

Public Interest Test – FOI

ANNEX A

Reference Number – DAERA/26-483

Requested Information

Information regarding the contract managed by the Veterinary Service Animal Health Group (VSAHG) under eTendersNI Reference: [REDACTED]

Question 3. A copy of the successful tenderer's final submission document (accepting that specific pricing breakdowns or proprietary commercial details may be redacted under section 43 of the FOI Act).

Exemption / Exception under consideration

FOIA Section 43(2) Commercial Interests

Reasons why the public interest would favour disclosure:

- Public interest in transparency
- Public interest in the issues of the day
- The Department's default position is to disclose information held unless an absolute exemption applies
- Openness and transparency in the delivery of the Department's operations
- The right of the Public to have access to information

Reasons why the public interest would favour withholding:

- Successful tenderer's final submission document – disclosure of information would prejudice the Department's procurement process for requirements for future procurement exercises.
- May pose a risk to the organisation enabling competitors or bad actors to exploit vulnerabilities in its supply chain, disrupt operations or undercut pricing strategies.
- Market Distortion: Disclosure of certain information may distort market dynamics or create unfair advantages for competitors, potentially leading to market manipulation or anti-competitive behaviour.
- Keeping certain information confidential helps guard against unauthorised access by competitors seeking to gain insights into the organisation's operations.

Conclusion

Following consideration of the Public Interest Test the Department has decided that on balance the public interest in disclosure is outweighed by the potential damage to

business, commercial interest, and integrity of future processes. Therefore the exemption is maintained.

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs