

Procurement Plan for Wirral

Procurement Summary

1. Family Services

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

The area currently has a good level of access across the full range of family services and we anticipate that this will continue to be the case. We will therefore invite tenders under **Service Specification A**.

- Providers will be required to deliver the full breadth of Family cases across both private and public family law.
- Providers will be required to have a permanent presence in the PA.
- Providers must tender for and undertake a **minimum of 75** Legal Help NMS per year.
- Providers will be required to open at least **5** public law certificates each 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)

There has previously been some level of demand for a housing and family combined service in the PA. We will therefore make **300** NMS available in housing for providers wishing to deliver a combined housing and family service.

Providers will be required to tender for and deliver a **minimum of 50** Housing Legal Help per year.

3. Social Welfare Law Services

We intend to invite bids for **3,130** new matter starts (NMS) across the Social Welfare Law (SWL) categories of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits advice and **100** in Community Care and **100** for Employment. We will invite tenders under **Service Specification A**.

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 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.

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
Wirral	1,140	600	1,390

4. Access

Whilst there are no significant access issues within Wirral, we wish to maintain access across the wider PA as there are current pockets of demand for family and SWL services outside the Birkenhead town centre and the immediate surrounding area.

In order to facilitate this we are currently considering using criteria that gives preference to providers who can also offer advice services from more than one location in the PA by at least a part time Presence.

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.

6. Current Supply (September 08 – August 09)

Category	No. of Providers	NMS opened	Certificates issued
Family (public)	18	2,400	808
Family (private)	20		1,060
Debt	2	1,276	7
Housing	3	972	80
Welfare Benefits	4	1,557	0
Employment	0	30	0
Community Care	1	28	3

	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	20	0	0	1	0	2	1	12	2
NFP	4	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0