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Contract

Critical Friend - Devolution Programme

Essex County Council

UK7: Contract details notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-000070

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-05fed0

Published 2 January 2026, 3:22pm

Scope

Description

The devolution programme team is bringing on external 'critical friends', experts who have been recruited through

the company Solace.

The purpose of this external critical friend is to independently assess the Devolution programme deliverables and

outcomes to ensure that the new MCCA is fit for purpose and to review operational efficiency, compliance and

performance outcomes to meet the objectives in the White paper. The assessment should provide

recommendations for improvements or corrective actions.

Actions will include:

Review of Programme with CEOs/Leaders and WSLs. Review approach, strategy,

operational, governance and deliverables.

Review relationships and ambition with and between Greater Essex and the CA

Review of programme governance and Governance approach for CCA , Constitution

Strategic insights. Call on for advice/strategic insight as required by Sponsors. Targeted as needed

Advise programme team on investment opportunities.

Work with team to design investment opportunity options for Mayor Induction pack

Contract 1

Supplier

- Solace

Contract value

- £70,400 including VAT

Below the relevant threshold

Date signed

29 September 2025

Contract dates

- 29 September 2025 to 28 March 2026
- Possible extension to 28 September 2026
- 1 year

Description of possible extension:

N/A

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 79410000 - Business and management consultancy services

Contract locations

- UKH3 - Essex

Procedure

Procedure type

Below threshold - unknown

Supplier

Solace

6 Mitre Passage

London

SE10 0ER

United Kingdom

Email: contactsolace@solace.org.uk

Region: UKI51 - Bexley and Greenwich

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): Yes

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Contract 1

Contracting authority

Essex County Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PWVM-4844-NRQH

County Hall, Market Road

Chelmsford

CM1 1QH

United Kingdom

Email: ProcurementSandA@essex.gov.uk

Region: UKH36 - Heart of Essex

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government