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Tender

Barristers Framework Agreement for West Midlands Local Authorities (WMLA)

Wolverhampton City Council

UK4: Tender notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-001979

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-052257 ([view related notices](#))

Published 9 January 2026, 3:28pm

Scope

Reference

CWC24161

Description

The WMLA (West Midlands Local Authorities) is seeking to appoint a panel of specialist legal advisers to a Barristers Framework, with the object of achieving better value, enhanced service delivery and more efficient management of matters outsourced to external barristers. This is a new procurement, as the WMLA does not currently have a Barristers Framework in place.

The term of the Framework will be for an initial period of three (3) years with the option to extend for a further period of up to twelve (12) months

Commercial tool

Establishes a framework

Total value (estimated)

- £60,000,000 excluding VAT
- £72,000,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2029
- Possible extension to 30 June 2030
- 4 years

Description of possible extension:

Each Framework Agreement will be let for a term of three (3) years, with the estimated commencement date of 1st July 2026, with the option to extend for a further period/s of up to twelve (12) months.

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 79110000 - Legal advisory and representation services

Contract locations

- UKG - West Midlands (England)
-

Lot 1. Adult Social Services

Description

- Mental Health
- Displacement of nearest relatives (under Mental Health) in County Court;
- Community care, including procurement issues relating to providers
- Mental capacity and deprivation of liberty, including 'Re X Procedure'
- Court of protection
- Functions of the local authority under the Care Act 2014 and relevant legislation relating to children (for example at transition, young carers, etc.)
- Forced marriages, regardless of the age of the parties concerned (including children)
- Inquests
- Judicial Review;
- Public Interest Immunity;
- Inherent Jurisdiction;
- Leaving Care;
- NRPF single adults;
- Continuing Health Funding including disputes and advice re Health Bodies;

- Ordinary Residence
- Human Rights Claims
- FGM
- SENDIST matters, including EHC Plan and Transport issues

Lot value (estimated)

- £60,000,000 excluding VAT
- £72,000,000 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Same for all lots

CPV classifications, contract locations and contract dates are shown in the Scope section, because they are the same for all lots.

Lot 2. Children's Services

Description

- Care proceedings
- The Children Act 1989
- The Child Abduction & Custody Act
- Adoption proceedings, Special Guardianship and Placement Orders
- Public Interest Immunity
- Judicial Review

- Functions of the local authority under the Care Act 2014 and relevant legislation relating to children (for example at transition, young carers, potential Court of Protection transfer etc.)
- Forced marriage
- Advice on international placements and the placement of children in other jurisdictions, including international law and the Hague Convention
- Injunctions, particularly in the context of social media campaigns involving cases, and generally media advice in children related matters (including social media)
- Human Rights Claims
- FGM
- Inherent Jurisdiction & Wardship
- Deprivation of Liberty (under inherent jurisdiction)
- Age assessments, including unaccompanied asylum seekers
- Private Family Cases with LA involvement e.g. s7 and s37 Children Act 1989 cases
- Immigration, including status and leave to remain

Lot value (estimated)

- £60,000,000 excluding VAT
- £72,000,000 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Same for all lots

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Lot 3. Governance & Public Law, including Education

Description

Governance & Public Law

- Public and Administrative Law
- Governance, Constitutional & Policies
- Regulatory issues
- Charities
- Commercial & Contractual disputes, and procurement issues, including Subsidy Control
- Waste matters
- Information Law including Data Protection and Freedom of Information, Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Local Government Finance
- Employment matters, especially complex issues or relating to senior staff
- Education, especially complex issues or issues relating to policy
- Judicial reviews on any subject matter
- Any other high profile, high risk matter, that is likely to have an impact on the authority as a whole
- Company Law, including Local Authority Companies and restructuring and insolvency of companies
- Establishment of Corporate Structures and Trading Vehicles, including Charities, LLPs, ABSs, CBSs and JVs
- Elections

Education (including but not limited to):

- SENDIST
- Admissions
- Attendance issues
- Exclusion cases
- Disability discrimination claims in the SENDIST Tribunal
- Equalities and Human Rights, including advice and advocacy, including Transgender issues
- PRU - Pupil Referral Units
- School organisation, including opening and closing schools
- Governance issues
- Academy conversions
- Complaints and disputes at school, including parental complaints
- Judicial Review, including JR challenges regarding school transport
- Specialist employment advice
- School finance issues
- Intervention powers
- General Education Advice
- Investigations into conduct
- Banning orders
- Safeguarding
- Data Protection

Lot value (estimated)

- £60,000,000 excluding VAT
- £72,000,000 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Same for all lots

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Lot 4. Criminal Litigation & Prosecutions

Description

- Trading Standards & Health & Safety, including food hygiene
- Fraud in relation to all areas of local authority activities, including Blue Badge, social care, tenancy fraud and corporate fraud
- Full range of prosecution / enforcement work undertaken by local authorities including planning, licensing (including HMO, Landlord, private rented sector and Housing health and safety rating schemes licensing matters) and education and environmental crime (including fly tipping, noise prosecutions, nuisance, ASB, policing and Care Act)
- Applications for range of Enforcement Powers and ancillary proceedings, relating to shop premises, including;
 - ? Closure orders;
 - ? Conspiracy;
 - ? Complicity;
 - ? Tobacco offences;

? Trademark offences;

? Money Laundering.

- POCA
- Housing Act 2004 enforcements
- Appeals in Magistrates Court regarding notices under Highways Act
- Appeals against noise abatement
- Community protection notices
- Penalty notices under Housing Act 2004
- Traveller Injunctions
- General Regulatory Law

Lot value (estimated)

- £60,000,000 excluding VAT
- £72,000,000 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Same for all lots

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Lot 5. Housing & Civil Litigation

Description

Housing:

- Full range of local authority landlord & tenant matters, including advice and representation
- Homelessness (including s 204's)
- Allocations
- s.80 EPA
- Anti-social behaviour proceedings
- Injunctions and Committals
- Disrepair claims
- Repossession and evictions
- Gas servicing access claims
- Service charge disputes and Leasehold Valuation Tribunals
- Advice on internal Housing Management Policies and Procedures
- Public Law Defences
- Mortgage repossessions
- Trespasser Claims
- Judicial review
- Leasehold disputes
- Public Law / Equality Act claims in relation to Housing
- Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Right to Buy
- Housing Act 2004 disputes in the First Tier Tribunal

- Renters Rights Act

Civil Litigation:

- Full range of claims brought against local authorities, including personal injury claims
- Claims against the police
- Coroners work
- Debt recovery
- General civil litigation, including traffic matters
- Commercial litigation
- Social media, reputation issues generally, and issues arising from the Defamation Act
- Construction litigation
- Judicial Reviews
- Injunctions, including s222 matters
- Council tax and national non-domestic rate (business rates) matters;
- Insolvency
- Litigation arising out of the Electronic Communications Code and attendant legislation (including the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Act 2022)
- Public Realm litigation, including Challenges in relation to Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Traffic Management Orders, Parking, Bus Lane Enforcement and Markets
- Data Protection Breach Claims
- Human Right issues
- Equality Act matters

Lot value (estimated)

- £60,000,000 excluding VAT
- £72,000,000 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Same for all lots

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Lot 6. Planning

Description

- Planning Appeals
- Enforcement Notices including injunctions
- Highways (and Public Rights of Way)
- Housing / Retail
- S106 Agreements
- Local Development Frameworks / Schemes
- TPOs
- CIL
- Town & Village Greens
- Mixed Use Developments
- CPOs
- Judicial Review

- Injunctions
- Appropriation
- Regeneration
- Procurement
- Other general planning advice
- Permitted Development, Use Classes Order
- Lawful Development Certificates
- Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas
- Development Consent Order (DCO)/National Infrastructure/ Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects
- Planning Committees and Governance
- Green Belt
- Nutrient and Neutrality Provisions

Lot value (estimated)

- £60,000,000 excluding VAT
- £72,000,000 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Same for all lots

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Lot 7. Property

Description

- Commercial & residential matters
- Lease renewals & forfeitures
- Code leases
- Smallholdings
- Mediation & arbitration of commercial LL&T Disputes
- Rights of Way (private & public)
- Restrictive covenants & easements
- Mortgages and Property Estoppels
- Possession actions
- Dilapidations
- Mixed Use Developments
- CPOs
- Judicial Review
- Injunctions
- Appropriation
- Regeneration
- Procurement
- Lease extensions and voluntary lease extensions, under commercial & residential matters
- Utilities, including wayleaves and deeds of easement

- Telecommunications leases
- Agricultural land
- Deferred payments re Care Act
- Trusts
- Charity land
- Education sites
- Right to Buy
- Community Asset Transfers
- Assets of Community Value
- Property Litigation, including:
- Contested lease renewals
- Judicial Review
- Injunctions
- Mediation & arbitration of commercial LL&T Disputes
- Possession actions

Lot value (estimated)

- £60,000,000 excluding VAT
- £72,000,000 including VAT

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Lot 8. Employment

Description

- Unfair and constructive dismissal
- Discrimination
- Redundancy
- TUPE
- Pensions
- Employment contract issues
- Employee status
- Trade union rights and industrial action
- Unlawful deduction of wages
- Disciplinary and Grievance matters
- Recruitment and retention
- Bullying, harassment and victimisation
- Whistleblowing
- Employee and industrial relations
- Collective agreements
- Agency workers
- Employment & HR policies and procedures

- Parental leave
- Hybrid working
- Confidentiality and settlement agreements
- Employment Tribunal Claims
- Employment Appeals Tribunal Claims
- Employment Claims in the County Court and High Court
- Judicial Mediation
- Equal Pay
- Right to Work and Immigration Issues

Lot value (estimated)

- £60,000,000 excluding VAT
- £72,000,000 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Same for all lots

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Lot 9. Licensing

Description

- Licensing Act 2003 matters, including but not limited to alcohol licensing, club licenses,

stadium licenses, venue licenses, event and temporary event licenses and personal licenses

- Gambling Act 2005 matters, including but not limited to betting shops, casinos and bingo halls
- Street trading (under Local Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 and authorities own street trading provisions);
- Pavement licensing, including Highways licensing
- Animal welfare licensing, including but not limited to licensing breeders, day care and boarding establishments and breaches of animal welfare requirements
- Special Treatment licensing, including but not limited to tattooing and massage
- Street collections licensing
- Sex establishment licensing
- Taxi licensing
- Judicial Reviews
- Attendance at committees, including representation for responsible authorities and acting as legal advisor to committee
- Appeals against Committee decisions, including Licensing Committees and Gambling Committees
- General licensing advice, including policy advice

Lot value (estimated)

- £60,000,000 excluding VAT
- £72,000,000 including VAT

Framework lot values may be shared with other lots

Same for all lots

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Framework

Maximum number of suppliers

Unlimited

Maximum percentage fee charged to suppliers

0%

Framework operation description

Award work without reopening competition where it deems a Participating Barrister to represent the most advantageous solution for such Services as compared to other legal providers that are able to provide the Services; or

Award work following a mini-tender between legal providers capable of providing the required Services.

Award method when using the framework

Either with or without competition

Contracting authorities that may use the framework

The Contracting Authority is currently acting on behalf of the following Participating Authorities (together the "Participating Authorities"):

1. Birmingham City Council
2. Coventry City Council
3. Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
4. Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
5. Shropshire County Council
6. Stratford-on-Avon District Council
7. Borough of Telford and Wrekin
8. Walsall Metropolitan Council
9. Warwick District Council
10. Wolverhampton City Council

The Framework will also be available for other local authorities within the West Midlands Region to access, namely any local authority within the following six counties: Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands County, and Worcestershire.

Contracting authority location restrictions

- UKG - West Midlands (England)

Participation

Legal and financial capacity conditions of participation

Lot 1. Adult Social Services

Lot 2. Children's Services

Lot 3. Governance & Public Law, including Education

Lot 4. Criminal Litigation & Prosecutions

Lot 5. Housing & Civil Litigation

Lot 6. Planning

Lot 7. Property

Lot 8. Employment

Lot 9. Licensing

All conditions of participation are detailed in the tender documents, including the following requirements: bidder's financial capacity, legal capacity and technical ability.

All technical specifications related to this Framework Agreement can be accessed via the tender documents.

Technical ability conditions of participation

Lot 1. Adult Social Services

Lot 2. Children's Services

Lot 3. Governance & Public Law, including Education

Lot 4. Criminal Litigation & Prosecutions

Lot 5. Housing & Civil Litigation

Lot 6. Planning

Lot 7. Property

Lot 8. Employment

Lot 9. Licensing

All conditions of participation are detailed in the tender documents, including the following requirements: bidder's financial capacity, legal capacity and technical ability.

All technical specifications related to this Framework Agreement can be accessed via the tender documents.

Particular suitability

Lot 1. Adult Social Services

Lot 2. Children's Services

Lot 3. Governance & Public Law, including Education

Lot 4. Criminal Litigation & Prosecutions

Lot 5. Housing & Civil Litigation

Lot 6. Planning

Lot 7. Property

Lot 8. Employment

Lot 9. Licensing

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Tender submission deadline

9 February 2026, 12:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

CWC24161 - Barristers Framework for WMLA - www.wolverhamptontenders.com

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

English

Award decision date (estimated)

26 May 2026

Recurring procurement

Publication date of next tender notice (estimated): 1 July 2029

Award criteria

Name	Description	Type
Quality	60% allocated to Quality (including social value)	Quality
Price	40% allocated to Price	Price

Weighting description

60% allocated to Quality (including social value)

40% allocated to Price

This weighting is applicable to all Lots. Full details of the award criteria can be found within the Invitation to Tender within the tender pack.

Other information

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Open procedure

Special regime

Light touch

Justification for not publishing a preliminary market engagement notice

A Pre-Market Engagement was published on 6th October 2025.

Notice Identifier: 2025/S 000-063406

Procurement Identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05aadd

Documents

Associated tender documents

<http://www.wolverhamptontenders.com>

Contracting authority

Wolverhampton City Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PVBV-7568-LBLL

Civic Centre, St Peter's Square

Wolverhampton

WV1 1SH

United Kingdom

Email: corporate.procurement@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.wolverhamptontenders.com>

Region: UKG39 - Wolverhampton

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government

Other organisation

These organisations are carrying out the procurement, or part of it, on behalf of the contracting authorities.

KENNEDY CATER LTD

Summary of their role in this procurement: Kennedy Cater (KC) is a legal consultancy appointed by the Contracting Authority to provide procurement support on the establishing of the Barristers Framework for WMLA. While Kennedy Cater supports this procurement process, the City of Wolverhampton Council, as a public body, leads this procurement.

- Companies House: 05686834
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PLMQ-7162-VNYP

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Region: UKJ46 - West Kent

Contact organisation

Contact Wolverhampton City Council for any enquiries.