

Procurement Plan for Cheshire

Procurement Summary

1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for approximately **3,260** new matter starts (NMS) for the provision of face-to-face Family Advice within the procurement area (PA) of Cheshire.

We do not consider that the PA has enough provision of Family Services at the present time and we will wish to increase the availability of Family services as part of this tender round. We especially wish to increase Family services in Ellesmere Port and Chester. We will invite tenders under **Service Specification B**.

- Providers will be able to tender for **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 within Access Points where 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 public law children work they must commit to undertake at least **5** certificated cases per year.

2. Housing and Family Services (Combined Service)

We will set aside a small proportion of the NMS available in Housing for providers wishing to deliver a combined Housing and Family service.

There has previously been little demand for this service combination within the PA and we therefore intend to invite bids for **100 NMS** in Housing for providers wishing to deliver a combined Housing and Family service.

Providers wishing to provide Housing as part of this service combination will be required to tender for and undertake a minimum of **50** NMS in Housing per schedule year.

3. Social Welfare Law Services

We intend to invite bids for **3,900** NMS across the core Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice, **100** NMS in Community Care and **100** NMS in Employment. We will invite tenders under **Service Specification B**.

The area currently has a reasonable level of service across the Social Welfare Law categories and we anticipate that this will continue to be the case.

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

- Providers may bid to deliver these services 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 within the PA, and within one of the access points specified.
- Providers delivering Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits will be required to undertake a minimum of **100 NMS** in each category per schedule year.
- Providers will be required to undertake a minimum of **20 NMS** in Community Care per schedule year.
- Providers will be required to undertake a minimum of **30 NMS** in Employment per schedule year.
- Community Care and Employment providers will be required to have a part-time presence in the PA.
- As SWL tenders are being invited under **Service Specification B**, the requirement to employ an authorised litigator in Housing and/or 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
Cheshire	1,660	800	1,440

4. Access

There are some potential access issues within Cheshire as the area is geographically large and as significant distances exist between some parts of the area we wish to ensure that access to services is not compromised. We have therefore divided the NMS available across the PA to reflect these issues.

We will advertise the available NMS by the two specific access points (Cheshire West & Chester and Cheshire East) and will use criteria that require

providers to deliver services in at least one of these areas through a permanent presence location.

Access Point	NMS allocated for Family	NMS allocated for Debt	NMS allocated for Housing	NMS allocated for Welfare Benefits
Cheshire West & Chester Including; Chester Ellesmere Port Winsford Northwich	1,920	830	400	720
Cheshire East Including: Macclesfield Congleton Crewe Nantwich Sandbach Wilmslow/Alderley Edge	1,340	830	400	720

5. Budget

Current spend in Family Legal Help in this area is lower than is suggested by the Indicative Spend Budget Model. Therefore, the total number of NMS available in this area has been 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.

Current spend in SWL services in this area is lower than is suggested by the Indicative Spend Budget Model. Therefore, the total number of NMS available in this area has been 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

Category	No. of Providers	NMS opened	Certificates issued (08/09)
Family - Private	33	2,967	957
Family – Public	24		796
Debt	6	1,661	4
Housing	2	648	106
WB	7	1,442	0
Employment	2	78	1
Community Care	1	87	0

	Total providers	Current SWL Services						Current Family Services	
		Providers delivering 5 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 4 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 3 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 2 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 1 core SWL cat	Providers delivering Housing & Family	Providers delivering 5+Public law certs	Providers delivering Private Law only
Solicitor Providers	37	0	0	1	1	0	0	17	9
NFP Providers	7	0	0	1	4	2	0	0	0