

## Procurement Plan for East Sussex

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### Procurement Summary

#### 1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for approximately **2,450** new matter starts (NMS) for the provision of face-to-face Family advice within the procurement area (PA) of East Sussex.

The area currently has a good service in the family category and we anticipate that this will continue to be the case. Currently supply is focussed in Hastings and Eastbourne, with some provision in the Lewes, Rother and Wealden areas. While we wish to maintain services in the urban areas we also wish to maintain access in the more rural parts of the PA. It is unlikely that there will be large volumes of work in both areas of family law in the more rural parts of the area and we will therefore invite tenders under **Service Specification B**.

- Providers will be able to tender for the full range of private work and/or public law family work.
- Providers will have to have a permanent presence in the procurement area and, where specified, in the access point(s) where they tender to carry out work.
- To encourage supply in rural areas providers will be required to tender for and undertake a minimum of **75** Legal Help cases per year.
- Those wishing to undertake only public law children cases must commit to undertake at least **5** certificated cases per year.

#### 2. Family and Housing (Combined Service)

We will set aside a proportion of the available NMS in housing for providers wishing to deliver a combined housing and family service. There has historically been considerable demand for this service combination and will therefore invite bids for **200** Housing NMS to be delivered as part of this combination.

Providers wishing to deliver 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 tenders for **2,980** NMS across the core Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice, **240** in Community Care and **100** in Employment.

Currently service provision is concentrated in two parts of the PA, and we would like to encourage the development of new services in other areas.

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

- Providers will be able to bid to deliver Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits services either as a single legal entity or as part of a consortium.
- Providers will be required to have a permanent presence in the procurement area and, where specified, in the access point(s) where they tender to carry out work.
- In addition providers delivering Debt, Housing and Welfare Benefits will be required to undertake a minimum of **75** NMS in each of these categories per schedule year.
- Providers delivering employment advice will be required to undertake a minimum of **30** NMS in each schedule year.
- Providers delivering community care advice will be required to undertake a minimum of **20** NMS in each schedule year.
- Community Care and Employment providers will be required to have a part-time presence in the PA.
- We will invite tenders under **Service Specification B** and therefore 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
East Sussex	900	1,060	1,020

#### 4. Access

There are some potential access issues within East Sussex as the area is geographically large and predominantly rural and current provision in SWL is mainly concentrated in the coastal towns of Eastbourne and Hastings. Population density is low outside the main towns and public transport links are relatively poor in the procurement area.

To ensure continued access to advice across the Procurement Area we will make NMS available by access points in the West and East of the PA for both

Family and SWL services. Providers will be required to have a permanent presence within the access point they bid to work in.

<b>Access Point</b>	<b>NMS allocated for Family</b>	<b>NMS allocated for Debt</b>	<b>NMS allocated for Housing</b>	<b>NMS allocated for Welfare Benefits</b>
<b>West:</b> Eastbourne and/or Lewes and/or Wealden Districts	1,270	450	530	510
<b>East:</b> Hastings and/or Rother Districts	1,180	450	530	510

## 5. Budget

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.

Current spend in this area is higher than that which we would expect to spend in SWL services according to the Indicative Spend Budget Model. It is therefore unlikely that we would wish to actively increase the provision of SWL services and matter starts will be carefully managed with the aim of remaining within the level of current spend.

## 6. Current Supply (September 08 – August 09)

<b>Category</b>	<b>No. of Providers</b>	<b>NMS opened</b>	<b>Certificates issued</b>
Family (public)	19	2,437	700
Family (private)	22		770
Debt	3	992	2
Housing	3	1,407	114
Welfare Benefits	3	1,123	0
Employment	1	42	0
Community Care	1	261	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
<b>Solicitor</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>NFP</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>