

## Procurement Plan for The Kent Coast

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### Procurement Summary

#### 1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for **2,470** new matter starts (NMS) for the provision of face-to-face Family advice within the procurement area of The Kent Coast. The area is made up of four distinct areas: Canterbury, Dover, Shepway and Thanet. The area currently has a reasonable level of access to the full range of public and private family services and we wish to maintain this level of access across the area. We will therefore invite tenders under **Service Specification A**.

- Providers will be required to tender for and deliver 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 per year and at least **5** public law certificates each 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. Family and Housing (Combined Service)

Housing may also be tendered for in combination with family and 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 been little demand for this combination in the procurement area and as a result we will set aside **100** 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** Housing NMS per schedule year.

#### 3. Social Welfare Law Services

We intend to invite tenders for **2,900** NMS across the core Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice, **100** in Community Care and **100** in Employment.

There is significant demand for SWL advice in the area, but while there is a good level of access to the core 3 SWL categories, we do not consider the market to be sufficiently developed in the full range of services to tender at the

highest specification. We will therefore advertise for tenders under **Service Specification B**.

- 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 **100** 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
The Kent Coast	1,080	860	960

#### 4. Access

Although the Kent coast PA is geographically medium sized, reasonable public transport links are available across the majority whole of the area except within Shepway where the density of population is low at an average of 271 people per square kilometre.

Therefore isolation and access to services can be an issue for some local people. As access to services is generally good, we will not specify any access points for the PA, but we will consider the use of selection criteria that prefer tenders from providers able to deliver a service in the harder to reach areas.

## 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 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)	16	2,454	432
Family (private)	22		646
Debt	3	1,077	8
Housing	2	898	55
Welfare Benefits	3	855	0
Employment	2	62	0
Community Care	1	29	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	23	0	0	0	0	2	0	11	6
NFP	4	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0