

Procurement Plan for Gateshead

Procurement Summary

1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for approximately **970** new matter starts (NMS) for the provision of face-to-face Family advice within the procurement area of Gateshead. This is separate from any family advice which is included in the Gateshead Community Legal Advice centre.

There is currently access to Family advice across the procurement area, and we will invite bids under **Service Specification A**. However, services are to a large extent concentrated in the City Centre. To ensure continued access to services throughout the procurement area and to support this client choice we will set the minimum NMS level at **75**.

- Providers will be required to tender for both the full range of private family work and public law children work.
- Providers will need to have a permanent presence in the PA.
- Providers will be required to tender for and undertake a minimum of **75** Legal Help cases and **5** public law certificated cases per year.

Providers who wish to undertake only work for children will be able to tender for a specialist children contract, with no requirement to undertake the full range of family services.

2. Social Welfare Law Services

We intend to re-tender the Community Legal Advice Centre contract for all NMS in the PA across the core Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt, Welfare Benefits, Community Care and Employment. As set out above, the Community Legal Advice Centre contract will include a small proportion of the Family NMS for the PA.

We expect that the tender process will open later this year with a view to the contract being let from October 2010.

3. Access

There are no potential access issues within Gateshead as the area is geographically small and good public transport links are available across the whole of the procurement area. Travel times from some of the more isolated areas on the very periphery of the procurement area are up to 55 minutes to

the city centre and this has impacted on client choice, but research has shown that those clients may be more likely to access services closer to them in the neighbouring areas of Newcastle and Durham.

Therefore no criteria will be used to select providers on the basis of their location within the area. Providers will only be required to have a permanent presence within the procurement area.

4. 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.

5. Current Supply: September 08 – August 09

Category	No. of Providers	NMS opened	Certificates issued
Family (public)	12	1,151	396
Family (private)	12		285

Current Family Services: number of providers delivering public/private

	Total providers	5+Public law certificates	Family private only
Solicitor	13	9	0