

Procurement Plan for Merton & Sutton

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 (PA) of Merton & Sutton. Clients currently have relatively good access to both public and private Family services although volumes are often low. To ensure continued access to advice across a wide range of Family services we will advertise the tender under **Service Specification B**.

There has historically been little access to combined public and private family law services and in order to allow the market to develop we have set the requirement to undertake a minimum number of Legal Help cases at the slightly lower level of **75** NMS per year.

- 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.
- Where providers wish to undertake private family work they must 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 & Housing (Combined Service)

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

We have historically seen a small amount of demand for this service combination within the PA. We will therefore make **100** NMS in Housing available for providers wishing to deliver a combined Housing and Family service.

Providers wishing to bid for this service combination will be required to tender for and undertake a minimum of **50** Housing matters per schedule year.

3. Social Welfare Law Services

We intend to invite tenders for **1,870** NMS across the core Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice, **100** in Community Care and **100** in Employment. Clients currently have access to SWL services across the PA and we expect that there may be competition to

deliver services in the area. To maintain good client access to the full range of SWL services we will invite tenders under **Service Specification A**.

Housing, Welfare Benefits and Debt will be advertised together as a bundle of services and providers will be required to bid 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 **75** 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 tenders are invited under **Service Specification A**, we will require providers to employ an authorised litigator in order to conduct Housing and / or Community Care services.

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
Merton & Sutton	990	390	490

4. Access

There are no potential access issues within Merton & Sutton as the area is geographically small and good public transport links are available across the whole of the PA. Therefore no criteria will be used to select providers on the basis of their location within the area and providers will only be required to have a permanent presence within the PA.

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 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 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)	13	880	206
Family (private)	17		271
Debt	3	1,039	0
Housing	4	396	49
Welfare Benefits	2	355	0
Employment	1	2	0
Community Care	0	0	0

		Current SWL Services: number of providers delivering combinations of categories						Current Family Services: number of providers delivering public/private	
		Total providers	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
Solicitor	17	0	0	1	0	1	1	8	4
NFP	3	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0