

# **DSHS Ltd**

## **Main Scheme Procurement Process – Equality Impact Assessments**

### **Overview of Digital Switchover**

In September 2005, the Government announced that Digital Switchover will take place between 2008 and 2012. Digital Switchover is the process of changing the television broadcasting network to digital. It will involve converting the current analogue television network, as well as encouraging the public to convert or upgrade their TV and recording equipment so they can receive digital television. This will be done TV region by TV region.

### **The aims of the project**

The Help Scheme is a key component of the Digital Switchover programme for which the Government is committed to:

- Achieving digital switchover between 2008 and 2012 ensuring universal access to high quality, free to view and subscription digital TV.
- Ensuring the interests of elderly people and other vulnerable groups are protected.
- Clearing 14 frequency channels for reuse.

More specifically the Help Scheme aims to assist those groups identified as potentially having particular difficulty in switching over to digital TV: those who are 75+, the severely disabled and the blind and partially sighted. DCMS research has indicated that financial considerations are not the main obstacle; rather, these groups may need help and advice on installation and equipment, which is easy to use and meets their needs.

The Help Scheme is focused on providing practical assistance and support for people who:

- are aged 75 or over
- get or could get attendance allowance, constant attendance allowance, mobility supplement or disability living allowance
- are registered blind or partially sighted

Over seven million households in the UK will be eligible to receive help. Eligible people will be able to:

- choose a set-top digital box and receive help to install and use it
- ask for advice on the options from different service providers.

Most people will need to pay £40 for help – this includes:

- help to choose the right equipment
- provision of easy-to-use equipment suitable for people with specific needs (e.g. to receive Audio description broadcasts)
- help with installing the equipment in the home
- fitting a new aerial where we can (if needed)
- a simple demonstration of how everything works and
- someone to call for help while getting used to things.

It is free if eligible people also get:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance or
- Pension Credit

## **The driving force for the project**

The driving force for the Help Scheme Project is captured within four main objectives. They are to ensure that:

- All households eligible for help from the scheme, and who apply for it, are switched over successfully within the qualifying period.
- The scheme provides usable and fit-for-purpose equipment for eligible households that match known needs of the eligible groups.
- The scheme is successfully communicated to the target audience in accordance with the rollout schedule.
- The scheme is demonstrably platform neutral in its approach.

## **The procurement process**

A procurement strategy has been developed in order to let a contract (or contracts) for provision of the Digital Switchover Help Scheme, initially for the Whitehaven component and subsequently the 'main scheme'.

The BAFO (Best and Final Offer) short list for Whitehaven will also be the short list for the main scheme and as such a key feature for procurement will be to maintain an effective competition for the main scheme contract award.

A notice was sent to OJEU on 29 January (2007), with a PQQ submission deadline of 28 February. Short-listed bidders were issued an ITT (for Whitehaven) on 13 April and BAFOs received on 4 May (the ITT for the 'Main Scheme' will issued in October). Evaluation is due to be completed on 18 May (after this review has reported) with a contract decision taken by 29 May and formal award on 11 June. Insofar as it covers the Whitehaven Project, the Help Scheme is due to commence in

July 2007 and for the 'main' scheme it will commence in April 2008. Contract award for the main scheme will occur at the beginning of February 2008.

A key aspect of the process was the development of the schedule of service requirements. These were developed based on the requirements of the consultation that was conducted to form the Code of Service Standards. The scheme requirements were developed by a team of subject matter experts. This team included two full-time diversity experts.

Bidders were asked to outline their target operating model for delivery of help scheme services. In particular bidders were asked to set out how the specific needs of the Eligible Persons will be met when delivering the Help Scheme by detailing the customer experience (the Customer Journey). Bidders were also asked to provide a detailed and comprehensive implementation plan.

The Target Operating Model (TOM) sets how the Bidder proposes to deliver the service. It is the "input" equivalent to the "output" set out in the contract and is designed to:

- Provide DSHS a detailed view of how bidders propose to deliver the Services and allows DSHS to determine if they are capable of doing so.
- Provide this in a format that enables a "like for like" comparison between TOMs whilst allowing flexibility in approaches.
- Provide Bidders with a clear understanding of how their Target Operating Model will be evaluated following tender submissions.
- Form part of the Contract.

DSHS expected the successful Service Provider to expand their Target Operating Model into their Service Design Document.

## **Customer Journey considerations**

The Customer Journey is fundamental to the delivery of the Services and carries equal weighting to the Target Operating Model.

Bidders were required to demonstrate a deep understanding of the impairment specific and other relevant needs of Eligible Persons to optimise the Customer Journey throughout the delivery of the services.

DSHS is keen to understand how customers will experience the Service proposed by Bidders.

Therefore, bidders was asked to detail how their TOM will feel from a Customer's perspective. Bidders were asked to consider the use of personas to bring to life the Customer experience.

Responses must demonstrate:

- The quality of the customer experience
- How the Customer will be made to feel safe and secure
- That the impairment specific and other relevant needs will be met across all elements of the service delivery and specifically during Home visits;
- The degree to which the Customer experience is seamless
- Customer empathy
- The support customers will be provided
- Disability awareness
- Age awareness
- The management of Customer expectations
- How Customer feedback will be captured, measured and applied
- How Customer satisfaction will be captured, measured and applied

The EIAs conducted focused on the core components of the Target Operating Model – these are:

- Marketing and communications
- Contact centre
- Logistics
- Installations
- Aftercare
- Appeals and complaints