

## Procurement Plan for West Lancashire

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### Procurement Summary

#### 1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for **5,220** new matter starts (NMS) for the provision of face to face Family advice within the procurement area (PA) of West Lancashire.

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 a number of access points within the area where the semi-rural nature of the population means providers will be unlikely to undertake a large volume of work.

- We will therefore invite providers to bid 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 law 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. There has previously been only a small amount of demand for this service combination within the PA and we therefore intend to invite bids for **100** NMS.

Providers wishing to provide Housing as part of this service combination will be required to tender for and undertaken a **minimum of 50** Legal Help Housing matters per year.

#### 3. Social Welfare Law Services

We intend to invite bids for **5,760** NMS across the core Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice, with **100** NMS in Community Care and **150** in Employment. We will invite these bids 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 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 within access point(s) tendered for as specified.
- 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 B**, the requirement to employ an authorised litigator in Housing and/or Community Care will **not** be an essential criterion.

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.

In the categories of Debt, Housing and Welfare Benefits, the allocation of NMS is divided within the procurement area as follows:

PA	Debt	Housing	Welfare Benefits
West Lancashire	2,600	1,530	1,630

#### 4. Access

There are some potential access issues for services in the West Lancashire PA as the area is large, has a number of geographically distant towns and a mixture of urban and rural locations.

We wish to ensure that services can be provided evenly across the PA and will therefore make NMS available for particular access points within the PA. In addition we will use criteria that require providers to deliver services in at least one of these access points through a permanent presence within these locations. Providers delivering Family or Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits will need to have a permanent presence in the PA and in the access point(s) tendered for.

Access Point	NMS allocated for Family	NMS allocated for Debt	NMS allocated for Housing	NMS allocated for Welfare Benefits
<b>Blackpool and/or Fylde and/or Wyre</b>	2,120	1,030	590	640
<b>Chorley and/or South Ribble</b>	700	460	270	290
<b>Lancaster and/or Morecambe</b>	920	480	290	300
<b>Preston</b>	1,060	350	210	200
<b>Ormskirk and/or Skelmersdale</b>	420	280	170	200

## 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 SWL services in this area is slightly lower than is suggested by the Indicative Spend Budget Model. Therefore, the total number of NMS available in this area has been 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 (offices)	NMS opened	Certificates issued
Family (public)	47	5,793	1,282
Family (private)	56		1,894
Debt	9	2,608	6
Housing	5	1,347	94
Welfare Benefits	5	1,519	0
Employment	4	150	0
Community Care	1	25	1

	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
<b>Solicitor</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>NFP</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>