Request for Tenders for the provision of Reseller and Implementer Services for Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central Finance Management System (CHI/0005/2026)		
Question	**Query**	**Response**
1	Please clarify what is considered compliant with the following requirement: *"I confirm that our organisation is currently a Microsoft Business Partner (Business Applications) - Small and Midsize Business Management (or equivalent)"* Microsoft has 6 solution partner designations including one called Business Applications. Is this sufficient to meet this requirement?	Please note, in regard to Part 3.2.3 of the RFT, requiring Tenderers to hold *Microsoft Business Partner (Business Applications) – Small and Midsize Business Management (or equivalent)*, the Contracting Authority will consider the following to be compliant: • The organisation holds the current Microsoft Solutions Partner for Business Applications designation via the Small and Midsize Business Management or Enterprise pathway. Other Microsoft Solutions Partner designations (i.e. Data & AI, Digital & App Innovation, Infrastructure, Security, Modern Work) are not considered equivalent to this requirement.
2	***Q1. Selection Criteria - Accreditation/Certification (RFT Section 3.2.3; Tender Response Document Part A.6)*** Section 3.1 of the RFT provides that a Tenderer relying on the capacity of other entities for the purposes of fulfilling any of the Selection Criteria in Part 3.2 may do so, subject to each such entity submitting a separate ESPD and to the Tenderer providing proof that the entity will place the necessary resources at its disposal. Section 3.2.3 requires Tenderers to submit evidence that they hold Microsoft Business Partner (Business Applications) - Small and Midsize Business Management (or equivalent), and Part A.6 of the Tender Response Document provides a Yes/No confirmation expressed in respect of "our organisation".	Please note for this Selection Criteria requirement the following will apply: • the accreditation must be held by the Tenderer itself (or, in the case of a consortium, by the lead entity) in its own name.

	Please confirm which of the following applies: a) a Tenderer may satisfy the accreditation requirement at Section 3.2.3 by relying on the Microsoft Business Partner status of another entity in accordance with Section 3.1, that entity submitting a separate ESPD together with an undertaking that it will place the necessary resources at the Tenderer's disposal; b) the accreditation may be held by the Tenderer's delivery partner, where that partner is named as a subcontractor and will perform the reseller and implementation elements of the Services, without the Tenderer formally relying on that partner's capacity under Section 3.1; or c) the accreditation must be held by the Tenderer itself (or, in the case of a consortium, by the lead entity) in its own name. If (a) or (b) applies, please confirm how the Contracting Authority wishes this to be recorded at Part A.6 of the Tender Response Document, given that the confirmation there is expressed in respect of the Tenderer's own organisation.	
3	***Q2. Selection Criteria - Technical and Professional Ability (RFT Section 3.2.2; Tender Response Document Part A.4)*** Section 3.2.2 requires Tenderers to demonstrate two contracts for Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central Finance Management Systems completed within the last three years, at least one of which was with an Approved Housing Body, local authority, government department, registered charity or equivalent social or community housing body. Part A.4 of the	Please note for this Selection Criteria requirement the following will apply: • the reference contracts must have been delivered by the Tenderer itself (or, in the case of a consortium, by the lead entity) in its own name.

	Tender Response Document provides templates for Reference Contract 1 and Reference Contract 2 but does not identify the entity by which each contract was delivered. Please confirm which of the following applies: a) a Tenderer may satisfy the requirement at Section 3.2.2 with contracts delivered by another entity on whose capacity it relies in accordance with Section 3.1, that entity submitting a separate ESPD together with an undertaking that it will place the necessary resources at the Tenderer's disposal; b) the reference contracts may be those of the Tenderer's delivery partner, where that partner is named as a subcontractor at Part A.3 of the Tender Response Document and will perform the reseller and implementation elements of the Services; or c) the reference contracts must have been delivered by the Tenderer itself (or, in the case of a consortium, by the lead entity) in its own name. If (a) or (b) applies, please confirm how the delivering entity should be identified within the Reference Contract templates at Part A.4, and whether the sector requirement in respect of at least one contract may likewise be met by that entity.	
4	***NEC Housing Integration Scope*** Can CHI provide a detailed list of all data and transactions that must be exchanged between NEC Housing and the proposed Finance Management System, and identify which interfaces are required to be real-time, near real-time or batch processed?	The current expectation is that NEC Housing will remain a key operational housing system and that integration with the proposed Finance Management System will be required for relevant financial, banking, property, tenancy, rent, customer, supplier and transaction-related data flows. Detailed interface design, including final data mapping, frequency, controls, exception handling and reconciliation

		requirements, will be confirmed during discovery and design with the successful tenderer. Tenderers should set out their proposed approach for real-time, near real-time and scheduled batch integration, including assumptions, dependencies and any constraints.
5	***NEC Technical Architecture*** Can CHI provide API documentation, interface specifications and technical architecture details for NEC Housing, including any existing integrations with Castleton Financials?	CHI is not providing detailed NEC Housing API documentation, technical architecture, security configuration or legacy interface specifications through the public clarification process. Relevant non-confidential information on the expected integration scope is set out in the tender documentation and related clarification responses. Tenderers should base their proposals on the requirement to integrate the Finance 6Management System with NEC Housing and to support appropriate data exchange, controls, validation, reconciliation and exception handling. Detailed technical design, API documentation, data mappings, interface specifications and any information relating to the existing Castleton Financials interfaces will be confirmed during discovery and design with the successful tenderer, subject to NEC/vendor constraints, security requirements and appropriate confidentiality arrangements. Tenderers should clearly state any assumptions, dependencies, licensing implications and recommended integration components, including where optional APIs, connectors or middleware are proposed.
6	***Ownership of Master Data*** Can CHI confirm which system will be the system of record for tenants, properties, units, suppliers, customers and rent accounts following implementation?	NEC Housing will be the primary system of record for tenants, properties, units, and rent accounts. Housing Asset Maintenance Contractors will be cross-referenced/integrated to the FMS vendor/supplier onboarding platform. The target operating model is that each master data set will have a clearly defined system of record, with integration used to share

		approved data where required. At this stage, CHI expects housing-related records such as tenants, properties, units and rent accounts to remain primarily managed within the housing system, while finance master data required for statutory accounting, procurement, payments and financial reporting will be managed within the Finance Management System. Final ownership, data stewardship, approval workflows and integration rules will be confirmed during design.
7	***Loan Management Expectations*** Does CHI expect the Finance Management System to provide a complete loan management capability, including loan administration, repayment schedules, covenant monitoring, interest calculations and lender reporting, or would simple loan tracking using dimension tags to show all payments with calculations happening outside the system suffice?	CHI requires the solution to support effective loan visibility, control, reporting and auditability. Tenderers should set out the extent to which their proposed solution can support loan administration, repayment scheduling, interest calculations, lender reporting and associated controls. CHI has a separate system for loan covenant reporting, so covenant reporting is not required to be delivered within Business Central. CHI is open to proposals that use core system functionality, configuration, reporting, dimensions, integrations, APIs or complementary tools, provided the proposed approach is robust, supportable and clearly explains what is delivered within the Finance Management System and what, if anything, remains outside it. Where an API, connector or integrated component is the recommended approach, tenderers should include this as optional pricing within the pricing schedule, with the associated purpose, assumptions, licensing implications, implementation dependencies and ongoing support requirements clearly identified. For further information, please see *Appendix to Clarification 7 and 8 – Loan Management Notes*.
8	***Loan Portfolio Complexity*** Can CHI provide details of the current loan portfolio, including the number of active loans, lenders, loan types and covenant arrangements currently managed?	CHI is not providing detailed confidential loan portfolio information through the public clarification process. Tenderers should assume that CHI requires a scalable loan management and reporting capability suitable for a growing approved housing body with multiple funding

		arrangements, lenders, repayment profiles and reporting obligations. Further detailed portfolio information may be provided to the successful tenderer during implementation under appropriate confidentiality arrangements. For further information, please see *Appendix to Clarification 7 and 8 – Loan Management Notes*.
9	***Treasury Management Scope*** Can CHI clarify whether treasury management requirements (cash pooling, investments, debt management, cash forecasting and bank treasury reporting) are expected to be delivered entirely within the new Finance Management System or through an integrated specialist solution?	Tenderers should outline the available options for meeting CHI's treasury management requirements, including cash visibility, bank-related reporting, debt tracking, cash forecasting and forward-looking financial information. This should include a clear explanation of what can be delivered within the proposed Finance Management System, what would require configuration, reporting or integration, and where an API, connector or integrated specialist solution is considered the more suitable approach. Where an API, connector or integrated external/third party component is recommended/proposed, tenderers should include this as optional pricing within the pricing schedule, with the associated purpose, assumptions, licensing implications, implementation dependencies, controls and ongoing support requirements clearly identified.
10	***P&A Agreement Management*** Can CHI provide further detail on the P&A Agreement Management process, including volumes, lifecycle management requirements, approval workflows, review cycles and income forecasting requirements?	CHI requires the solution to support the effective recording, management, approval, review and reporting of P&A agreements (approx. 300 No. Agreements). Tenderers should assume that P&A agreements may be managed at project phase level and may be aligned to the relevant loan term, commonly over long-term periods such as 25 or 30 years. The solution should support CPI-linked review cycles at varying intervals depending on the agreement, together with review reminders, income tracking against budget, cashflow predictions, forecasting based on current agreements, planned reviews and development pipeline additions. Tenderers should also describe

		how the solution would support monthly invoicing batch postings, including the ability to manually review and amend invoice batches to reflect new agreements or income reviews before posting. Detailed process volumes, approval workflows and final configuration requirements will be confirmed during discovery and design with the successful tenderer.
11	***P&A Reporting Requirements*** Can CHI provide examples of existing P&A reports and clarify which P&A reporting requirements are mandatory at go-live?	Mandatory go-live reporting will focus on statutory, operational, financial control, budget variance, management reporting and implementation-critical outputs required to operate safely from go-live. Tenderers should describe their reporting capability, approach to prioritisation, report development methodology, self-service reporting options, and how reports can be phased without compromising business continuity or compliance.
12	***Reporting Prioritisation*** Can CHI identify which reports are considered business-critical for go-live and which reports could be delivered in subsequent phases?	Business-critical reports for go-live will include those required for statutory reporting, financial control, month-end and year-end processes, payments, audit, governance, budget monitoring and essential management reporting. Additional analytical, enhancement or optimisation reports may be delivered in later phases, subject to agreed prioritisation, dependencies and project governance.
13	***Historical Data Strategy*** Can CHI clarify whether a reporting archive or data warehouse solution would be acceptable for historical Sage and Castleton Financials data, rather than migrating all history directly into Business Central?	CHI is open to considering a reporting archive, data warehouse or other controlled reporting solution for historical Sage and Castleton Financials data, where this provides appropriate access, auditability, reconciliation and reporting capability. Tenderers should clearly set out their recommended historical data strategy, including the balance between data migrated into the new Finance Management System and data retained in an accessible archive or reporting layer. Tenderers should provide pricing for both options, where applicable, including

		the costs, assumptions, dependencies, benefits and limitations associated with each approach.
14	***Data Migration Scope*** Can CHI confirm the required level of migration detail, including the number of historical years required, whether full transaction history is mandatory and the reconciliation tolerances expected?	All historical data is required to be available for reporting purposes, including Balance Sheet and P&L information from the relevant legacy finance systems. This includes the historical data required to support statutory, management, audit, reconciliation, operational and other reporting requirements. Tenderers should refer to the data volume details already provided as part of the tender documentation. The volumes in both legacy systems are considered low; however, tenderers should clearly state their proposed migration and/or reporting access approach, including assumptions regarding transaction-level detail, reconciliation controls, validation approach, reporting availability and tolerances.
15	***Existing Integration Landscape*** For Graphite Connect, Pamwin, MRI Housing BRIXX and Capture Expense, can CHI confirm which applications will remain in place following implementation and provide details of all integration requirements for each system?	CHI expects a number of existing business applications to remain relevant following implementation, subject to final design and implementation planning. Graphite Connect is CHI's new supplier onboarding solution, where supplier data is approved before being shared with Business Central and, where required, onward to NEC. Pamwin is used for development pipeline planning and tracking, and CHI requires the ability to import relevant data to support cashflow and budget forecasting. MRI Housing BRIXX is used for long-term financial forecasting, including 30-year forecasting required for regulatory reporting. CHI would like the ability to produce the required information feeds for this process from Business Central, and may provide a blank sample report or template where appropriate through the procurement process. Capture Expense is a recently implemented expenses solution and CHI expects to continue using it for at least the next two years. The required solution should support the import of

		expense data for reporting and payment processing. CHI's payroll is operated by an external payroll agency. A payroll interface is not required, provided that monthly payroll information can be supplied in a format suitable for upload into Business Central for payment processing. Tenderers should set out their proposed approach to integration, data import, validation, controls, reconciliation, exception handling and reporting for each relevant application, including any assumptions, dependencies, licensing implications or third-party components. For further detail and sample reports, **please see the following appendices:** • *Appendix to Clarification 15 - BRIXX Sample Blank Report Plan* • *Appendix to Clarification 15 - MRI Housing BRIXX 30yr Forecasting* • *Appendix to Clarification 15 - PAMWIN Finance Pipeline Report*
16	***Banking and Payment Requirements*** Can CHI provide details of the banking partners, payment methods, direct bank integration requirements and any existing banking technology currently used?	CHI is not providing detailed banking partner or sensitive banking technology information through the public clarification process. Tenderers should assume that the solution must support secure, controlled and auditable banking and payment processes, including payment file generation or bank integration options, approvals, segregation of duties, reconciliation, controls and reporting. Tenderers should describe supported banking integration methods, security model, implementation requirements and any bank-specific dependencies.
17	***Budget and Phasing Expectations*** Can CHI clarify whether the estimated contract value of €785,000 is intended to include implementation services, software licensing, third-party products, support services and	The estimated contract value should be treated as an indicative procurement value and not as a detailed budget breakdown. Tenderers should provide transparent pricing for implementation services, software licensing, third-party products, support, maintenance and any optional or phased elements, in line with the tender requirements. The

	optional contract extensions, and whether phased delivery of non-core requirements would be acceptable?	pricing schedule also allows for optional pricing of recommended APIs or integration components, where resellers consider these to be more suitable for meeting CHI's requirements. CHI is open to phased delivery of non-core requirements where this supports value for money, delivery confidence and business continuity, provided core go-live requirements are met and any proposed phasing is clearly described.
18	***Dimensional Model*** Please confirm the intended dimensional model: ○ Estate ○ Scheme ○ Phase ○ Unit ○ Funding Programme ○ Funding Tranche ○ Department ○ Cost Centre Which of these are expected to exist as: ○ BC Dimensions ○ Master Records ○ Data imported from external systems	Respondents should propose the most appropriate Business Central dimensional and master data design to meet the requirements, rather than CHI prescribing the final configuration. Estate, scheme, phase, unit, funding programme/tranche, department and cost centre should be supported for reporting, analysis, allocation, and integration purposes. CHI's current expectation is that unit-level data will remain in NEC Housing as the primary housing system of record. Relevant data is expected to be made available to Business Central at scheme/phase level for finance, reporting, allocation and forecasting purposes, with units linked to the relevant scheme/phase and carrying the associated funding tranche ID or equivalent funding reference as an attribute where required.
19	***Payment & Availability*** a) In regard to P&A Agreements; is each agreement related to: ○ property ○ scheme ○ funding tranche ○ Council b) Is there a standard rent review methodology? c) Is P&A income posted through BC currently or another system?	a) There is a P&A Agreement per phase of ownership. This is linked to the overarching CALF Agreement for a scheme. A scheme may have 100 units and close in 4 phases. In this instance, there would be 4 P&A Agreements based on the number of units and cost of each phase. b) Payment and Availability (P&A) Reviews are index based. Harmonised or CPI are used depending on the index noted in the P&A agreement.

	d) How many P&A reviews are normally performed annually? e) Are P&A calculations spreadsheet-based today? f) Is market-rent data sourced from an external system?	c) Postings will be fully in BC d) 20-30 per year at present e) Yes f) Local authority carries out the P&A review, and we check against the relevant index prior to sign-off.
20	***Development Pipeline Planning*** a) How frequently is pipeline information updated? b) Is budget forecasting performed in PAMWIN today? c) Should BC become the planning platform? d) In relation to Funding Tranches / SHCEP / CALF, what data must be stored for each funding stream? e) What are the SHCEP eligibility rules? f) How are eligibility calculations performed today? g) What controls must prevent over-claiming? h) Does grant accounting need: ○ accruals ○ deferred income ○ grant reconciliation ○ funding utilisation	a) Regular updates with weekly report provided by development team to Finance Team b) No. Budget forecasting is manually calculated in excel using information from the Pamwin report. c) The Finance Management System should be capable of consuming relevant PAMWIN data to support finance, budget monitoring, cashflow forecasting, reporting, reconciliation and wider financial planning requirements. d) CHI has not prescribed a final funding stream data model at tender stage. Tenderers should propose the structure they consider most appropriate to meet the published requirements. The solution should be capable of holding and reporting on key funding, claims, receipt, reconciliation and audit information. e) SHCEP Claim Eligibility is outlined as part of the CALF agreement and relates to certain legal, and professional costs only. f) Claimable amount is noted in the CALF agreement. It a simple calculation based on 1. % of project Cost plus 2. % of the Annual P&A. g) Not applicable as limits on claim is outlined in the CALF agreement.

		h) Yes. CHI requires the grant accounting functionality to support accruals, deferred income, grant reconciliation and funding utilisation reporting. This should allow CHI to record and monitor grant income and related expenditure against the relevant funding tranche. The solution should also support reconciliation of grant claims, receipts and utilisation, including reporting on amounts claimed, received, deferred, recognised and remaining available.
21	***Cash Forecasting*** a) Who maintains assumptions? b) Should forecasts include: ○ AP ○ AR ○ Loans ○ Development pipeline ○ Grants ○ P&A income c) Is forecast vs actual analysis mandatory, and is Power BI acceptable?	a) Finance and financial planning team. b) Yes. Cashflow and financial forecasts should be capable of incorporating relevant data from AP, AR, loans, development pipeline, grants and P&A income, where those data sources are applicable to the forecasting requirement. Tenderers should describe how each source would be included, whether through Business Central, Power BI, a reporting layer, data import, integration or another proposed solution component. The response should clearly identify data ownership, refresh frequency, assumptions, controls, manual inputs, reconciliation points and any limitations. Please refer also to Clarification 9 on treasury management scope, Clarification 10 on P&A forecasting, Clarification 12 on reporting prioritisation and Clarification 15 on PAMWIN and development pipeline information. c) Yes. Forecast versus actual analysis is required to support budget monitoring, financial control, cashflow management, variance analysis and management reporting. Tenderers should describe how their proposed solution will support comparison of forecast, budget and actual values across relevant reporting dimensions and time periods. CHI is open to this being delivered through Business Central, Power BI, a reporting layer or an integrated solution, provided the approach is robust, auditable, supportable and clearly

		identifies the data sources, refresh frequency, assumptions, controls and any limitations. CHI requires flexible cash forecasting across short, medium and longer-term horizons, incorporating payables, receivables, loans, development pipeline, grants and P&A income where relevant. Power BI is acceptable where suitable.
22	***Additional Resources***	Please see below links for additional information in relation to CHI and annual reporting, and the CALF Funding Model: • https://www.cooperativehousing.ie/about • https://icsh.ie/resources/guidance-note-on-the-payment-and-availability-pa-and-capital-advance-leasing-facility-calf-funding/
23	***Treasury Management*** a) Are you expecting Business Central itself to perform treasury functions, or are you open to an integrated Treasury Management System? b) Do you already have a preferred treasury solution? c) How many bank accounts will participate in cash pooling? d) Is there a formal ZBA structure already in place? e) Which banks require EOD and intraday connectivity? f) What connectivity standards are required? o ISO20022 o SWIFT o Open Banking APIs o Host-to-host g) Is Bank of Ireland the only banking platform requiring direct integration, or are other banks also in scope? h) Is real-time cash visibility mandatory or are daily updates acceptable? i) Do you require automatic cash sweeping between accounts?	a) CHI is seeking a fit-for-purpose solution and is open to either native Business Central functionality or an integrated treasury solution where justified. b) No c) CHI does not currently operate a cash pooling arrangement. Tenderers should describe how their proposed solution would support cash pooling should CHI choose to implement such arrangements in the future. d) No ZBA or TBA structure is currently in place. e) Our Primary Bank is currently the main banking platform in scope. Tenderers should describe the available options for end-of-day and intraday connectivity, where supported. f) CHI has not mandated a specific banking connectivity standard. Tenderers should propose the most appropriate approach to support banking integration requirements, including ISO 20022,

	j) How are authorised signatories managed today? k) Do you currently hold treasury bills, commercial paper, money market funds and/or term deposits? l) Approximately how many investment transactions occur annually? m) Is accounting/reporting sufficient, or is full investment lifecycle management required? n) Are treasury reports operational reports or board-level reporting? o) How frequently are treasury reports produced? p) Are there any treasury, loan or cash management systems currently in use that will remain in place after implementation?	secure APIs, host-to-host connectivity and standard banking file exchange mechanisms where relevant. The proposed approach should clearly identify security controls, dependencies and any third-party components required. g) Our primary banking platform is currently the main banking platform in scope. h) Real-time cash visibility is not currently considered mandatory. Daily updates are likely to be acceptable. Tenderers should outline the available options together with the associated benefits, implementation considerations and costs of real-time versus scheduled cash visibility. i) CHI does not currently operate automated cash sweeping or cash pooling arrangements. Tenderers may propose such functionality where they consider it beneficial and should clearly explain the business benefits, implementation requirements, controls and ongoing support implications. j) Authorised signatories are currently managed through established manual processes. k) No to treasury bills and commercial paper. Yes to money market funds and term deposits. l) Approximately 100-150 investment transactions occur annually. m) CHI requires appropriate accounting, reporting, visibility, control and auditability of investments. Tenderers should clearly describe the functionality provided by their proposed solution, including investment lifecycle capabilities, transaction management, forecasting, reporting and controls, and identify any functionality delivered through integrated or third-party components.

		n) Both operational and Board-level reporting requirements apply. o) Weekly, monthly and quarterly. p) All treasury, loan and cash management is handled manually in excel at present except for covenant tracking. The covenant tracking system will remain in place.
24	***Loan Management*** a) How many active loans currently exist? How many new loans are typically added annually? How many lenders? Are loans all CALF loans or are there multiple instrument types? b) Do you require: ○ loan register only ○ accounting ○ forecasting ○ covenant monitoring ▪ What covenant calculations are currently monitored? ▪ Can sample covenant calculations be provided? ○ lender reporting c) Are loan calculations currently maintained in spreadsheets? d) Do you expect repayment schedules to be maintained inside BC? e) Are covenant calculations fixed or lender-specific? f) Do any loans have: ○ variable rates ○ stepped rates ○ interest-only periods ○ refinancing events g) Are Interest Calculations:	a) We have a limited number of Lenders and instrument types (See additional link resources at Clarification Response 22). b) CHI has a separate system for covenant monitoring and reporting. However, the Finance Management System must support lender-specific reporting requirements, including detailed scheme-level Income & Expenditure reporting and other financial reports required by lenders and funding providers. c) Yes d) Tenderers should describe their proposed approach for maintaining repayment schedules, including whether these would be held directly within Business Central or through an integrated solution. Please refer to Clarification Response 7. e) Covenant calculations are lender-specific f) Tenderers should assume that the loan portfolio may contain a mixture of funding arrangements and repayment profiles. Detailed portfolio information will be confirmed with the successful tenderer. Please refer to Clarification Response 8. g) Conventions based on lender

	○ Actual/365 ○ Actual/360 ○ 30/360 ○ other conventions?	Please refer to Clarification Response 7 in the CHI-0005-2026 - Clarification Questions & Answers document for loan management expectations and Clarification Response 8 for portfolio confidentiality. Please also refer to Appendix to Clarification 7 and 8 – Loan Management Notes Please also refer to additional resource links noted in Clarification Response 22.