

Procurement Plan for Wiltshire

Procurement Summary

1. Family Services

We intend to invite bids for approximately **2,900** New Matter Starts (NMS) for the provision of face-to-face Family advice within the procurement area (PA) of Wiltshire.

Access to advice in this PA is currently focused in the main urban area of Swindon. However, outside of this area, there are large rural parts to this PA and we wish to maintain sustainable access to both public and private Family advice across Wiltshire.

In recognition of the likelihood that the market across the more rural parts of the PA are unlikely to be sufficiently well developed for us to require providers to undertake the full range of Family services, we will advertise these tenders as **Service Specification B**.

- Providers will be able to tender for the full range of private Family work and / or public law children work.
- Providers will need to have a permanent presence in the access point(s) tendered for.
- 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 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 & Family service. There has previously been little demand for this combination and we therefore intend to invite bids for just **100** NMS across the PA for providers wishing to deliver Family and Housing together.

Providers wishing to undertake Housing as part of this service combination will be required to tender for and undertake a minimum of 50 NMS in Housing.

3. Social Welfare Law Services

We intend to place tenders for approximately **3,960** NMS across the Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice, 100 in Community Care and 100 in Employment.

Similarly to current Family provision, SWL services are currently centred in Swindon and we no longer consider the market to be sufficiently well developed across the PA to require the highest service specification. We will advertise these tenders as **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 access point(s) tendered for.
- 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 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. 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
Wiltshire	1,370	930	1,660

4. Access

There are potential access issues in this rural area. Wiltshire is a predominately rural area with a number of small towns without easy transport links to the larger centres. A significant number of the population live in relatively isolated locations.

We will therefore make NMS available for particular access points within the PA. Providers (other than those delivering Community Care and Employment

– see above) will be required to have a permanent presence in the access point(s) in which they deliver services.

Access Point	NMS allocated for Family	NMS allocated for Debt	NMS allocated for Housing	NMS allocated for Welfare Benefits
Swindon	1,400	820	500	880
Rest of Wiltshire (North Wiltshire West Wiltshire Kennet Salisbury)	1,500	550	430	780

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)	14	2,642	383
Family (private)	20		840
Debt	5	1,520	1
Housing	3	1,141	80
Welfare Benefits	6	1837	0
Employment	0	53	1
Community Care	0	0	0

	Current SWL Services						Current Family Services	
Total	Providers	Providers	Providers	Providers	Providers	Providers	Providers	Providers

	Providers	delivering 5 core SWL cats	delivering 4 core SWL cats	delivering 3 core SWL cats	delivering 2 core SWL cats	delivering 1 core SWL cat	delivering Housing & Family	delivering 5+Public law certs	delivering family private only
Solicitor	21	0	0	1	0	0	0	11	6
NFP	5	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0