

## Procurement Plan for St Helens

---

### Procurement Summary

#### 1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for **1,130** New Matter Starts (NMS) for the provision of face to face Family advice within the procurement area (PA) of St Helens. The area currently has a good level of service in the family category and we anticipate that this will continue to be the case. However, there are currently local points of access within the area that are unlikely to provide large volumes of work but are important to maintain access across the PA.

- We will therefore invite tenders under **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 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 50** 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. There has previously been little demand for this service combination within the PA and we therefore intend to set the available housing NMS at **100**.

Providers wishing to undertake this combined service must tender for and deliver a **minimum of 50** Housing Legal Help cases per year.

#### 3. Social Welfare Law Services

We intend to invite bids for **3,340** new matter starts (NMS) across the Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice and **170** in Community Care and **100** for Employment. We will invite these bids under **Service Specification A**.

Housing Welfare Benefits and Debt will be advertised 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 Debt, Housing and Welfare Benefits services either 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, Debt and Welfare Benefits will be required to undertake a minimum of **100** NMS in each category per schedule year.

- Providers will be required to undertake a minimum of **20** NMS in Community Care per schedule year.
- Providers will be required to undertake a minimum of **30** NMS in Employment 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 A, the requirement to employ an authorised litigator in Housing and/or Community Care will be an essential criterion.

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
St Helens	1,300	800	1,240

#### 4. Access

There are no significant access issues within St Helens as the area is not geographically large and public transport is available. However, we would wish to maintain access across the PA as there are smaller pockets of demand for family and SWL services outside the St Helens town centre area.

#### 5. Budget

Current spend in this area is higher than that which we would expect to spend in Family Legal Help according to the Indicative Spend Budget Model. It is therefore unlikely that we would wish to actively increase the provision of Family services and matter starts will be carefully managed with the aim of remaining within the level of current spend.

Current spend in this area is significantly 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. Consideration will also be given to the possibility that some SWL services provided by suppliers based within the area are being provided outside of the PA.

**6. Current Supply (September 08 – August 09)**

Category	No. of Providers	NMS opened	Certificates issued
Family (public)	7	1,257	573
Family (private)	7		362
Debt	2	1,540	0
Housing	2	796	245
Welfare Benefits	2	1,476	0
Employment	0	12	0
Community Care	1	186	1

	Total providers	Current SWL Services: number of providers delivering combinations of categories					Housing & Family	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		5+Public law certs	Family private only
<b>Solicitor</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>NFP</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>