

Procurement Plan for South Hertfordshire

Procurement Summary

1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for approximately **2,160** new matter starts (NMS) for the provision of face to face Family Advice within the procurement area (PA) of South Hertfordshire.

Currently, clients in this PA have access to the full range of Family services and we anticipate this will continue to be the case. We will invite providers to bid under **Service Specification A**.

- Providers will be required to deliver the full range of private family work **and** public law children work.
- Providers will need to have a permanent presence in the PA and in the access point(s) tendered for.
- Providers will be required to tender for and undertake a minimum of **75** Legal Help cases per year 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. Family & Housing (Combined Service)

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

There has previously been little demand this service combination within the PA and we therefore intend to invite bids for **100** NMS in Housing for providers wishing to deliver a combined Housing and Family service.

Providers wishing to provide 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 bids for **740** NMS across the Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice, **100** NMS in Community Care and **100** NMS in Employment.

Historically we have experienced difficulty in securing SWL services in this PA and client access to advice is limited in all parts of the PA. We wish to

encourage the development of SWL services across South Hertfordshire. We will therefore invite tenders for SWL under **Service Specification B**.

Housing, Welfare Benefits and Debt will be tendered together as a bundle of services and providers will be required to both tender 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 and a presence in the access point(s) tendered for as specified.
- Providers delivering Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits will be required to undertake a minimum of **50 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/ or Community Care will not be an essential criterion. However, 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
South Hertfordshire	200	320	220

4. Access

South Hertfordshire has a number of large towns most of which benefit from good public transport links within and between them. To ensure that services are available across the PA, we are inviting bids for specified access points and making NMS available by access point.

Access Points	NMS allocated for Family	NMS allocated for Debt	NMS allocated for Housing	NMS allocated for Welfare Benefits
Dacorum, Watford & Three Rivers	1080	100	160	110
St Albans, Hertsmere and Broxbourne	1080	100	160	110

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)	17	1,964	641
Family (private)	21		561
Debt	3	118	1
Housing	4	434	74
Welfare Benefits	3	175	0
Employment	1	24	0
Community Care	0	0	0

	Total Providers	Current SWL Services						Current Family Services	
		Providers delivering 5 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 4 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 3 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 2 core SWL cats	Providers delivering 1 core SWL cat	Providers delivering Housing & Family	Providers delivering 5+Public law certs	Providers delivering family private only
Solicitor	24	0	1	2	0	1	0	12	5
NFP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0