



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

Mr S Mallett
By email

**Department of Energy & Climate
Change**

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13 November 2014

Dear Mr Mallett

Renewable Energy Planning Database Procurement Process

Thank you for your email of 28 October 2014, in which you seek further feedback about your tender to 'Maintain and publish a planning database for renewable energy installations' (Tender reference 830/06/2014).

I will address each of your points in turn but more generally, I would like to reiterate that DECC takes an evidence-based approach to procurement in the interests of fairness to all bidders. It is the Tenderer's responsibility to ensure that the information contained within the response to the Invitation to Tender (ITT) meets all the requirements of the ITT on a full and comprehensive basis.

This procurement was for the maintenance and publication of a planning database for renewable energy installations. The ITT set out at Section 12 the scope of the work and the expectations of what the contractor would be required to do, and at Section 13, the requirements and outputs.

In particular paragraph 13.1 set out that the 'overall aim of the work of the planning database is to ensure that Government can continue to have access to accurate data on the deployment of renewable electricity projects as they pass through the planning system. The emphasis will be on the capture of accurate and timely data on proposed and existing planning applications'.

Section 13 also listed specific objectives and advised that the tender should set out the proposed arrangements for covering these objectives.

To enable the Evaluation Panel to assess the best bid, the ITT set out at Paragraph 26.1 criteria for assessing the tenders, and the weighting to be applied. This included wording such as 'experience / ability to demonstrate...'. As part of this assessment, the Evaluation Panel was looking for bidders to demonstrate clearly and convincingly how they met the criteria and therefore the requirements of the ITT.

In submitting your Tender, you referenced a published renewables map as evidence of your ability to meet the requirements of the ITT. However, it was still necessary to support this by explaining in the main body of the bid how and why it would meet all the requirements of the ITT (such as consistency, quality, accuracy, timeliness) and to provide assurance on how the outputs would be met to the required level. Unfortunately, there was insufficient detail in the bid for the Evaluation Panel to verify this.

Simply put, you would have scored higher marks had you:

- Provided supporting evidence within the body of the bid on how your renewables map met the requirements of the ITT; and
- Addressed areas outwith the scope of the map in sufficient detail to provide evidence or demonstrate an understanding of the requirements. For example, how the map and your proposed data collection processes were sufficient to meet DECC's needs and quality standards; your approach to data quality assurance.

As requested, I will now address the individual points raised in your email. For ease of reference I have replicated your email below, with my response added in red below each comment.

Simon Mallet email:

I tendered for the REPD part of the overall RESTATS / REPD project and was dismissed at an early stage. The general statement was:

"However there was little evidence of how that would be applied to this work area. The bid also failed to demonstrate a good understanding of renewable energy and policy issues and of DECC's requirement."

Looking at the first sentence "however there was little evidence of how that would be applied to this work area" the specification of what was actually required as an output in every sense described renewables map. A resource that I have developed and expanded over the years, even so far as to change the original restats target from sub 1MW to anything over 1MW.

The statement is irrational and ignores the evidence presented. Simply the fact that I was (as stated within the bid) and still am already doing what was required as the major output of the tender (and actually doing it better. The additional reporting was just a case of formatting the collected data in a different way.

Although you mention you would work with others, we would have liked detail on how you would do this, how you would guarantee the quality of the work and how you would meet DECC's requirements.

The tender makes only very high-level, general references to working with developers and local authorities. We are aware of the difficulties of sometimes achieving timely and accurate data collection, so would have expected your response to include detail as to how this would be achieved or how the risk of a lack of engagement from them would be managed.

Going on from there: "The bid also failed to demonstrate a good understanding of renewable energy and policy issues and of DECC's requirement" Having developed and managed the renewables map for over 6 years to the point where it is a resource

used more than the equivalent part of DECC's equivalent by 2 orders of magnitude, again this is an irrational statement.

As mentioned above, your tender concentrated on the publication of your map. You would have received higher marks had you, for example demonstrated an understanding of how Government policy on renewables has evolved over time, and mentioned the current challenges the REPD is designed to help address. For example, the management of financial incentives schemes and the need to meet targets and manage budgets.

I would also draw your attention to the statements from NAREC and STFC. You have seen these already.

Extracts and second-hand statements from third parties are not relevant unless they demonstrate meeting the requirements.

My contention is that as an individual, even though I was able to present proof of my ability to satisfy every requirement within the tender, my bid was always going to be dismissed.

As explained by Ed Davey in his response to the Rt Hon Sir Hugh Robertson, each proposal was assessed by an evaluation panel and marked in accordance with the published evaluation criteria and weighting, set out in the Invitation to Tender. The three suppliers with the highest scores from the written proposal were then shortlisted and invited for interview, two of which were SMEs.

The process was carried out in a fair and transparent way, overseen by a Senior Procurement manager. Whether the proposal was submitted by an individual, SME or large organisation was immaterial as the assessment depended on the evidence submitted within the tender.

I would also like a response to:

For about 2 years, renewables map was referenced by DECC / RESTATS as the definitive resource for renewable energy projects. Please can you clarify how this fits with the above dismissal of my ability to provide this resource formally. I can only think that you are happy to have it for free, but, for some reason will not entertain a bid to supply what was previously used by you for free I simply cannot understand this, unless I consider less salubrious reasons.

As set out above, the Panel could only consider the evidence submitted. I cannot comment on the previous reference or use of renewables map. However as one of the primary users of the REPD over the past 4 years, I can confirm that the REPD is a key component of DECC policy making. Other published databases are unlikely to be used for DECC purposes as they are unable to provide the same level of certainty over quality, accuracy and timeliness of data.

*I have stated that renewables map gets **60 times more visitors** than the equivalent part of the restats/repd web presence. This is based on the data provided within the FAQs of the tender. Can you clarify web page views and unique visitors with a clearly-stated time period, that information was omitted from the FAQs and cannot/ could not be considered 'commercial in confidence'..*

The contractor has advised that the data reported related to June 2014 and was intended to give a representation of the traffic levels.

Also, and perhaps as important as all the above. Following Eunomia's award of the contract they are rapidly becoming the most frequent users of renewables map. If they are so much better that they justify being paid for this data, why are they constantly data-mining my website. I cannot think of the words to express how contemptible that is.

This is not for DECC to respond.

I would appreciate a clear and honest response - please include my MP (via Stainton James) in your reply. I hope you will give him the respect, in your clear and full response to all of the above, that we both deserve.

As an Annex to this letter, I have set out your individual scores against the published criteria, and below have suggested ways in which you could have received higher scores:

1. Project management
How your website was a comparable project, structure of that site and its deliverables. How Project Management is embedded and how you guarantee quality of the work
2. Data collection
How this is done, mention/understanding of diversity and challenges extracting from different sources
3. Database management and development
Mention of Government Digital Services, sufficient support for developing databases
4. Consistency of data
Evidence of Quality Assurance processes, benchmarking, methodology
5. Understanding of policy
Demonstrate an understanding of financial incentive schemes and requirements to 2020; need to manage Levy Control Framework budget; understanding of priorities and evolving policy.
6. DECC requirement
Demonstrate an understanding of need for forecasting and explain how that might be done. Understanding importance of database and accurate, quality controlled data as part of that requirement

I hope that this letter provides useful feedback, particularly by explaining how DECC evaluated this tender which may be useful for other tenders you submit in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Redrup
Contract Manager

Annex

Evaluation Criteria as set out in Section 26 of the ITT

		MARK	WEIGHTING	SCORE
Project Management	Project Management Experience / Ability to demonstrate ability in a similar field.	2	15	6
Data Collection	Experience / Ability to demonstrate successful data collection	2	16	6.4
Database Management and Development	Experience / Ability to demonstrate successful database management and development.	3	16	9.6
Consistency with Data	Ensuring consistency with data currently produced	1	16	3.2
Understanding Renewable Energy	Understanding of renewable energy and policy issues	1	16	3.2
Understanding DECC requirement	Understanding of DECC's requirement	1	16	3.2
Lowest Price	Total prices of the four scenarios will be added together and the marks will be awarded proportionately to the lowest price and then the 5% weighting applied).	5	5	5
TOTAL			100	36.6

Score	Description
0	Unacceptable
1	Unsatisfactory – well below requirement
2	Weak - below requirement
3	Adequate - mostly meets the requirement
4	Good – completely meets the standard with moderate levels of assurance
5	Excellent – completely meets the standard with high levels of assurance