



Scottish Procurement Buyer Guide

Telephony and Communication Services Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)

SP-21-039

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1. Foreword and acknowledgements

Scottish Procurement aims to deliver benefits to the people of Scotland through improved value for money for taxpayers, improved goods and services for all our citizens and economic opportunities for Scotland. This is achievable through effective collaboration throughout the procurement cycle.

Scottish Procurement would like to acknowledge the work, support and contribution from all sector representatives. Their input has helped to shape the direction of this Telephony and Communication Services project to a successful outcome.

2. Introduction

Scottish Procurement has established a DPS for Telephony and Communication Services. The DPS commenced on 27 April 2022 and is due to expire on 28 March 2025 with an option to extend for an additional 12 months. Call off contracts awarded via the DPS will have no constraints on their duration or value.

This buyer guide aims to assist Scottish public sector organisations in selecting the most suitable and cost effective telephony and communication services to suit their individual requirements from a range of suppliers. It is designed to guide organisations through the selection process and provide confidence regarding the services purchased through this DPS.

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3. Aim of the DPS

This DPS follows on from the Telephony Services DPS and has been enhanced to enable a broad range of telephony and communication services to be available to Scottish public sector organisations (including 3rd sector organisations and charities) from a wide range of suppliers. Scottish Procurement has worked collaboratively with cross-sectoral colleagues and key stakeholders to develop the strategy for the DPS with the aim of offering a straightforward, flexible and quick route to market for all Scottish public sector organisations and having a proportionate application process for suppliers which should continue to encourage SME participation.

4. Scope of the DPS

The Telephony and Communication Services DPS has two lots with the type of services available via each Lot set out below. This is not intended to be an

exhaustive list of the services available but provides a high level illustration of the range of potential services which may be requested.

Lot 1 – Telephony and Communication Services		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of voice calls, services & infrastructure • Electronic billing services • Broadband provision & services • DDI provision • Traditional Telephony including Line rental, PSTN & ISDN • Migration management support • Paging services • Non-geo numbers and Directory Enquiries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) • SIP Trunks • Point to point circuits • Telephony as a service • Provision of IP Telephony • Telephony software services • Provision of telephony through a hosted or cloud based solution • Call /Contact Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance & Support • Messaging Services • Unified Communications • Intelligent Voice Response • Automated Call Distribution • Audio Conferencing • Web Conferencing • Video Conferencing • Webcasting • WiFi Services

Lot 2 – Enterprise Bundled Services*
Offers the full range of telephony and communication services available in Lot 1 with the inclusion of mobile voice & data services. This Lot provides organisations with the option of consolidating a number of discrete contracts into a single procurement exercise and provides organisations with a “one stop shop” solution for all their telephony and communication needs.

* Mobile voice and data services can only be purchased via this Lot along with wider services from Lot 1; they cannot be procured as a standalone service via this DPS. For standalone mobile voice & data services needs, please refer to the current [Mobile Voice and Data Services Framework](#).

5. What is a DPS?

A DPS is an electronic method of procurement, based on a list of pre-qualified suppliers for commonly used purchases, from which Scottish public sector organisations can invite tenders. As a procurement process, it has some aspects that are similar to a framework agreement. However, it is a wholly electronic process, with opportunities competed for through calls for competition. There is no limit to the number of suppliers that can participate in the DPS and suppliers have the ability to apply to join at any time during the period of the DPS. Further information can be found at our [website](#) and [procurement journey](#).

6. How does a DPS Operate?

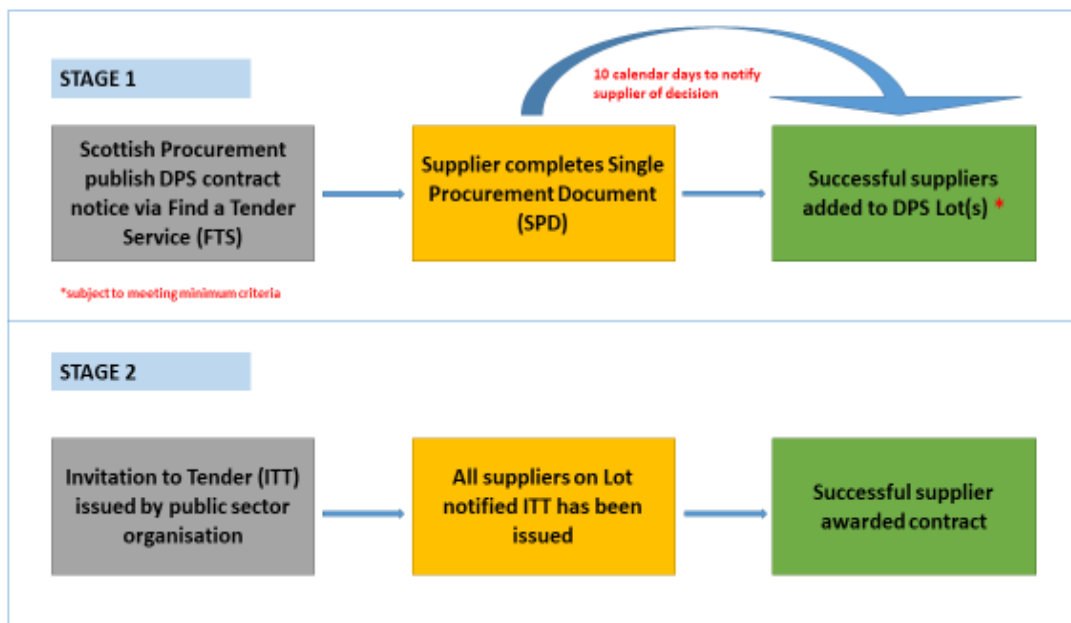
A DPS is a two stage process:

Stage 1 - Suppliers can apply to participate by completing the Single Procurement Document (SPD) via the [Public Contracts Scotland - Tender](#) (PCS-T) portal. Suppliers are required to complete the SPD and meet the minimum selection criteria stated within the [Contracts Notice](#).

NOTE: Stage 1 has already been undertaken by Scottish Procurement in establishing the DPS. However, new suppliers can apply to join at any time during the term of the DPS and Scottish Procurement will continue to process these applications.

Stage 2 – Scottish public sector organisations will issue a call for competition / invitation to tender for their requirement through the DPS. All suppliers registered for the relevant Lot must be given the opportunity to submit a tender for all call-off contract opportunities.

The diagram below offers a simple high level illustration of how the DPS operates



- there is no maximum or minimum number of suppliers within each lot
- Suppliers have the option to join the DPS at any time
- There are no restrictions on the number of Lots suppliers may apply for

7. Benefits

A DPS is an effective and efficient procurement procedure that can benefit both suppliers and organisations alike. Below are just some of the benefits you can expect to find when using the system:

What are the benefits to buyers?	Easy route to market for organisations with pre-approved suppliers	Wide range of services available	Continued access to a wide range of suppliers including SME's
	Electronic process where supplier details are held centrally	No minimum or maximum value of contracts awarded via this DPS	No minimum or maximum duration of contracts awarded via this DPS
	Ability to procure all telephony and communication services	All suppliers will pay staff at least the real living wage for services via this DPS	All suppliers hold relevant 3rd party Cyber security accreditation or equivalent

8. Using the DPS for tenders

The DPS provides a list of pre-qualified suppliers that have met the minimum entry criteria. It is a simple route to market which will enable organisations to procure their telephony and communication requirements without having to go through an onerous tendering process, meaning organisations need only issue and evaluate their individual invitations to tender.

There is no “direct award” process available via the DPS and organisations must give all suppliers that have been established on your chosen lot the opportunity to respond to your call for competition/Invitation to Tender (ITT). In our experience of other DPS', it is unlikely that all suppliers will bid for all opportunities as they will “self-select” the tenders they bid for on a case by case basis.

You are able to undertake electronic engagement with the all the suppliers on the relevant lot. For example, you may wish to issue a project summary document highlighting the key aspects of your requirement or to seek some feedback on your requirement before the full ITT documentation is issued. Should you choose to issue this via the DPS area of the PCS-T system, please clearly identify this as an ‘Expression of Interest’ (or similar wording) in the title to avoid confusion with actual ITT documentation.

NOTE: As the DPS is an ‘open and running’ system it is important you ensure that your ITT is issued to any new suppliers added to the DPS between the dates of initial engagement, and issuing your ITT documentation. It is also important to note that when you set up a project on PCS-T, only those suppliers on the DPS list at that time are included on that project. Any supplier added to the DPS list after your project has been set up will need to added manually and, accordingly, **you are strongly encouraged to check with the Scottish Procurement point of contact to ensure your supplier list is up-to-date before issuing your ITT.**

You can also establish if new suppliers have been added to the DPS by checking the live supplier list on our [website](#).

It is important that you ensure that all suppliers are included in all communications in relation to your call for competition as the process you adopt must be transparent.

Once the tenders are returned to you, the evaluation would be carried out and a call-off contract awarded to the successful supplier. There is no requirement to carry out a standstill exercise but you are encouraged to offer feedback to unsuccessful bidders, paragraphs 14.7 & 14.11 also refer.

9. Calls for Competition

Scottish public sector organisations should develop their tender documents as they would for any tender, including how and when to respond, along with details of the evaluation criteria that will be used. Responses received by the deadline should then be evaluated and the tenderer that offers the most economically advantageous tender should be awarded the call-off contract.

You must give suppliers a minimum of 10 days to respond to any tenders issued via the DPS. However, organisations should take into account the complexity of their requirement when deciding the duration a tender is open for.

The award criteria must include both cost and quality of service. The weightings should be determined prior to issue of the tender documents. Please note that the overall weightings must be within the following ranges as advertised within the Contract Notice:

- **Quality/Technical: 40-80%**
- **Price: 20-60%**

All DPS call off transactions must be carried out electronically.

To help organisations use the DPS, a dedicated area within Public Contracts Scotland – Tender (PCS-T) has been created specifically for organisations to use to carry out their call off process from the DPS. There is no need to undertake the two day PCS-T training course to get access to this dedicated area within PCS-T. Once you gain access there is a user guide which contains information that will help you run your call for competition.

In order to be added to this dedicated area you need to:

- Contact the DPS generic mailbox [Telephony and Communication Services DPS](#) and ask to be added to the DPS Lot(s) that you are using for your requirement.
- When you receive confirmation you have been added you will also receive the PCS-Tender 'DPS Call-off User Guide'.

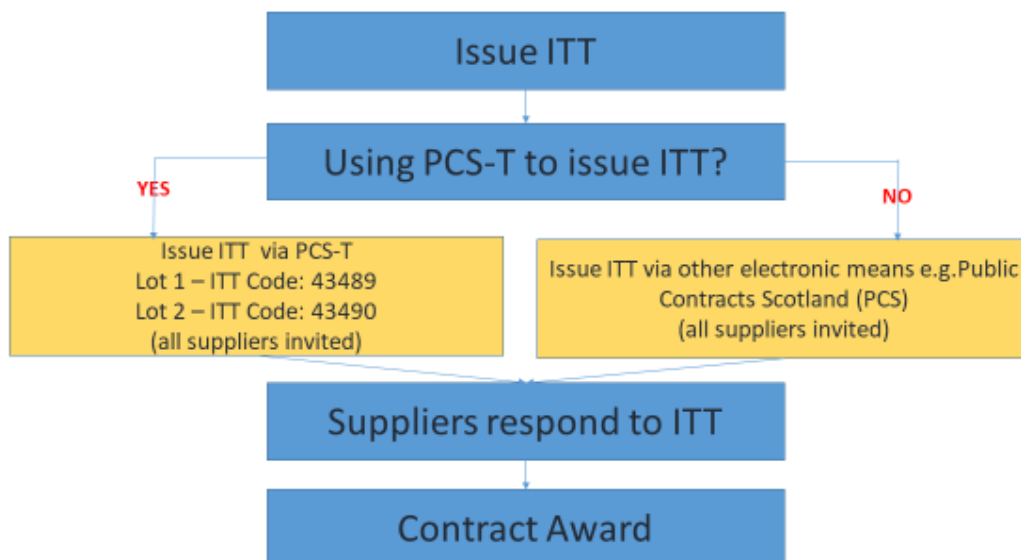
When you are running a call off contract through PCS-T, you need to create the ITT from the DPS template. You can 'create from existing ITT' using the following codes:

Lot 1 – ITT Code 43489
Lot 2 – ITT Code 43490

These templates will be kept up to date as new suppliers join the DPS.

Organisations should only set up their project on the DPS dedicated area within PCS-T when you are ready to issue your tender. This is to mitigate against the issues mentioned in paragraph 8 when new suppliers are added to the DPS.

Organisations that do not wish to use the dedicated PCS-T area can run the DPS call off process by any electronic means, e.g. another electronic portal. To do so you can obtain a copy of the supplier contact details by emailing the following mailbox [Telephony and Communication Services DPS](#)



10. Terms and Conditions

Organisations may choose to use whichever terms and conditions they wish within their ITT. The Scottish Government model ICT Terms and Conditions (T&Cs) are not mandated but have been provided to assist organisations should they wish to consider these.

The template T&Cs can be found on the ICT Networks section of the Scottish Procurement [Knowledge Hub](#) and can be amended as required to meet individual organisation needs.

Organisations should ensure that their chosen T&Cs are included as part of their tender documentation and subsequent call-off contract.

11. Sustainability Considerations within ITT

Organisations undertaking a procurement exercise under this DPS are encouraged to consider sustainability issues within their ITTs. Embedding sustainability into procurement can support the objectives of your organisation and can be adapted to reflect the nature of the contract.

Many sustainability benefits can be achieved through supplier engagement before the procurement process begins which can allow the market to understand and prepare their response to tender requirements. Further guidance on sustainability issues are available via the [Procurement Journey](#).

Sustainability issues that organisations may wish to consider within their ITT include:

- Carbon emissions: for example, energy production, energy consumption, vehicle emissions
- Waste production: if hardware/equipment, cabling etc. is recycled, reused, repurposed in the delivery of services; reduction of packaging materials etc
- Employment, skills & training and Community Benefits: how a supplier may support local communities in relation to generating employment or training opportunities or other benefits that may support the local community
- Fair work: how a supplier will support fair work practices in the workplace or community

12. Cyber Security

Buyers should be aware that in accordance with the [Contract Notice](#), it is mandatory that suppliers hold a suitable third party Cyber Security accreditation e.g. Cyber Essentials, Cyber Essentials Plus, ISO 27001:2013, IASME Gold or are able to provide evidence/details of equivalency as part of their application.

However, it is the responsibility of each buying organisation to ensure they have considered the specific cyber security aspects of each invitation to tender. Some organisations may have existing support and processes in relation to cyber security requirements and have access to evaluation expertise to determine cyber capability of tenderers however not all organisation have this support in place.

The [Cyber Security Procurement Support Tool](#) (CSPST) is a public sector tool designed to assist the public sector with the improvement of cyber security in the supply chain. The CSPST tool includes links to the Nation Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) guidance and tools that suppliers can access for free. NCSC guidance and tools can be accessed [here](#).

The guidance also provides helpful information for small businesses and 3rd sector organisations who want to learn how to improve their cyber security generally.

13. Awarding Contracts

Call-off Contracts should be awarded in an open, fair and transparent manner at all times and you should ensure that winning contractor offers the Most Economically

Advantageous Tender (MEAT). There is no obligation for you to undertake a standstill period.

In all regulated procurements, i.e. those valued in excess of £50,000, including a DPS call-off, Scottish public sector organisations must publish an appropriate contract award notice.

Contract award notices may be grouped on a quarterly basis. Grouped notices must be sent for publication within 30 days of the end of each quarter. Further information can be found [here](#).

Once a call-off contract is signed, organisations must complete the Contract Award form at Annex A and send a copy to [Telephony and Communication Services DPS](#).

14. Frequently asked questions

1. Who can use the DPS?

It is the responsibility of any buying organisation wishing to use the framework agreement to satisfy itself that it is eligible to do so. Entitlement can be established from the terms of the [Contract Notice](#).

The DPS will be available for use by the Scottish Ministers (including Agencies), Scottish Non-Departmental Public Bodies, offices in the Scottish Administration which are not ministerial offices, cross-border public authorities within the meaning of section 88(5) of the Scotland Act 1998, The Office for the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, councils constituted under section 2 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994, , bodies registered as social landlords under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Scottish health boards or special health boards, Student Loans Company Limited, the Commissioner of Northern Lighthouse operating as the Northern Lighthouse Board, Scottish Futures Trust, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Business Stream Ltd, the Business Gateway National Unit at the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, further or higher education institutions being fundable bodies within the meaning of section 6 of the further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005, any public body established by or under the Scotland Act 1998 or any Act of the Scottish Parliament, any association of or formed by one or more of the foregoing, bodies financed wholly or mainly by one or more of the foregoing, bodies subject to management supervision by one or more of the foregoing and bodies more than half of the board of directors or members of which, or, in the case of a group of individuals, more than half of those individuals, being appointed by one or more of the foregoing. In addition to the contracting authorities listed, the framework agreement will be available to charities entered on the Scottish Charity Register and voluntary organisations entered on the Membership Database of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

Information about agencies of the Scottish Ministers, Scottish Non-Departmental Public Bodies and offices in the Scottish Administration which are not ministerial offices are listed at

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/public-bodies/about/Bodies>

Overview of the governance structure of public procurement for Scotland, including the Public Procurement Group.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-procurement-governance/>

2. Are the standard terms and conditions available on the DPS subject to Scots law?

Yes – if you use the terms made available by Scottish Government they are subject to Scots law. However, if using your own terms and conditions, or in circumstances where you use the supplier terms, these will be subject to the specified legal jurisdiction in those terms.

3. Is there a process for providing feedback back into Scottish Procurement on issues relating to the DPS and the contractor's performance?

For any issues or feedback please contact: [Telephony and Communication Services DPS](#)

4. Does the DPS allow for community benefits?

Community benefits are social considerations which include not only targeted recruitment and training, but also equal opportunities, training for the existing workforce, supply chain initiatives, community consultation, 'considerate contractor' schemes, contributions to education, the promotion of social enterprises, and resources for community initiatives.

It is strongly recommended that you include details of any community benefits you want to be delivered as part of the service - you should include these at tender stage of your call-off.

5. Does the DPS consider Fair Work?

For more information on [Fair Work](#) practices please see the Scottish Procurement Policy Note [SPPN 6/2021](#).

In accordance with the [Contract Notice](#), suppliers will be asked to confirm that they will pay staff that are involved in the delivery of services under this DPS, at least the [Real Living Wage](#). This will be a mandatory requirement for all suppliers wishing to join this DPS. Scottish Procurement will ensure suppliers confirm this as part of the on-boarding process via the SPD.

Organisations are encouraged to incorporate Fair Work practises within their individual call offs and build this into their invitations to tender.

6. Can the DPS be used for direct awards, perhaps for low-value contracts?

No. The procurement rules state that each requirement under a DPS must be competed and all suppliers within the relevant Lot must be given the opportunity to bid.

7. Does the standstill period apply to contracts under the DPS?

No. The standstill period is not obligatory for individual contracts awarded under a DPS.

8. Do I need to provide suppliers with a minimum time period to respond to tenders?

Yes. The minimum time period for receipt of tenders is 10 days from the date on which the call for competition was issued. However, organisations should allow suppliers a reasonable time to respond and should take into account the value, duration and complexity of their requirement when deciding a tender response date.

9. Does the DPS encourage SME access to public contracts?

The DPS has many aspects that make it SME friendly. Getting onto the DPS is less onerous for SMEs. Also, suppliers can apply to join the DPS at any time and if they are unsuccessful, they are informed of the reasons and are able to address this and reapply at any time.

10. If there are a large number of suppliers on the DPS or specific Lot, how will we effectively resource and undertake competitions for individual contracts?

The DPS is no more onerous than the Open Procedure for individual contracts; in fact, it is easier, as you will only have to examine tenders received and not assess supplier's exclusion and selection status for every contract (SPD). We also know from experience that suppliers will "self-select" what tenders they bid for and it is unlikely that all suppliers will bid for all tender opportunities. As the DPS is for Telephony and Communication Services commonly available on the market, it may also be possible in many cases to run relatively straightforward award evaluation criteria, which will help to keep resource requirements in check.

The process you adopt must be fully transparent to the suppliers within the Lot and must clearly layout your evaluation process.

11. Do I need to provide a debrief to unsuccessful suppliers?

There is no requirement for a standstill period under a DPS. However, debriefing suppliers is a key element of good procurement practice. Suppliers will learn from your feedback, enabling them to improve on future tenders. Organisations are not prohibited from either proactively providing feedback or offering to provide feedback on request. Where you do provide or offer feedback you should treat all suppliers equally.

12. Is there any minimum/maximum durations to the contract call-offs and can contracts overhang the DPS period?

There is no minimum/maximum duration for the contract call-offs but the duration should be proportionate. Procurement rules specifically allow “overhang” in frameworks therefore there is no reason to consider that proportionate overhang would be impermissible in DPS. As with all procedures, the DPS should not be used in a way which will distort or prevent competition.

13. How do I issue calls for competition / ITT

The recommended option for carrying out your tender process is through PCS-T. The option to use PCS-T is now available to any buyer (even if you are not a current PCS-T user) to issue their invitation to tender via the DPS. There is no need to undertake the two day PCS-T training course. A straightforward and easy to follow guide is available when you register to access the relevant lot in the DPS area. To access PCS-T, please contact the [Telephony and Communication Services DPS](#) mailbox.

Those organisations that choose not to use PCS-T can still make use of any electronic process such as Public Contracts Scotland, alternative procurement systems etc. If not using PCS-T though please ensure you have the full up-to-date supplier list and contact details and this can be found by contacting the [Telephony and Communication Services DPS mailbox](#).

**Telephony and Communication Services Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)
Call-Off Contract Award Form**

Once a call-off contract is signed, organisations must complete the form below and send a copy to [Telephony and Communication Services DPS Mailbox](#)

Public Sector Organisation Name	
Buyer name	
Buyer email	
Buyer telephone number	
Contract Title	
Contract Value (inc extension options)	
Contract Duration (inc start and end date)	
Option extension periods	
Successful Supplier	
Supplier contact name	
Supplier contact e-mail	
Supplier contact telephone number	