g)-(i) is 'Yes' but no response provided to 1.1 (g)-(ii).
<b>1.1 (h)-(i)</b>	
PASS	A response of 'Yes' or 'No' is provided (if applicable); OR no response as the question is not applicable as the procurement is not for services.
FAIL	A failure to provide a response to 1.1 (h)-(i) where appropriate.
<b>1.1 (h)-(ii)</b>	
PASS	If response to 1.1 (h)-(i) is 'Yes', the requested information and confirmation of compliance has been provided.
FAIL	If response to 1.1 (h)-(i) is 'Yes' but no confirmation of compliance is given in response to 1.1 (h)-(ii).
<b>1.1 (i) – (m)</b>	
PASS	All information has been provided for all questions, where applicable.
FAIL	Information requested not provided for all questions, where applicable.
<b>1.2</b>	
PASS	Applicant has responded that they are bidding as a single Applicant; OR Applicant has responded that they are bidding as part of a group or consortium and all information is provided for 1.2 (a-e).
FAIL	No response provided; OR if bidding as part of a group or consortium, all applicable information requested in 1.2 (a-e) is not provided.
<b>1.3</b>	
PASS	All requested information for sub-contractors/supply chain has been provided, if applicable.
FAIL	Where applicable, the information requested for sub-contractors/supply chain is not provided.
<b>1.4</b>	
PASS	Where applicable, the Lots/Tier bid for are detailed within 'Lot & Tier Application Summary' within Appendix 4 with the relevant Lotting information.
FAIL	Where applicable, no response provided to confirm the Lots/Tier bid within 'Lot & Tier Application Summary' within Appendix 4.

**Part 2: Exclusion Grounds**

<b>Section 2 - Grounds for mandatory exclusion (2.1)</b>	
See Annex D of the questionnaire for guidance	
<b>2.1(a)</b>	
For the questions within 2.1(a) you must self-certify whether any of the grounds for mandatory exclusion apply, as specified by the questions.	
The detailed grounds for mandatory exclusion of an organisation are set out in Annex D of the Selection Criteria Questionnaire, which should be referred to before completing these questions.	
PASS	Responses of 'No' to each question; OR a response of 'Yes' to one or more questions (accompanied by 'No' for the remainder of the questions) and the required information is provided in question 2.1(b), and appropriate evidence of self-cleaning for each response of 'Yes' is provided within 2.1(c). (See section on 'Self-cleaning' below for guidance and instructions on this).
FAIL	The Council is entitled to exclude Applicants from this procurement if any of the mandatory grounds for exclusion apply, as indicated by a Applicant responding 'Yes' to a question, and/or the Council has other external evidence. However, the Council will consider all the relevant circumstances, and will at its discretion allow an Applicant to score a PASS and proceed if it provides evidence of 'Self-cleaning' to the Council's satisfaction.
<b>2.1(b)</b>	
PASS	A response of 'Yes' to one or more of the offences listed in 2.1(a) and further details as requested provided; OR no response provided as not applicable.
FAIL	A response of 'Yes' to one or more of the offences listed in 2.1(a) and further details as requested not provided.
<b>2.1(c)</b>	
PASS	Responses of 'No' to all offences listed in 2.1(a); OR a response of 'Yes' and sufficient evidence of self-cleaning is provided to the satisfaction of the Council (see full details within section on 'Self-cleaning' below).
FAIL	If any of the mandatory grounds for rejection apply and the Applicant does not provide sufficient evidence of 'Self-cleaning', then the Council will score this section of the Applicant's application as a FAIL.  If an Applicant is scored a FAIL for this section, then this will result in the Applicant's elimination from the evaluation process and the Council will not proceed with the scoring of the Applicants application. (See section on 'Self-cleaning' below).
<b>Section 3 - Mandatory and discretionary grounds relating to the payment of taxes and social security contributions (3.1 – 3.2)</b>	
<b>3.1(a)</b>	
PASS	Response of 'Yes' and information requested provided, if applicable; OR a response of 'No' and sufficient evidence of self-cleaning is provided to the satisfaction of the Council (see full details within section on 'Self-cleaning' below).
FAIL	The Council is entitled to exclude Applicants from this procurement if any of the grounds for exclusion apply, as indicated by an Applicant responding 'No' to the question, and/or the Council has other external evidence. However, the Council will consider all the relevant circumstances, and will at its discretion allow a Applicant to score a PASS and proceed if it provides evidence of 'Self-cleaning' to the Council's satisfaction.
<b>3.1(b)</b>	

PASS	If the response to question 3.1(a) is 'No' and information requested is provided; OR no response required due to a response of 'Yes' to question 3.1(a).
FAIL	If the response to question 3.1(a) is 'No' and information requested is not provided.
<b>3.2</b>	
PASS	If the response to question 3.1(a) is 'No' and a response of 'Yes' is provided.
FAIL	The Council is entitled to exclude Applicants from this procurement if any of the grounds for exclusion apply, as indicated by an Applicant responding 'No' to the question, and/or the Council has other external evidence. However, the Council will consider all the relevant circumstances, and will at its discretion allow a Applicant to score a PASS and proceed if it provides evidence of 'Self-cleaning' to the Council's satisfaction.
<b>Section 4 - Grounds for discretionary exclusion (4.1 – 4.3)</b>	
<b>4.1 (a) - (i) and 4.1(j)-(i) - 4.1(j)-(iv)</b>	
You must self-certify whether any of the grounds for discretionary exclusion apply, as specified by the questions.	
PASS	Responses of 'No' to each question; OR a response of a 'Yes' to one or more questions but appropriate evidence of self-cleaning is provided within 4.3 (see section on 'Self-cleaning' below for guidance and instructions on this).
FAIL	The Council is entitled to exclude Applicants from this procurement if any of the discretionary grounds for exclusion apply, as indicated by an Applicant responding 'Yes' to a question, and/or the Council has other external evidence. However, the Council will consider all the relevant circumstances, and will at its discretion allow an Applicant to score a PASS and proceed if it provides evidence of 'Self-cleaning' to the Council's satisfaction.
<b>4.2</b>	
PASS	If the Potential Applicant is a relevant commercial organisation subject to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, a response of 'Yes' to both confirmation statements; OR a response of a 'No' to one or more confirmation statements but appropriate evidence of self-cleaning is provided within 4.3 (see section on 'Self-cleaning' below for guidance and instructions on this); OR no response as the Applicant is not a relevant commercial organisation subject to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
FAIL	The Council is entitled to exclude Applicants from this procurement if any of the discretionary grounds for exclusion apply, as indicated by an Applicant responding 'No' to one or more of the confirmation statements, and/or the Council has other external evidence. However, the Council will consider all the relevant circumstances, and will at its discretion allow an Applicant to score a PASS and proceed if it provides evidence of 'Self-cleaning' to the Council's satisfaction.
<b>4.3</b>	
PASS	No response required due to responses of 'No' to all situations and statements listed in 4.1 and responses of 'Yes' to the confirmations in 4.2 (where applicable); OR a response of 'Yes' to one or more of the situations and/or statements listed in 4.1 and/or a response of 'No' to either confirmation in 4.2 (if applicable) and sufficient evidence of self-cleaning is provided in 4.3 to the satisfaction of the Council (see full details within section on 'Self-cleaning' below).
FAIL	If any of the grounds for rejection apply in 4.1 and 4.2 and the Applicant does not provide sufficient evidence of 'Self-cleaning' in 4.3, then the Council will score this section of the Applicant's application as a FAIL.

	<p>If an Applicant is scored a FAIL for this section, then this will result in the Applicant's elimination from the evaluation process and the Council will not proceed with the scoring of the Applicants application. (See section on 'Self-cleaning' below).</p>
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**Self-cleaning: important instructions**

**Self-cleaning:** If an Applicant responds 'Yes' to any of the questions within 2.1(a) or 4.1, or 'No' to any of the questions within 3.1(a), 3.2, and 4.2 (if applicable), the Council may request further evidence of self-cleaning at any time prior to award.

In order for the evidence referred to above to be sufficient, the Applicant shall, as a minimum, prove that it has:

- Paid or undertaken to pay compensation in respect of any damage caused by the criminal offence or misconduct;
- clarified the facts and circumstances in a comprehensive manner by actively collaborating with the investigating authorities; and
- taken concrete technical, organisational and personnel measures that are appropriate to prevent further criminal offences or misconduct.

The measures taken by the Applicant shall be evaluated taking into account the gravity and particular circumstances of the criminal offence or misconduct. Where the measures are considered by the Council to be insufficient, the Applicant shall be given a statement of the reasons for that decision, and the question(s) shall be scored as a FAIL.

The Council can use its discretion as to whether the Applicant may be awarded a PASS, provided the Applicant can demonstrate remedial action to the Council's satisfaction.

If an Applicant answers 'Yes' to any of the questions within 2.1(a) or 4.1 or 'No' to any of the questions within 3.1(a), 3.2, and 4.2 (if applicable) and subsequently **does not provide any evidence that is requested** of Self-cleaning the Applicant will fail that question and be excluded from the process.

Self-cleaning is not applicable to discretionary exclusion grounds which are procurement-specific and which do not arise from Applicant misdeeds ("conflict of interest" and "distortion of competition from prior involvement").



**Part 3: Selection Questions**

<b>Section 5 – Economic and Financial Standing (5.1 – 5.5)</b>							
<b>5.1-5.3(a-b)</b>							
PASS	The Applicant can provide the requested details to one of the questions 5.1, 5.2, 5.3(a) or 5.3(b).						
FAIL	The Council may fail an Applicant if they cannot provide the requested details for at least one of the questions 5.1, 5.2, 5.3(a), or 5.3(b).						
<b>5.4</b>							
PASS	<p>The specified minimum level of economic and financial standing for this procurement is set out below:</p> <p><i>If both of the following criteria are achieved, the Applicant will achieve a PASS and should select 'Yes' within the Selection Criteria Questionnaire.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A result of 0.7 or above for the current ratio; and</li> <li>• A result of 1 or below for the debt ratio.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>To calculate the financial ratios:</u></b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="411 900 1385 1032"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">FINANCIAL INFORMATION – evaluation method</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Current ratio</td> <td>Current assets divided by current liabilities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Debt ratio</td> <td>Total debt divided by total assets</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Council reserves the right to carry out further financial stability evaluation if it deems it necessary, which may involve seeking further information such as details of your accounting model or information concerning any underwritten debt.</p> <p>At the sole discretion of the Council, the further information provided may be taken into account to assess whether your organisation will PASS the question.</p>	FINANCIAL INFORMATION – evaluation method		Current ratio	Current assets divided by current liabilities	Debt ratio	Total debt divided by total assets
FINANCIAL INFORMATION – evaluation method							
Current ratio	Current assets divided by current liabilities						
Debt ratio	Total debt divided by total assets						
FAIL	<p>If an Applicant selects 'No' for Question 5.4 as they did not satisfy both of the above criteria they may FAIL that question in which case the Council will not proceed with the scoring of their application.</p> <p>Applicants may be required to confirm the following information during evaluation stage when requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current assets</li> <li>• Current liabilities</li> <li>• Total debt</li> <li>• Total assets</li> </ul> <p>The Council will use the above information to calculate the ratios. If an Applicant is found not to satisfy both the above criteria they may fail question 5.4 and be excluded from the procurement.</p> <p>The Council reserves the right to carry out further financial stability evaluation if it deems it necessary, which may involve seeking further information such as details of your accounting model or information concerning any underwritten debt.</p>						

	<p>At the sole discretion of the Council, the further information provided may be taken into account to assess whether your organisation will PASS the question.</p> <p>The Council reserves the right to use a third party provider of business information. This may be to validate the financial information provided by the Applicant, to identify areas of concern, and/or obtain further information where required.</p>
<b>5.5</b>	
PASS	Where the Applicant is relying on another member of the bidding group/consortium or any subcontractors or other security in order to meet the selection criteria relating to economic and financial standing, the Applicant confirms that the relevant person or entity is willing to provide a guarantee or other security if required.
FAIL	<p>Where the Applicant is relying on another member of the bidding group/consortium or any subcontractors or other security in order to meet the selection criteria relating to economic and financial standing, the Applicant does not confirm that the relevant person or entity is willing to provide a guarantee or other security if required.</p> <p>The Council reserves the right to carry out further financial stability evaluation if it deems it necessary, which may involve seeking further information such as details of your accounting model or information concerning any underwritten debt.</p> <p>At the sole discretion of the Council, the further information provided may be taken into account to assess whether your organisation will PASS the question.</p>
<b>Section 6 – Technical and professional ability (6.1 - 6.3)</b>	
<b>6.1</b>	
<p>This question requires contract(s) that are relevant to the Council's requirement. <b>The Council's requirements are set out within the ITP (Invitation to Participate) and Service Specification documents.</b> Examples of contracts relevant to the Council's requirements may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract(s) for services similar to those set out with in the Council's ITP and Specification documents;</li> <li>• Contract(s) for services which are similar in nature to those set out within the Council's tender documents specifically the service specification.</li> <li>• Other contracts or major grants as the Council sees appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>Applicants must provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. references from staff in other authorities, e.g. Contract Managers;</li> </ol> <p>in the event that this is not possible, Applicants must provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. references from other public sector bodies - e.g. if you have been contracted by the NHS;</li> </ol> <p>and in the event that this is not possible, Applicants must provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. references from the Council staff if options 1 and 2 are not possible. This could be the relevant Contract Officer or Commissioning Manager.</li> </ol>	

4. In the event that Applicants cannot provide options 1, 2 or 3 for referees, the Council will accept references from social workers.

The relevancy of your contracts to the Council's requirements will be assessed on the following. As part of your responses you must address the nature of the service (service description).

**Selection Criteria – Reference Request – See Appendix 5.  
IMPORTANT – References Instructions below:**

- 1) Applicants are required to contact the referee(s) indicated above for each contract to obtain the references.
- 2) Applicants must use the template provided at 'Appendix 5 - Selection Criteria Reference Request'. The text must be replicated into the body of an Email. Questions 1-4 in the template are for the referee to complete.
- 3) Applicants must submit the Email trail which includes their request and the referee's response to questions 1-4 with their Application. Each Reference response must:
  - a. be submitted as a separate Email, and;
  - b. be submitted as an Email Message format, pdf or any other format which is created when you save an Email (rather than copying and pasting the text from an Email into a word or other document).
- 4) The Council may contact the referees to validate their responses during the evaluation stage of the process.
- 5) In the event that it is not possible to provide the email trail which includes the Applicants request and the referee's response with their Application, Applicants must provide:
  - a. The email trail to evidence that they have sent the reference request to the referee, and;
  - b. The correct contact details at section 6.1 of the Selection Criteria Questionnaire for the Council to issue the reference request, or follow up on their request.
- 6) Applicants are reminded that the Council may require satisfactory references to enable a pass for this question, therefore they should use best endeavours and allow enough time to acquire the necessary references from the referees.

PASS	The information is complete and the reference(s) which the Council obtains are satisfactory.
FAIL	<p>If one or more references gives evidence of a failure to deliver the required levels of contract performance it may result in a FAIL.</p> <p>No description(s) provided in response to the question, or the contracts provided are not relevant to the Council's requirements may result in a FAIL.</p> <p>If it is not possible to validate the accuracy of the information provided or if the accuracy of the information provided is put in significant doubt by the referee this may result in a FAIL.</p> <p>However, the information for the other questions within section 6 will be taken into account by the Council to assess whether your organisation will PASS the question.</p>

	Please note that the Council will check the word-count of your response(s), any words above the word-count will not be evaluated. The word-count applies to each contract, i.e. you have 500 words for Contract 1, 500 words for Contract 2, 500 words for Contract 3.
<b>6.2</b>	
This question requires an explanation as to why examples cannot be given within 6.1 and how you meet the selection criteria relating to technical and professional ability.	
PASS	Explanation not required by virtue of the response given to 6.1, or the explanation provided is satisfactory.
FAIL	No response to the question, or the explanation is not satisfactory.  However, the information for the other questions within section 6 will be taken into account by the Council to assess whether your organisation will PASS the question.
<b>6.3</b>	
This question requires previous experience of working with subcontractors.	
PASS	The evidence submitted is satisfactory, even if limited, or no response due to no subcontracting in proposed delivery model.
FAIL	No description(s) provided in response to the question where the Applicant has stated they would use subcontracting within the delivery model.

**Section 7 – Additional Questions including Project Specific Questions**

<b>7.1 Insurance</b>	
PASS	You either have or can commit to obtain, prior to the commencement of the contract, each of the levels of insurance cover indicated as set out within question 7.1.
FAIL	You have not got each level of insurance cover as set out within question 7.1 and are not willing to obtain each level of insurance cover if offered a contract.

<b>7.2 Data Protection</b>	
<b>7.2(a)</b>	
PASS	A Response of Yes
FAIL	A Response of No
<b>7.2(b)</b>	
PASS	The information provided is complete and satisfactory and evidence is provided to support your company's ability to implement appropriate technical and organisational methods to comply with UK GDPR and ensure the protection of the rights of data subjects.
FAIL	The information is not provided, or the information provided is not satisfactory.

<b>7.3 Health and Safety</b>	
<b>7.3 (a)</b>	
PASS	The information provided is complete and satisfactory and includes details of existing policy and examples of how risks are controlled. *Note – a response to this question is not applicable if you are an organisation with less than 5 employees
FAIL	The information is not provided, or the information provided is not satisfactory.

<b>7.4 Business Dealings within Russia or Belarus</b>	
<b>7.4(a)</b>	
PASS	A Response of 'No.'
FAIL	A Response of 'Yes' and information requested has NOT been provided, or a response of 'Yes' and the information provided entitles the Council, at its sole discretion, to exclude the bid in accordance with current law and guidance.
<b>7.4(b)</b>	
PASS	A Response of 'No.'
FAIL	A Response of 'Yes' and information requested has NOT been provided, or a response of 'Yes' and the information provided entitles the Council, at its sole discretion, to exclude the bid in accordance with current law and guidance.
<b>7.4(c)</b>	
PASS	A Response of 'No.'
FAIL	A Response of 'Yes' and information requested has NOT been provided, or a response of 'Yes' and the information provided entitles the Council, at its sole discretion, to exclude the bid in accordance with current law and guidance.

<b>7.5 Flexible Agreement Minimum Criteria - Ofsted / Care Inspectorate Registration and Rating</b>	
<b>7.5 (a) Flexible Agreement Minimum Criteria - Ofsted / Care Inspectorate Registration and Rating</b>	
Please see Invitation to Participate document Section 3.6.1, Process Chart 1.1 and Evaluation Criteria stage 1.1	
PASS	<p>Applicant has completed Appendix 4 Selection Criteria Additional Information and the Council is able to verify the Applicant has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ofsted (or equivalent Regulatory Body) registration and rating of Requirements Improvement or above, or</li> <li>• Care Inspectorate rating of Adequate or above, or</li> <li>• Newly registered that has not received a published Ofsted or Care Inspectorate rating (or equivalent Regulatory Body), or</li> <li>• responded 'No' but supplied an explanation of how you otherwise meet this requirement despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion.</li> </ul> <p>At the sole discretion of the Council, the information provided may be taken into account to assess whether your organisation will PASS this question.</p>
FAIL	<p>If you respond 'No' to question 8.3(a), or you have not provided information which meets the Flexible Agreement Minimum Criteria and do not provide a satisfactory explanation of how you otherwise meet this requirement despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion within 8.3(b) this may result in a FAIL.</p> <p>An Applicant may Fail if they have an Ofsted rating of Requirement Improvement and their submitted action plan is deemed to not be satisfactory by Council.</p>
<b>The Council will verify this information as part of the evaluation process to ensure the Flexible Agreement Minimum Criteria is met.</b>	

<b>7.6 Registered Households and Location</b>
<b>7.6(a) Registered Households and Location</b>

Please see Invitation to Participate documents, Process Chart 1.1 and Evaluation Criteria stage 1.1	
PASS	At the Application Return Deadline Applicant has completed Appendix 4 Selection Criteria Additional Information and the Council is able to verify the Applicant has: 2 or more Registered Households residing within Wider Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, Cumbria and Lancashire (Wider BBCL) Boundary (see ITP Map 1)
FAIL	If you respond 'No' to question 8.4(a), or you have not provided information which meets the Flexible Agreement Minimum Criteria.

**Applicants must pass all sections in the above stages to be given a place on the Flexible Agreement. If an Applicant fails any section their Application will not be considered further and be rejected. The next stages will determine which Lot and Tier the Applicant will be placed within the Flexible Agreement.**

## Stage 2.0 LOT 1 PRICE ASSESSMENT

### (Process chart 2.0)

As stated in the ITP all Applicants must complete the Tab 4 Price Schedule within Appendix 4 Selection Criteria Additional Information and Price Schedule.

The prices submitted at this Application stage will be fixed for the first 12 months following the Flexible Agreement Commencement Date. Prices will then be subject to an optional annual inflationary adjustment. See clause 11 of the Call-Off Terms and Conditions for Charges and Payment terms.

**To be awarded a place on the Flexible Agreement prices submitted for Lot 1 will be subject to a price assessment as described below.**

**If an Applicant also wishes to apply for Lot 2 and/or Lot 3, the prices submitted will be evaluated for Tier 1 applications only. See stage 3.3.4 (Lot 2) and stage 3.4.4 (Lot 3).**

### **Price Assessment for Lot 1 only.**

All Applicants who pass the Flexible Agreement Minimum Criteria (stage 1 and 1.1) will be subject to the following Price Assessment, this will determine which Tier an Applicant will be placed within Lot 1.

All Applicants must submit a price per week for each price category for Lot 1 within Appendix 4 Selection Criteria Additional Information and Price Schedule – Tab 4 Price Schedule, which is the prices for each price category for delivering the Services set out in the Service Specification. These prices will be used should any Standard Foster Care Placement be awarded to a Provider. Price categories are set out in the price schedule at Appendix 4. For the purposes of this Lot 1 price assessment, only prices submitted for Lot 1 will be used, see below for more details.

There will be no ceiling price, however Applicants are encouraged to provide a competitive price as this will be assessed using the criteria outlined below to determine Tier position for Lot 1 Standard Foster Care. When a Call-Off is made via a Placement Request, if more than one Provider is able to offer a suitable Placement, then the lower priced Offer will be chosen, (see Schedule 2 of the Flexible Agreement for the Call Off Procedure).

Prices will not be scored during this price assessment to join the Flexible Agreement, however the following exercise will be carried out to determine the tier position for Lot 1 only.

- The Council will use the prices submitted by Applicants for Lot 1 within Appendix 4 (Selection Criteria Additional Information and Price Schedule) and multiply this by the example cohort sizes in the table below. This will calculate each Applicant's total cohort price.
- The sum of all total cohort prices will add up to an Applicant's Lot 1 price for each Applicant. This is the price which will be used in the price assessment.

### **Price Assessment Lot 1 only**

- The Council will calculate a mean average Lot 1 price using all Applicants Lot 1 price, by adding all of the Applicants Lots 1 prices and dividing by the number of Applicants Lot 1 prices.

## Appendix 8 – Application Evaluation Criteria

- If any **Applicant's Lot 1 price** is higher than 10% above the mean **average Lot 1 price** the Applicant will be placed in **Lot 1 Tier 3** (Process Chart 3.1.2).
- If any **Applicant's Lot 1 price** is no higher than 10% above the mean **average Lot 1 price** the Applicant will move onto the Tier 1 and Tier 2 evaluation as detailed below (3.0 onwards on the process chart).

Cohort Sizes:

Cohort Sizes <i>Evaluation Purposes Only</i>	Cohort				
	Age 0-4	Age 5-10	Age 11-15	Age 16-17	Parent & Child
<b>Price Category</b>					
<b>Standard Foster Care</b>	55	103	236	90	12
<b>Sibling Group</b>	30	146	197	32	
<b>Solo Placement</b>	4	12	21	6	

Cohort sizes are based on data held in December 2020 and are for evaluation purposes, there is no guarantee of volumes through the Flexible Agreement.

The following evaluation examples are for illustrative purposes only to demonstrate how Applicants prices will be assessed as described above. These examples should not be considered to have any influence on Applicant's prices, this is only to demonstrate how the price assessment process will be carried out.

### Applicant A

Price Category	Age 0-4	Age 5-10	Age 11-15	Age 16-17	Parent & Child
<b>Standard Foster Care</b> <i>Price Submitted x Cohort Size</i>	£750 x 55	£800 x 103	£850 x 236	£860 x 90	£1300 x 12
<b>Sibling Group</b> <i>Price Submitted x Cohort Size</i>	£700 x 30	£750 x 146	£800 x 197	£850 x 32	
<b>Solo Placement</b> <i>Price Submitted x Cohort Size</i>	£1000 x 4	£1100 x 12	£1200 x 21	£1250 x 6	
<b>Total Cohort Price</b>	£66,250.00	£205,100.00	£383,400.00	£112,100.00	£15,600.00
<b>Applicant A Total Lot 1 Price</b>					<b>£782,450.00</b>

### Applicant B

Price Category	Age 0-4	Age 5-10	Age 11-15	Age 16-17	Parent & Child
<b>Standard Foster Care</b> <i>Price Submitted x Cohort Size</i>	£720 x 55	£790 x 103	£830 x 236	£850 x 90	£1200 x 12
<b>Sibling Group</b> <i>Price Submitted x Cohort Size</i>	£690 x 30	£740 x 146	£790 x 197	£845 x 32	
<b>Solo Placement</b>	£950 x 4	£1000 x 12	£1100 x 21	£1200 x 6	



Price Submitted x Cohort Size					
<b>Total Cohort Price</b>	£64,100.00	£201,410.00	£374,610.00	£110,740.00	£14,400.00
<b>Applicant B Total Lot 1 Price</b>					<b>£765,260.00</b>

**Applicant C**

Price Category	Age 0-4	Age 5-10	Age 11-15	Age 16-17	Parent & Child
<b>Standard Foster Care</b> Price Submitted x Cohort Size	£850 x 55	£900 x 103	£955 x 236	£1010 x 90	£1550 x 12
<b>Sibling Group</b> Price Submitted x Cohort Size	£750 x 30	£855 x 146	£950 x 197	£990 x 32	
<b>Solo Placement</b> Price Submitted x Cohort Size	£1250 x 4	£1300 x 12	£1400 x 21	£1500 x 6	
<b>Total Cohort Price</b>	£74,250.00	£233,130.00	£441,930.00	£131,580.00	£18,600.00
<b>Applicant C Total Lot 1 Price</b>					<b>£899,490.00</b>

	Applicant A Total Lot 1 Price	Applicant B Total Lot 1 Price	Applicant C Total Lot 1 Price
	<b>£782,450.00</b>	<b>£765,260.00</b>	<b>£899,490.00</b>
<b>Mean Average Lot 1 Price</b>	<b>£815,733.33</b>		
10% higher than mean average	<b>£897,306.67</b>		

Using the example above Applicant C would be placed in Tier 3 due to their **total Lot 1 price** being more than 10% higher than the mean **average Lot 1 Price**. Applicant A and Applicant B will move onto stage 3 evaluation.

**This completes the evaluation for Lot 1 Tier 3 Providers (Process Chart 3.1.2)**

**Stage 3.0 LOT/TIER ESSENTIAL CRITERIA**

**(Process chart 3.0)**

Once the Price Assessment is completed, those Applicants who are not within Tier 3 will be subject to the following evaluation.

**As a reminder of the Sufficiency Areas for the Lots and Tiers as detailed in the ITP document please see below:**

Each Lot will be split into the following sufficiency areas:

Lot 1	Tier 1 Only	Area A	Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire's Fostering Sufficiency Area	Map 3 (BBL)
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Lot 1	Tier 1 Only	Area B	Cumbria's Fostering Sufficiency Area	Map 2 (C)
Lot 1	Tier 2	Combined Area A and Area B	Combined Area A Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, and Lancashire's Fostering Sufficiency Area and Area B Cumbria's Fostering Sufficiency Area	Map 4 (BBCL)
Lot 1	Tier 3	Wider Area A and Area B	Wider Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, Cumbria and Lancashire.	Map 1 (Wider BBCL)
Lot 2 Lot 3	Tier 1 & Tier 2 Tier 1 & Tier 2	Combined Area A and Area B	Combined Area A Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, and Lancashire's Fostering Sufficiency Area and Area B Cumbria's Fostering Sufficiency Area	Map 4 (BBCL)

**LOT/TIER ESSENTIAL CRITERIA FOR:**

<b>Lot 1 Tier 1</b>	<b>Stage 3.2</b>
<b>Lot 1 Tier 2</b>	<b>Stage 3.1</b>
<b>Lot 2 Tier 1</b>	<b>Stage 3.3.3</b>
<b>Lot 2 Tier 2</b>	<b>Stage 3.3.1</b>
<b>Lot 3 Tier 1</b>	<b>Stage 3.4.3</b>
<b>Lot 3 Tier 2</b>	<b>Stage 3.4.1</b>

**Stage 3.1 Lot 1 Tier 2 Essential Criteria**

Applicants who have not stated they want to be considered for Lot 1 Tier 1 on their completed Appendix 4 Lot & Tier Application Summary Tab and therefore want to be placed in Tier 2 will be evaluated using the following Tier 2 Essential Criteria (Process Chart 3.1)

**Stage 3.1 Lot 1 Tier 2 Essential Criteria**

Applicants must meet the following Tier 2 Essential Criteria to be awarded a place on Lot 1 Tier 2:

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Evaluation Stage in Process Chart</b>
------------------	--

Pass the Minimum Criteria for the Flexible Agreement	1.0-1.1
Have a <b>Lot 1 Price</b> no more than 10% of the <b>Lot 1 mean average price</b>	2.0
Have an Ofsted registration and rating of Good or Outstanding or Care Inspectorate registration and rating of Good or above	3.1
Have <b>2 or more</b> Registered Households residing within Combined Area A Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, and Lancashire's Fostering Sufficiency Area and Area B Cumbria's Fostering Sufficiency Area (BBCL) Boundary <b>Map 4</b> .	3.1

All Applicants who meet the above Lot 1 Tier 2 Essential Criteria will be awarded a place on Lot 1 Tier 2 of the Flexible Agreement. (*Process chart 3.1.1*)

**This completes the evaluation for Lot 1 Tier 2 Providers (Process Chart 3.1.1)**

Those Applicants that do not meet the Lot 1 Tier 2 Essential Criteria will be given a place in Lot 1 Tier 3 (*Process chart 3.1.2*)

### Stage 3.2 Lot 1 Tier 1 Essential Criteria

Applicants who have indicated in Appendix 4 Lot & Tier Application Summary Tab that they wish to apply for Lot 1 Tier 1 can request to apply for Lot 1 Tier 1 for the following boundaries:

- Area A (Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, and Lancashire's Fostering Sufficiency (BBL) Area)
- and / or**
- Area B (Cumbria's Fostering Sufficiency (C) Area)

Applicants must also complete and submit Appendix 6 Lot 1 Tier 1 Quality Criteria Questionnaire and have provided prices for all price categories within Appendix 4 - Selection Criteria Additional Info and Price Schedules.

#### Stage 3.2.1 Lot 1 Tier 1 Essential Criteria Area A (BBL)

Applicants who wish to be apply for Area A Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire's Fostering Sufficiency Area (BBL) must meet the following Lot 1 Tier 1 Essential Criteria:

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Evaluation Stage in Process Chart</b>
Pass the Minimum Criteria for the Flexible Agreement	1.0-1.1
Have a <b>Lot 1 Price</b> no more than 10% of the <b>Lot 1 mean average price</b>	2.0
Have an Ofsted registration and registration and rating of Good or Outstanding	3.2.1
Have <b>5 or more</b> Registered Households residing within Area A Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, and Lancashire's Fostering Sufficiency Area (BBL) Boundary Map 3.	3.2.1

### Stage 3.2.1 Lot 1 Tier 1 Essential Criteria Area B (C)

Applicants who have indicated on wish to be apply for Area B Cumbria's Fostering Sufficiency Area (C) must meet the following Lot 1 Tier 1 Essential Criteria:

<b>Criterion</b>	<b><i>Evaluation Stage in Process Chart</i></b>
Pass the Minimum Criteria for the Flexible Agreement	1.0-1.1
Have a <b>Lot 1 Price</b> no more than 10% of the <b>Lot 1 mean average price</b>	2.0
Have an Ofsted registration and registration and rating of Good or Outstanding	3.2.1
Have <b>5 or more</b> Registered Households residing within Area B Cumbria's Fostering Sufficiency Area (C) Boundary Map 2.	3.2.1

All Applicants who meet the above Lot 1 Tier 1 Essential Criteria applicable to the Area(s) applying for, will move on to the Tier 1 Additional Criteria evaluation, to determine if the Applicant has been successful in Tier 1 or not.

### Stage 3.2.2 Lot 1 Tier 1 Additional Criteria Area A and Area B

Lot 1 Tier 1 Additional Criteria consists of the following:

- **Quality Criteria** - Applicants must complete the Appendix 6 - Lot 1 Tier 1 Quality Criteria Questionnaire and respond to all questions. Applicants only need to complete this Questionnaire once regardless of the Area(s) wishing to apply for.  
**This criteria will carry a weighting of 60%**
- **Price Criteria** - Applicants must also complete the Lot 1 Prices within the Price Schedules at Appendix 4 - Selection Criteria Additional Info and Price Schedules.  
**This criteria will carry a weighting of 40%**

Please note one total score will be awarded for quality and one total score for price regardless of the Area(s) an Applicant applies for.

Please see below how each of the additional criteria will be evaluated.

### Lot 1 Tier 1 Area A and/or Area B – Quality Criteria – Non-Price (60%)

Each question will be scored out of 4 (please see "The interpretations of the non-pricing scorings").

Weighted marks for each question within a criterion are added together to give the total score for the quality criteria.

**Please do NOT include embedded documents or attachments to answer any question, unless invited to do so within the body of the question. Embedded documents and attachments which are not permitted will NOT be evaluated.**

**It is acceptable for Applicants to include tables, flow charts, maps, process diagrams, and staffing structures provided any characters within these are included in the character count for the question, and only if they are entered within the text boxes provided, or as per instructions provided. If character limits are exceeded, the panel will NOT score any information which exceeds the character limit.**

The **quality criteria** section below demonstrates how this will apply to an Applicants score if they received, for each question, the following scores against a variety of weightings:

The interpretations of the non-price scorings are:

SCORE	DESCRIPTION
0	<b>Unacceptable</b> Nil or inadequate response. Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement.
1	<b>Poor.</b> Response is partially relevant but generally poor. The response addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient/limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled.
2	<b>Acceptable</b> Response is relevant and acceptable. The response addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details on how the requirement will be fulfilled in certain areas.
3	<b>Good</b> Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled.
4	<b>Excellent</b> Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full.

It is intended that the responses to these Quality questions will be evaluated in question number order, however the Council reserve the right to evaluate the responses to questions in any order. **Each question has a threshold score whereby should an Applicant be awarded a score of less than 2 (i.e. it does not meet criteria),** the evaluation panel may not complete the rest of the assessment for that Applicant's submission and the Applicant may be rejected from the evaluation process. Each member of the evaluation panel must agree with the score and the resulting elimination.

Applicants who are rejected, will be required to wait until the next application window is open (once every 3 years, The Council reserves the right to evaluate sooner) before they can reapply for admission to the Flexible Agreement.

For the avoidance of doubt the Council reserves the right seek to award scores for Question 1 and reject any Suppliers who are awarded a score of less than 2 without scoring the remainder of their Application.

**Quality Criteria Overview**

No Applicant will be advantaged or disadvantaged through the scoring mechanism. Applicants will be required to complete the questionnaire fully for this Lot. References made within any proposals to information contained within other Lot Applications will be disregarded.

**Please ensure that you tailor your answers to the Lot.**

All Applications for Lot 1 Tier 1 will be evaluated and scored on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender against the evaluation criteria which is based on the quality/price split outlined in this document.

Score for question x weighting factor (As shown in the Quality criteria table) = weighted score for each question.

**Lot 1 Tier 1**

<b>QUALITY CRITERIA</b>	<b>MAXIMUM PRE-WEIGHTED SCORE</b>	<b>WEIGHTING FACTOR</b>	<b>MAXIMUM SCORE (%)</b>
1. Collaborative Working	4	8.75	35
2. Social Value	4	2.5	10
3. Care Planning and Review	4	3.75	15
<b>MAXIMUM WEIGHTED QUALITY SCORE</b>			<b>60%</b>

**Lot 1 Tier 1 Area A and/or Area B – Price Criteria (40%)**

Applicants will be required to submit a weekly price for each Price Category as described in stage 2.0 of this document.

The weekly prices must be the price for delivering the Services set out in the Service Specification. The prices submitted at this Application stage will be fixed for the first 12 months following the Flexible Agreement Commencement Date. Prices will then be subject to an optional annual inflationary adjustment. See clause 11 of the Call-Off Terms and Conditions for Charges and Payment terms.

**Lot 1 Tier 1 Standard Foster Care Prices:**

Having considered all aspects of Council's requirements detailed in these ITP documents, the Applicant must provide prices within Appendix 4 Selection Criteria Additional Information and Price Schedules

Applicants must complete all parts the schedule for Lot 1, Submission of an incomplete price schedule may result in failure and disqualification of the Application.

Any reference to spend or volumes commissioned by the Council and Contracting Bodies will be based on historical data and are to be used for guidance only. The Council cannot guarantee the number of Placements throughout the Term of the Flexible Agreement.

All prices must be quoted in pounds sterling to two decimal places, and be exclusive of VAT.

Prices must remain open for acceptance until 180 days from the Applicant Return Deadline.

Please see section 4.2 of the Invitation to Participate for more information about pricing.

**Price Score**

For the purposes of price scoring for Lot 1, the price score will be calculated using the Applicants **Total Lot 1 Price**. This will be calculated in the same way as described in stage 2.0.

Each Applicants **Total Lot 1 Price** will be arranged by the most competitive (lowest value) through to the least competitive (highest value).

The most competitive Applicant's **Total Lot 1 Price** gains the full score available within the price criteria (40%). All remaining prices, which are more expensive, are awarded a score pro rata to the most competitive price. The formula to calculate the price score is carried out as described below.

*The following examples are for illustrative purposes only and should not be considered to have any influence on Applicants prices.*

	<b>Total Lot 1 Price</b>	<b>Weighting for Lot 1 Price</b>	<b>Price Score</b>
Applicant A	£782,450.00	<b>40.00</b>	<b>39.12%</b>
Applicant B	£765,260.00		<b>40%</b>

The formula used to calculate the **Price Score** for each Applicant's **Total Lot 1 Price** shall be:

$$\text{Price Score} = (\text{Lowest Total Lot 1 Price} / \text{Applicants Total Lot 1 Price}) * \text{Weighting}$$

In the event that the calculation returns a negative Price Score the Applicant will be awarded a Price Score of zero (0).

**Stage 3.2.3 Lot 1 Tier 1 Area A and Area B Successful Providers**

The sum of an Applicant's Quality and Price Score added together will provide an Applicants Lot 1 Tier 1 Score:

$$\text{Quality Score (Max 60\%)} + \text{Price Score (Max 40\%)} = \text{Lot 1 Tier 1 Score}$$

Applicants will be arranged by the highest Lot 1 Tier 1 Score through to the lowest Lot 1 Tier 1 Score for the Area(s) the Applicant has applied for.

The Council will take each list of ranked Applicants and the top 12 ranking Applicants for Area A will be awarded a place in Lot 1 Tier 1 Area A and the top 12 ranking Applicants for Area B will be awarded a place in Lot 1 Tier 1 Area B.

The remaining Applicants who meet the Tier 1 criteria but are not in the top 12 highest scoring in each Area will be awarded a place on Tier 2 (Combined Area A and Area B) and will be classified as Tier 1 Reserves for the Area(s) as applicable. (Process Chart 3.2.4). For the avoidance of doubt, there will be an Area A Tier 1 Reserve list and an Area B Tier 1 Reserve list.

Please see Appendix 2 - Flexible Agreement, Schedule 5, for more details regarding Tier 1 Reserves.

**This completes the evaluation for Lot 1 Tier 1 Area A Providers and Area B Providers (Process Chart 3.2.5 and 3.2.6)**

### Stage 3.3 Lot 2 Enhanced Foster Care

Applicants must have been successful within Lot 1 (any Tier) to be considered for Lot 2.

Applicants who have been successful within Lot 1 and have indicated in Appendix 4 Lot & Tier Application Summary Tab that they wish to apply for Lot 2 Enhanced Foster Carer must complete and submit Appendix 7 Lot 2 and Lot 3 Quality Criteria Questionnaire (**All Applicants must complete Lot 2 question 1**. If an Applicant wishes to be considered for Tier 1, they must also complete Lot 2 questions 2 and 3). Applicants must also provide prices for the relevant Lot(s) within Appendix 4 Price Schedule.

#### Stage 3.3.1 Lot 2 Essential Criteria Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL)

Applicants who wish to be apply for Lot 2 must meet the following Lot 2 Essential Criteria:

<b>Criterion</b>	<b><i>Evaluation Stage in Process Chart</i></b>
Pass the Minimum Criteria for the Flexible Agreement	1.0-1.1
Have an Ofsted registration and rating of Requires Improvement or above or Care Inspectorate registration and rating of Adequate or above.	3.3.1
Have 2 <b>or more</b> Registered Households residing Combined Area A Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, and Lancashire's Fostering Sufficiency Area and Area B Cumbria's Fostering Sufficiency Area (BBCL) Boundary Map 4.	3.3.1
Achieved a score of 2 or more for Lot 2 question 1 of the Lot 2 Quality Criteria Questionnaire. See details below.	3.3.1

Lot 2 Applicants must provide a response to Q1 Service Model question within Appendix 7 Lot 2 and Lot 3 Quality Criteria Questionnaire to be considered further for Lot 2 evaluation.

Lot 2 Question 1 will be scored out of 4 (please see "The interpretations of the non-pricing scorings" below). This question has a **threshold score** whereby should the evaluation panel award a score of less than 2, the Applicant has not met the threshold and **will be rejected**.



Therefore, to be eligible for the Lot 2 Tier 2, a **minimum score of 2** must be achieved in Question 1 of the Lot 2 Quality Criteria.

All Applicants who have met the above Tier 2 Essential Criteria will be awarded a place on Lot 2 Enhanced Foster Care Tier 2.

**This completes the evaluation for Lot 2 Tier 2 Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL) (Process Chart 3.3.2)**

### **Stage 3.3.3 Lot 2 Tier 1 Additional Criteria Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL)**

Applicants who have met the Lot 2 Essential Criteria above and have indicated in Appendix 4 Lot & Tier Application Summary Tab that they wish to apply for Lot 2 Tier 1 must complete and submit all questions within Appendix 7 Lot 2 and Lot 3 Quality Criteria Questionnaire and have provided prices for all price categories within Appendix 4 Price Schedule.

Lot 2 Tier 1 Additional Criteria consists of the following:

- **Quality Criteria** - Applicants must complete all Lot 2 questions within Appendix 7 Lot 2 and Lot 3 Quality Criteria Questionnaire.  
**This criteria will carry a weighting of 60%**
- **Price Criteria** - Applicants must also complete the Lot 2 prices within the Price Schedules at Appendix 4 - Selection Criteria Additional Info and Price Schedules.  
**This criteria will carry a weighting of 40%**

Please see below how each of the additional criteria will be evaluated.

### **Lot 2 Tier 1 Combined Area A and Area B – Quality Criteria – Non-Price (60%)**

Each question will be scored out of 4 (please see "The interpretations of the non-pricing scorings").

Weighted marks for each question within a criterion are added together to give the total score for the quality criteria. Please note, the score awarded for question 1 (Lot 2 Essential Criteria) will have the weighting applied in order to be included in the Tier 1 evaluation as detailed below.

**Please do NOT include embedded documents or attachments to answer any question, unless invited to do so within the body of the question. Embedded documents and attachments which are not permitted will NOT be evaluated.**

**It is acceptable for Applicants to include tables, flow charts, maps, process diagrams, and staffing structures provided any characters within these are included in the character count for the question, and only if they are entered within the text boxes provided, or as per instructions provided. If character limits are exceeded, the panel will NOT score any information which exceeds the character limit.**

The **quality criteria** section below demonstrates how this will apply to an Applicants score if they received, for each question, the following scores against a variety of weightings:

The interpretations of the non-price scorings are:

<b>SCORE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b> Nil or inadequate response. Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement.
<b>1</b>	<b>Poor.</b> Response is partially relevant but generally poor. The response addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient/limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled.
<b>2</b>	<b>Acceptable</b> Response is relevant and acceptable. The response addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details on how the requirement will be fulfilled in certain areas.
<b>3</b>	<b>Good</b> Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled.
<b>4</b>	<b>Excellent</b> Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full.

It is intended that the responses to these Quality questions will be evaluated in question number order, however the Council reserve the right to evaluate the responses to questions in any order. **Each question has a threshold score whereby should an Applicant be awarded a score of less than 2 (i.e. it does not meet criteria),** the evaluation panel may not complete the rest of the assessment for that Applicant's submission and the Applicant may be rejected from the evaluation process. Each member of the evaluation panel must agree with the score and the resulting elimination.

Applicants who are rejected, will be required to wait until the next application window is open (once every 3 years, The Council reserves the right to evaluate sooner) before they can reapply for admission to the Flexible Agreement.

### Quality Criteria Overview

No Applicant will be advantaged or disadvantaged through the scoring mechanism. Applicants will be required to complete the questionnaire fully for this Lot. References made within any proposals to information contained within other Lot submissions will be disregarded.

**Please ensure that you tailor your answers to Lot 2 questions.**

All Applications for Lot 2 Tier 1 will be evaluated and scored on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender against the evaluation criteria which is based on the quality/price split outlined in this document.

Score for question x weighting factor (As shown in the Quality criteria table) = weighted score for each question.

### Lot 2 Tier 1

QUALITY CRITERIA	MAXIMUM PRE-WEIGHTED SCORE	WEIGHTING FACTOR	MAXIMUM SCORE (%)
1. Service Model	4	8.75	35
2. Placement Requests	4	3.75	15
3. Enhanced Foster Carers	4	2.5	10
<b>MAXIMUM WEIGHTED QUALITY SCORE</b>			<b>60%</b>

## Lot 2 Tier 1 Combined Area A and Area B – Price Criteria (40%)

Applicants will be required to submit a weekly price for each Price Category.

The weekly prices must be the price for delivering the Services set out in the Service Specification. The prices submitted at this Application stage will be fixed for the first 12 months following the Flexible Agreement Commencement Date.

Prices will then be subject to an optional annual inflationary adjustment. Appendix 2 Flexible Agreement (clause 11 of the Call-Off Terms and Conditions) for Charges and Payment terms.

### **Lot 2 Tier 1 Enhanced Foster Care Prices:**

Having considered all aspects of Council's requirements detailed in these ITP documents, the Applicant must provide prices within Appendix 4 - Selection Criteria Additional Information and Price Schedules

Applicants must complete all parts of the Lot 2 price schedule, Submission of an incomplete price schedule may result in failure and disqualification of the Application.

Any reference to spend or volumes commissioned by the Council and Contracting Bodies will be based on historical data and are to be used for guidance only. The Council cannot guarantee the number of Placements throughout the Term of the Flexible Agreement.

All prices must be quoted in pounds sterling to two decimal places, and be exclusive of VAT.

Prices must remain open for acceptance until 180 days from the Applicant Return Deadline.

Please see section 4.2 of the Invitation to Participate for more in about pricing.

### **Price Score**

Applicants must provide a weekly Foster Carer Price for 1 Child placed in an Enhanced Foster Carer Placement, which will be used should any Enhanced Foster Care Placement be awarded to a Provider. This price must be for all ages.

Applicants must also provide a Retainer Fee for 1 Child. See Specification for more details, please note that this Retainer Fee may be used across all Lots of the Flexible Agreement. This retainer fee will be fixed for the for the first 12 months following the Flexible Agreement Commencement Date and will be subject to the optional annual inflationary uplift.

For the purposes of the evaluation process, the price score will be calculated using a price for an Enhanced Placement set over a 52 week period which will include a 4 week Retainer fee. This will be used as a scoring mechanism. i.e  
(Weekly price X 48) + (Retainer Fee X 4)= 52 week placement price.

The price score is calculated by arranging the Applicant's prices (the total cost of providing a 52 week placement) by the most competitive (lowest value) through to the least competitive (highest value).

- The most competitive price for a 52 week placement gains the full weighting available (40). All remaining prices, which are more expensive, are awarded a score pro rata to the most competitive response. The formula to calculate the price score is carried out as described below:

Price Score = (Lowest Applicants 52 week placement price / Applicants 52 week placement price price)\*Weighting

In the event that the calculation returns a negative Price Score the Applicant will be awarded a Price Score of zero (0).

### Stage 3.3.6 Lot 2 Tier 1 Combined Area A and Area B Successful Providers

The sum of an Applicant's Quality and Price Score added together will provide an Applicants Lot 2 Tier 1 Score:

Quality Score (Max 60%) + Price Score (Max 40%) = Lot 2 Tier 1 Score

Applicants will be arranged by the highest Lot 2 Tier 1 Score through to the lowest Lot 2 Tier 1 Score.

The top 5 ranking Applicants will be awarded a place in Lot 2 Tier 1 Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL). (Process Chart 3.3.6)

The remaining Applicants who meet the Tier 1 criteria will be awarded a place on Tier 2 (Combined Area A and Area B) and will be classified as Tier 1 Reserves. (Process Chart 3.3.5)

Please see Schedule 2 of the Flexible Agreement for more details regarding Tier 1 Reserves.

**This completes the evaluation for Lot 2 Tier 1 Combined Area and Area B Providers (Process Chart 3.3.6)**

### Stage 3.4 Lot 3 Step Down into Foster Care

Applicants must have been successful within Lot 1 (any Tier) to be considered for Lot 3.

Applicants who have indicated in Appendix 4 Lot & Tier Application Summary Tab that they wish to apply for Lot 3 Step Down into Foster Care must complete and submit Appendix 7 Lot 2 and Lot 3 Quality Criteria Questionnaire (**All Applicants must complete Lot 3 question 1.**)

If an Applicants wishes to be considered for Tier 1, they must also complete Lot 3 questions 2 and 3). Applicants must also provide prices within Appendix 4 Price Schedule tab.

**Stage 3.4.1 Lot 3 Essential Criteria Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL)**

Applicants who wish to apply for Lot 3 must meet the following Lot 3 Essential Criteria:

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Evaluation Stage in Process Chart</b>
Pass the Minimum Criteria for the Flexible Agreement	1.0-1.1
Have an Ofsted registration and rating of Requires Improvement or above or Care Inspectorate registration and rating of Adequate or above.	3.4.1
Have 2 <b>or more</b> Registered Households residing Combined Area A Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, and Lancashire's Fostering Sufficiency Area and Area B Cumbria's Fostering Sufficiency Area (BBCL) Boundary Map 4.	3.4.1
Achieved a score of 2 or more for question 1 of the Lot 3 Quality Criteria Questionnaire. See Criteria details below.	3.4.1

Lot 3 Applicants must provide a response to Lot 3 Q1 Service Model question within Appendix 7 to be considered further for Lot 3 evaluation.

Question 1 will be scored out of 4 (please see "The interpretations of the non-pricing scorings" below). This question has a **threshold score** whereby should the evaluation panel awarded a score of less than 2, the Applicant has not met the threshold and **will be rejected**.

Therefore, to be eligible for the Lot 3, a **minimum score of 2** must be achieved in Question 1 of the Lot 3 Quality Criteria.

All Applicants who have met the above Tier 3 Essential Criteria will be awarded a place on Lot 3 Step Down to Foster Care Tier 2.

**This completes the evaluation for Lot 3 Tier 2 Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL) (Process Chart 3.4.2)**

**Stage 3.4.3 Lot 3 Tier 1 Additional Criteria Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL)**

Applicants who have met the Lot 3 Essential Criteria above and have indicated in Appendix 4 Lot & Tier Application Summary Tab that they wish to apply for Lot 3 Tier 1 must complete and submit all Lot 3 questions within Appendix 7 Lot 2 and Lot 3 Quality Criteria Questionnaire and have provided prices for all price categories within Appendix 4 Price Schedule tab.

Lot 3 Tier 1 Additional Criteria consists of the following:

- **Quality Criteria** - Applicants must complete all Lot 3 questions within Appendix 7 Lot 2 and Lot 3 Quality Criteria Questionnaire.  
**This criteria will carry a weighting of 60%**
- **Price Criteria** - Applicants must also complete the Lot 3 prices within the Price Schedules at Appendix 4 - Selection Criteria Additional Info and Price Schedules.  
**This criteria will carry a weighting of 40%**

Please see below how each of the additional criteria will be evaluated.

### **Lot 3 Tier 1 Combined Area A and Area B – Quality Criteria – Non-Price (60%)**

Each question will be scored out of 4 (please see "The interpretations of the non-pricing scorings").

Weighted marks for each question within a criterion are added together to give the total score for the quality criteria. Please note, the score awarded for question 1 (Lot 3 Essential Criteria) will have the weighting applied in order to be included in the Tier 1 evaluation as detailed below.

**Please do NOT include embedded documents or attachments to answer any question, unless invited to do so within the body of the question. Embedded documents and attachments which are not permitted will NOT be evaluated.**

**It is acceptable for Applicants to include tables, flow charts, maps, process diagrams, and staffing structures provided any characters within these are included in the character count for the question, and only if they are entered within the text boxes provided, or as per instructions provided. If character limits are exceeded, the panel will NOT score any information which exceeds the character limit.**

The **quality criteria** section below demonstrates how this will apply to an Applicants score if they received, for each question, the following scores against a variety of weightings:

The interpretations of the non-price scorings are:

<b>SCORE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b> Nil or inadequate response. Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement.
<b>1</b>	<b>Poor.</b> Response is partially relevant but generally poor. The response addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient/limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled.
<b>2</b>	<b>Acceptable</b> Response is relevant and acceptable. The response addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details on how the requirement will be fulfilled in certain areas.
<b>3</b>	<b>Good</b> Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled.

<b>4</b>	<p><b>Excellent</b>                  Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full.</p>
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It is intended that the responses to these Quality questions will be evaluated in question number order, however the Council reserve the right to evaluate the responses to questions in any order. **Each question has a threshold score whereby should an Applicant be awarded a score of less than 2 (i.e. it does not meet criteria),** the evaluation panel may not complete the rest of the assessment for that Applicant's submission and the Applicant may be rejected from the evaluation process. Each member of the evaluation panel must agree with the score and the resulting elimination.

Applicants who are rejected, will be required to wait until the next application window is open (once every 3 years, The Council reserves the right to evaluate sooner) before they can reapply for admission to the Flexible Agreement.

### Quality Criteria Overview

No Applicant will be advantaged or disadvantaged through the scoring mechanism. Applicants will be required to complete the questionnaire fully for this Lot. References made within any proposals to information contained within other Lot submissions will be disregarded.

**Please ensure that you tailor your answers to Lot 3.**

All Applications for Lot 3 Tier 1 will be evaluated and scored on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender against the evaluation criteria which is based on the quality/price split outlined in this document.

Score for question x weighting factor (As shown in the Quality criteria table) = weighted score for each question.

#### Lot 3 Tier 1

QUALITY CRITERIA	MAXIMUM PRE-WEIGHTED SCORE	WEIGHTING FACTOR	MAXIMUM SCORE (%)
1. Service Model	4	8.75	35
2. Placement Requests	4	3.75	15
3. Step Down Foster Carers	4	2.5	10
<b>MAXIMUM WEIGHTED QUALITY SCORE</b>			<b>60%</b>

### Lot 3 Tier 1 Combined Area A and Area B – Price Criteria (40%)

Applicants will be required to submit a weekly price for each Price Category.

The weekly prices must be the price for delivering the Services set out in the Service Specification. The prices submitted at this Application stage will be fixed for the first 12 months following the Flexible Agreement Commencement Date.

Prices will then be subject to an optional annual inflationary adjustment. See clause 11 of the Call-Off Terms and Conditions for Charges and Payment terms.



**Lot 3 Tier 1 Enhanced Foster Care Prices:**

Having considered all aspects of Council's requirements detailed in these ITP documents, the Applicant must provide prices within Appendix 4 Selection Criteria Additional Information and Price Schedules

Applicants must complete all part of Lot 3 price schedule, Submission of an incomplete price schedule may result in failure and disqualification of the Application.

Any reference to spend or volumes commissioned by the Council and Contracting Bodies will be based on historical data and are to be used for guidance only. The Council cannot guarantee the number of Placements throughout the Term of the Flexible Agreement.

All prices must be quoted in pounds sterling to two decimal places, and be exclusive of VAT.

Prices must remain open for acceptance until 180 days from the Applicant Return Deadline.

Please see section 4.2 of the Invitation to Participate for more in about pricing.

**Price Score**

Applicants must provide a weekly price for each of the Price Categories, which will be used should any Step Down Placement be awarded to a Provider. There are four Price Categories – each one represents one of the four phases of a Step Down into Foster Care placement as detailed in section 11 of the Specification.

For the purposes of the evaluation process, the four phases have been set over a 52 week period which will be used as a scoring mechanism. The duration of each phase for scoring purposes is set out below.

Planning & Introductory	4 weeks
Stabilisation	16 weeks
Settling and Maintenance Period	26 weeks
Transition	6 weeks

The price score is calculated by arranging the Applicant's prices (the total cost of providing a 52 week placement) by the most competitive (lowest value) through to the least competitive (highest value).

The most competitive price for a 52 week placement gains the full weighting available (40). All remaining prices, which are more expensive, are awarded a score pro rata to the most competitive response for the price category. The formula to calculate the price score for each price category is carried out as described below:

Price Score = (Lowest Applicants 52 week placement price / Applicants 52 week placement price)\*Weighting

In the event that the calculation returns a negative Price Score the Applicant will be awarded a Price Score of zero (0).

*The following examples are for illustrative purposes only and should not be considered to have any influence on Applicants prices. Prices are per week. The number of weeks for each period*



is 4 weeks for *Planning and Introduction*, 16 weeks for *Stabilisation*, 26 weeks for *Settling and Maintenance Period* and 6 weeks for *Transition*.

	Lot 3 Price Category				Total Price over 52 weeks	Lot 3 Price Score
	Planning & Introductory	Stabilisation	Settling and Maintenance Period	Transition		
Applicant A	£500	£1,000	£900	£800	£46,200	40.00
Applicant B	£600	£1,100	£1,000	£900	£51,400	38.89

### Stage 3.4.6 Lot 3 Tier 1 Combined Area A and Area B Successful Providers

The sum of an Applicant's Quality and Price Score added together will provide an Applicants Lot 3 Tier 1 Score:

Quality Score (Max 60%) + Price Score (Max 40%) = Lot 3 Tier 1 Score

Applicants will be arranged by the highest Lot 3 Tier 1 Score through to the lowest Lot 3 Tier 1 Score.

The top 5 ranking Applicants will be awarded a place in Lot 3 Tier 1 Combined Area A and Area B (BBCL). (Process Chart 3.4.6)

The remaining Applicants who meet the Tier 1 criteria but are not in the top 5 highest scoring will be awarded a place on Tier 2 (Combined Area A and Area B) and will be classified as Tier 1 Reserves. (Process Chart 3.4.5)

Please see Schedule 2 of the Flexible Agreement for more details regarding Tier 1 Reserves.

**This completes the evaluation for Lot 3 Tier 1 Combined Area and Area B Providers (Process Chart 3.4.6)**

### Reopening of the Flexible Agreement

#### Every 3 Years Reopen for New Applications

The Council will to reopen the Flexible Agreement for new Applicants, and intends for evaluation to take place at least every three years at the Flexible Agreement Commencement Date anniversary, unless otherwise advised by the Council. The Council reserve the right to do this sooner if demand for placements increases or existing Flexible Agreement Providers lack capacity and it does not meet Contracting Body's needs. At this reopening new Applicants can apply to be part of the Flexible Agreement following the Application Process as describe in the ITP and this Application Evaluation Criteria document.

#### Existing Flexible Agreement Providers Wishing to Remain in Current Lot(s)/Tier

For existing Providers, they may wish to remain in the same Lot/Tier in which they are currently placed. These Providers must confirm if any changes have occurred.

Existing Providers may resubmit responses to Quality Criteria (as applicable) if they wish to do so, they may also confirm if their initial response remain unchanged. Existing Providers will not be required to resubmit Prices unless applying for a lot which a Provider is not already part of. Existing Providers will be subject to the same evaluation as described in this document, with the exception as described in this section. Please see below summary:

Criteria	Lot 1 Tier 1	Lot 1 Tier 2 & Tier 3	Lot 2 & Lot 3 Tier 1	Lot 2 & Lot 3 Tier 2
<b>Selection Criteria and Additional Information (see stage 1.0-1.1)</b>	Confirm any changes at reopening.			
<b>Price Assessment (see stage 2.0)</b>	Current price will remain but subject to 10% assessment	N/A		
<b>Quality Criteria</b>	Confirm if all existing responses still applies; or Resubmit to be rescored.	N/A	Confirm if all existing responses still applies; or Resubmit to be rescored	Confirm if existing Q1 response still applies; or Resubmit to be rescored
<b>Price Criteria</b>	Cannot resubmit Price for current Lots. Price score will be recalculated taking account of a Provider's current price (including any uplifts taken) and new Applicants prices.	N/A	Cannot resubmit Price current Lots. Price score will be recalculated taking account of a Provider's current price (including any uplifts taken) and new Applicants prices.	N/A

**Any Tier 1 Providers:**

Further to the table above, if an existing Tier 1 Provider wishes to remain a Tier 1 Provider, the following will apply:

- The Tier 1 Provider must confirm they still meet the Essential Criteria and confirm if any changes to the information currently held by the Council. This will be verified by the Council. Failure to confirm this information may result in the Council issuing an Improvement Notice which could lead to suspension of Placement Requests.
- If they meet the Essential Criteria they can move on to the next stage - Additional Criteria (quality and price evaluation). If any existing Tier 1 Provider does not meet the Essential Criteria, they will be placed in either Tier 2 or Tier 3 (Lot 1 only) subject to the evaluation of the relevant Essential Criteria for that Lot(s).

**Tier 1 (all Lots) Additional Criteria - Quality Criteria**

At the reopening of the Flexible Agreement, the Council will provide existing Tier 1 Providers and Tier 1 Reserve Providers the opportunity to resubmit all Quality Questions Response or they may choose to keep existing responses and therefore Quality Score. However, the Provider must confirm they can still maintain their initial Quality Questions responses.

If the Provider resubmits their Quality Questions Responses this will be evaluated as described in this document.

**Tier 1 (all Lots) Additional Criteria – Price Criteria**

For existing Providers, the price used to recalculate their Price Score will be their current price (Application price plus any adjustments) unless Providers choose to submit a new lower price. The Price Score will be as calculated in the same way as described in:

Lot 1 – stage 3.2.3,

Lot 2 – stage 3.3.4

Lot 3 – Stage 3.4.4

**Lot 2 and Lot 3 Providers**

At the reopening of the Flexible Agreement, the Council will provide existing Lot 2 and Lot 3 Providers the opportunity to resubmit a response to Question 1 of the Quality Questions (Service Model) or they may choose to keep their existing response and therefore Quality Score. However, the Provider must confirm they can still maintain their initial Service Model response.

If the Provider resubmits their Quality Questions Responses this will be evaluated as described in this document.

**Existing Providers Applying for other Lots/Tiers**

At the reopening, this is an opportunity to apply for different Lot(s), if not already part of, and be considered for a higher Tier if the Council is satisfied the Provider meets the Minimum and Essential Criteria for the Lot/Tier as described in this document.

Please see Tiering System at Schedule 5 of the Flexible Agreement for further information.

**Lot 2 and Lot 3 Tier 2 Provider:**

Existing Tier 2 Providers can apply to be in Tier 1 for Lot 2 and/or Lot 3 by submitting responses to Question 2 and 3 for the applicable Lot(s) in Appendix 7 - Lot 2 and Lot 3 Quality Criteria Questionnaire. Existing Provider may choose to resubmit response to Question 1 however this is not compulsory and if not resubmitted existing quality score awarded will remain. The Council will verify the existing Provider meets the relevant Lot and Tier Essential

Criteria and will evaluate existing Provider's additional Lot and/or Tier Applications along with any new Applications as described in Stages of this Application Evaluation Criteria, as described in Stages 3.3 onwards and 3.4 onwards of this Application Evaluation Criteria.

### Lot 1 Standard Foster Care

#### Lot 1 Providers:

Existing Lot 1 Providers, not already part of Lot 2 and/or Lot 3, can apply to be considered for Lot 2 and/or Lot 3 using the application process as described in Stages 3.3 onwards and 3.4 onwards of this Application Evaluation Criteria.

#### Lot 1 Tier 2 and Tier 3 Providers:

Existing Tier 2 and Tier 3 Providers can apply to be in Tier 1 by submitting an Appendix 6 - Lot 1 Tier 1 Quality Criteria Questionnaire. The Council will verify the existing Provider meets the relevant Lot and Tier Essential Criteria and will evaluate existing Provider's additional Lot and/or Tier Application along with any new Applications as described in Stages of this Application Evaluation Criteria, as described in Stages 3.3 onwards and 3.4 onwards of this Application Evaluation Criteria

#### Price Assessment Lot 1 only – Existing Providers

This process will follow the same process as described in stage 2.0 of this document, however **a new mean average will be calculated each year**. This will be following the completion of the inflationary adjustment (see clause 11 of the Call-Off Terms and Conditions), using existing Providers current **Total Lot 1 price** (including any adjustment) and the **Total Lot 1 price** from any new Applicants for Lot 1.

If an existing Provider's price is more than 10% above the mean average they will be moved to Tier 3, if they are not already within this Tier.