

Procurement Plan for Buckinghamshire

Procurement Summary

1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for approximately **3,210** NMS for the provision of face-to-face Family Advice within the procurement area of Buckinghamshire. Buckinghamshire is a relatively large geographical area with a mixture of larger towns and many smaller towns where the semi-rural nature of the procurement area means that providers are unlikely to be able to undertake a large volume of work across both public and private law. Accordingly, we will advertise this tender as Service Specification B to ensure access to services is maintained.

- Providers will be able to tender to deliver either the full range of private Family work and / or public law children work.
- Providers will need to have a permanent presence in the PA and a presence in the access point(s) tendered for as specified.
- Where providers wish to undertake private family work they must tender for and undertake a minimum of **50** Legal Help cases per year.
- Where providers wish to undertake only public law children cases they must commit to undertake at least **5** certificated cases per year

2. Family and housing service combination

We will set aside a small proportion of the available NMS in housing for providers wishing to deliver a combined housing and family service. There has previously been a small amount of demand for this service combination within the procurement area and we therefore intend to set the housing NMS available for delivery of this combined service at **100**. The minimum NMS requirement will be **50** for Housing.

3. SWL Services

We intend to invite tenders for **2,380** new matter starts (NMS) across the core Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefit advice, **100** in Community Care and **100** in Employment.

Buckinghamshire is a relatively large geographical area with a mixture of larger urban areas and several smaller towns. The Buckinghamshire procurement area will therefore be advertised as a service level B area for SWL services with the minimum NMS in each category (apart from community care and employment) being set at **50**.

Housing, Welfare Benefits and Debt will be procured together and providers will be required to tender for and provide services in all three categories.

- Providers may bid to deliver Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits either as a single legal entity or as part of a consortium.
- Providers delivering Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits will need to have a permanent presence in the PA.
- Providers delivering Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits will be required to undertake a minimum of **50** NMS in each category per schedule year.
- Providers delivering Community Care will be required to undertake a minimum of **20** NMS per schedule year.
- Providers delivering Employment will be required to undertake a minimum of **30** NMS per schedule year.
- Community Care and Employment providers will be required to have a part-time presence in the PA.
- As SWL tenders are invited under **Service Specification B**, the requirement to employ an authorised litigator in Housing and Community Care will not be an essential criterion.

However, in the Service Specification B areas where a competitive process is necessary to decide between tenders, as part of the selection process we will prefer providers who can provide the best access to an authorised litigator. This might mean giving preference to those with an employed authorised litigator. We will also consider alternative arrangements but providers are advised that this may score lower in the ranking.

For Debt, Housing and Welfare Benefits, we will divide the available NMS for the PA between the three categories as follows:

PA	Debt	Housing	Welfare Benefits
Buckinghamshire	690	950	740

4. Access

For both Family and the combined SWL categories of debt, housing and welfare benefits (excluding the combined housing and family NMS as specified above) we want to encourage access to services across the whole of Buckinghamshire and also to preserve access to services in the two larger towns. Providers will be required to have a permanent presence in the procurement area and we are considering the use of selection criteria that prefer tenders from providers able to deliver a SWL service in Wider Buckinghamshire, in particular South Buckinghamshire.

5. Budget

Family

Current spend in this area is lower than that which we would expect to spend in Family Legal Help according to the Indicative Spend Budget Model.

Therefore, the total number of NMS available in this area will be increased from that which is currently being delivered to enable an increase in access to services which moves closer to that suggested by the Model.

SWL

Current spend in this area is lower than that which we would expect to spend in SWL Legal Help according to the Indicative Spend Budget Model.

Therefore, the total number of NMS available in this area will be increased from that which is currently being delivered to enable an increase in access to services which moves closer to that suggested by the Model.

6. Current Supply: September 08 – August 09

Category	No. of Providers	NMS opened	Certificates issued
Family (public)	22	2,914	731
Family (private)	27		1,048
Debt	2	582	0
Housing	4	1,047	44
WB	2	602	0
Employment	1	103	1
Community Care	1	20	0

	Total providers	Current SWL Services: number of providers delivering combinations of categories					Current Family Services: number of providers delivering public/private		
		5 core SWL cats	4 core SWL cats	3 core SWL cats	2 core SWL cats	1 core SWL cat	Housing & Family	5+Public law certs	Family private only
Solicitor	29	0	0	0	0	3	1	16	4
NFP	3	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1