

CCS RM6179 Legal Services Panel

Consortium FAQs

Contact details



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The Consortium

Bevan Brittan  | SHARPE PRITCHARD |  HOWES PERCIVAL

How does the consortium work?

The consortium is made up of three firms, giving you the full breadth of expertise, experience and resources of Sharpe Pritchard LLP (SP), Bevan Brittan LLP (BB) and Howes Percival LLP (HP) in one supplier. The three firms signed a consortium agreement on 25 November 2021.

SP is the administrative lead for the Consortium, with BB and HP as consortium partners (i.e. not sub-contractors). Between us we cover all mandatory and several optional specialisms on the CCS RM6179 Legal Services Panel. We can also draw upon the services of our key sub-contractors, Stephenson Harwood and Burness Paull.

How does the consortium decide who leads on a matter?

When the consortium receives a bid or request for a proposal, we take various factors into account when preparing our response, including each firm's expertise, capacity, what other work they are doing, size of opportunity/required team, additional specialisms and any existing client relationships. Therefore you may put an opportunity out to tender and receive a joint response, or a response from just one of the firms.

Why has another consortium firm responded to a tender when it was sent to SP?

This will happen in instances when that consortium firm has been identified as the appropriate firm to respond to the tender opportunity.

How do clients instruct the consortium and do all three firms need to sign a contract for each instruction?

Each firm in the consortium (SP, BB and HP) has signed the Framework Award Form and is identified as one joint Supplier. The work under an order form can be performed by one firm exclusively, or we offer a joint service. Each order form will be signed by the consortium firm performing the work and SP as the administrative lead firm in the consortium.

How does invoicing work?

In a joint situation, the lead firm will issue invoices to the client, with the other firms' charges being shown as a disbursement on the lead firm's invoice. Full narratives will be provided. This simplifies the contract management and invoicing arrangements and means that the client will just be dealing with the lead firm with all invoices and cost breakdowns provided by the lead firm. We have successfully operated in this manner in the past and continue to do so.

Won't it be more hassle to use the consortium?

No – although we are a joint supplier, you can in practice instruct and deal with one firm if you want to, so the process is identical to using other single suppliers. If you do take up a joint offer, you can still opt to deal with and be solely invoiced by one lead firm. We have a dedicated consortium manager and management team working centrally with all three firms to support the process behind the scenes.

How does liability work?

Under clause 11.9 of the Framework Core Terms, if more than one Supplier is party to a Contract, each Supplier Party is jointly and severally liable for their obligations under that Contract. The "Contract" is defined as "either the Framework Contract or the Call-Off Contract, as the context requires".

Why has the consortium been formed?

To provide clients with more choice and resilience. The consortium has allowed the three firms to combine to offer the requisite expertise, public sector experience, and depth of resource required under the CCS RM6179 Legal Services Panel and to provide a truly national offering with offices across England and Wales.

Is the consortium a separate legal entity?

No, the three firms have entered into a consortium agreement to govern how they work together in delivering services under the panel. Each firm has gone through the same extensive due diligence to get on to the panel, with the requisite levels of insurance, quality management and information security certification as required by CCS. Whilst not a single entity, the consortium functions seamlessly. Indeed, SP and HP were previous consortium partners under RM3786 (the predecessor framework to RM6179) and have a very successful history working jointly on government matters for the past five years. The addition of BB has only served to strengthen that offering.

Who should I speak to with questions about the consortium?

The main contacts are Sarah Richardson and Julia Rudin whose contact details are on the front cover of this document. Please contact Sarah in the first instance, or you can also email the general mailbox for the panel at government@sharpepritchard.co.uk.

