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Planning

## High Level Needs Block Contracts

Essex County Council

F01: Prior information notice

Reducing time limits for receipt of tenders

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-004816

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0439cb

Published 13 February 2024, 3:00pm

### Section I: Contracting authority

#### I.1) Name and addresses

Essex County Council

County Hall, Market Road

Chelmsford

CM1 1QH

#### Contact

Ms Anne-Lise Nicol

#### Email

[AnneLise.Nicol@essex.gov.uk](mailto:AnneLise.Nicol@essex.gov.uk)

#### Telephone

+44 3330321595

**Country**

United Kingdom

**Region code**

UKH3 - Essex

**Internet address(es)**

Main address

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/>

Buyer's address

<https://procontract.due-north.com>

**I.2) Information about joint procurement**

The contract is awarded by a central purchasing body

**I.3) Communication**

The procurement documents are available for unrestricted and full direct access, free of charge, at

<https://procontract.due-north.com>

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted electronically via

<https://procontract.due-north.com>

**I.4) Type of the contracting authority**

Regional or local authority

**I.5) Main activity**

General public services

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## **Section II: Object**

### **II.1) Scope of the procurement**

#### **II.1.1) Title**

High Level Needs Block Contracts

Reference number

DN711075

#### **II.1.2) Main CPV code**

- 85300000 - Social work and related services

#### **II.1.3) Type of contract**

Services

#### **II.1.4) Short description**

Essex County Council have an upcoming opportunity for providers within the children's residential and fostering space to enter into a block contract agreement, this will be for registered provision for children and young people under the age of 18, currently in unregistered settings. Providers must have provision or be able to demonstrate they will have, either in Essex or within 20 miles from Essex County Council's geographic coverage / boundaries.

#### **II.1.6) Information about lots**

This contract is divided into lots: No

### **II.2) Description**

#### **II.2.3) Place of performance**

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

#### **II.2.4) Description of the procurement**

The Council are not mandating precise details of how a provider should support a Child in Care, instead trusting in the specialisms, knowledge, and expertise of this market. This output approach allows providers (both fostering and residential) full autonomy and freedom around their individual model using their bids to detail how they will meet the individual needs of a Child in Care and the expected outcomes of this contract.

Exact details of Children in Care requiring a placement are individually outlined in each output specification. These are anonymised referrals of a Young Person who is currently in an unregistered placement who requires a registered placement.

The Council will consider all registered children's home placements so long as it is in accordance with the child or young person's care plan, the Council are therefore able to consider solo, dual or group homes.

The Council are not mandating required minimum support hours (unless in accordance with a DoLS order) instead opting to hear from providers about how they best feel they can meet needs.

Placements for children and young people include those:

With emotional and behavioural difficulties.

With EHCP plans.

With a history of disrupted familial relationships and/or have experienced break down of placements in foster care or children's homes.

Who have been at risk of harm.

Who have experienced neglect.

Who have experienced emotional abuse.

Who have an identified or suspected neurodiversity.

Additional children and young people referred if / once the initial placement has ended are likely to include those aged 10-18 years old with behaviours including but not limited to:

Self-harm, including suicidal thoughts.

Offending

Sexualised behaviours

Fire setting

Absconding

The placement is not required to accommodate children and young people with:

Physical disabilities.

Severe Learning disabilities.

Acute mental health needs who require inpatient treatment.

Clinical / nursing needs.

Severe drug dependency not on a treatment support program.

The provider is to operate within Children's homes / fostering regulations, Ofsted requirements, and ensure Regulation 44 visits are in place as applicable.

Criteria For Providing the Provision include that the provider will have a registered children's home vacancy or foster care placement which can be offered within the timescales detailed within the specification. The placement is in Essex or within 20 miles. The provider must aspire for an Ofsted rating of good or outstanding.

This service specification has been drafted in accordance with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") and accompanying guidance. The provider must adhere to the quality standards as set out within the Regulations when delivering children's residential placements under this provision. These requirements include but are not limited to the provision of appropriately trained staff.

The service specification has also been drafted in accordance with Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations Volume 4 Fostering Services, the Care Standards Act 2000, the Adoption and Children Act 2002, the Children Act 2004 and the Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

Where you think you could deliver the above requirement, please send your expression of interest to the below by 5pm Friday 15th March 2024. Anne-Lise Nicol:

[Annelise.Nicol@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Annelise.Nicol@essex.gov.uk)

Essex County Council will be hosting a virtual market engagement event for this opportunity on Friday 16th February 2024. If you wish to attend this event, please send your expression of interest to the above-mentioned contact.

## **II.2.7) Duration of the contract, framework agreement or dynamic purchasing**

## **system**

Duration in months

12

This contract is subject to renewal

Yes

Description of renewals

1 year contract + 2 further year extensions optional (1+1+1).

### **II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds**

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

### **II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice**

20 March 2024

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## **Section IV. Procedure**

### **IV.1) Description**

#### **IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)**

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

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## **Section VI. Complementary information**

### **VI.4) Procedures for review**

#### **VI.4.1) Review body**

The Royal Courts of Justice

London

Country

United Kingdom