

## Procurement Plan for Oxfordshire

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### Procurement Summary

#### **1. Family Services**

We intend to invite bids for **2,130** NMS for the provision of face-to-face Family Advice within the procurement area of Oxfordshire. Currently most service provision is located in Oxford city. We wish both to ensure continued supply in Oxford city and also to encourage the development of additional supply in the more rural parts of the Procurement Area.

- We will therefore invite these tenders as Service Specification B which will allow providers to tender for either the full range of private family work and/or public law children work.
- Providers will be required to have a permanent presence in the procurement area.
- Where providers wish to undertake private family work they will be required to tender for and undertake a minimum of **50** Legal Help cases per year.
- Those wishing to undertake public law children only must commit to undertake at least **5** certificated cases per year.

#### **2. Family and 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. There has previously been little demand for this service combination within the procurement area and we therefore intend to set the housing NMS available for delivery of this combined service at **100**. The minimum NMS requirement for Housing will be **50**.

#### **3. Social Welfare Law Services**

We intend to invite tenders for **2,920** new matter starts (NMS) across the core Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice together with **130** Community Care matter starts and **160** Employment matter starts.

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.

There is currently access to services only in some parts of the procurement area (mainly concentrated in Oxford City) and we wish to encourage the development of services across other parts of the area. We will therefore invite tenders under Service Specification B and set the minimum NMS requirement at **50**.

- Providers may bid to provide these services as a single legal entity or as part of a consortium.
- Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits providers will be required to have a permanent presence in the PA
- Providers delivering housing, welfare benefits and debt will be required to undertake a minimum of **50** NMS in these categories per schedule year.
- Suppliers bidding for contracts in Community Care will be required to bid for and to undertake a minimum of **20** matter starts per schedule year; the equivalent requirement for Employment will be **30** matter starts.
- Community Care and Employment providers will be required to have a part-time presence in the PA.
- We will invite tenders to deliver SWL services under Service Specification B which means that we will not require providers delivering housing or community care to employ an authorised litigator. Service Level B is considered to be the most appropriate method to ensure supply is maintained throughout the Procurement area, which is largely rural.

However, in the Service Specification B areas where a competitive process is necessary to decide between bids, 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
Oxfordshire	1,090	840	990

#### 4. Access

Oxfordshire is geographically large and almost 50% of the population lives outside any of the main towns. Current provision does exist in other parts of the PA but is concentrated within Oxford City. Providers will be required to have a permanent presence within the Procurement Area but we would like to encourage additional services outside of the City and are currently considering how we might use criteria to prefer providers who are able to deliver services to other locations within the area.

#### 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

Category	No. of Providers	NMS opened	Certificates issued
Family (public)	13	1,936	858
Family (private)	13		594
Debt	3	1,149	3
Housing	1	984	52
Welfare Benefits	3	1,047	0
Employment	1	173	1
Community Care	2	134	14

	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	13	1	0	0	0	1	0	11	0
NFP	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0