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Award

Connect to Work (Supported Employment) - IPS Provision in North, Mid and East Kent

Kent County Council

UK6: Contract award notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-016008

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05471b ([view related notices](#))

Published 23 February 2026, 11:50am

Scope

Reference

CN250240

Description

The Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) has launched a new national supported employment programme called 'Connect to Work' (C2W). Connect to Work is a key part of the Government's new 'Get Britain Working Strategy' and its commitment to supporting the 1.8m people in the UK who would like to work but are not currently participating in the labour market.

The programme aims to support 81,000 individuals per year overall nationally. Connect to work will be delivered by 43 accountable bodies across the UK. Kent County Council (KCC) are one of 43 Accountable bodies and will be delivering the programme on behalf of Kent and Medway.

The "Connect to Work" programme is an initiative aimed at providing employment support to individuals with disabilities or long-term health conditions, or other disadvantaged

groups. The programme offers targeted interventions, job coaching, workplace support, and other support to ensure that individuals facing challenges can participate in and retain employment.

The majority of participants on the programme (75%) will be supported using the Individual Placement Support (IPS) fidelity model. This opportunity relates to the IPS intervention only.

For this procurement exercise, KCC are including the following contract areas in the competitive tender process:

Lot 1 - North Kent (IPS) (comprising the Gravesham and Medway districts)

Lot 2 - Mid Kent (IPS) (comprising the Swale, Ashford and Canterbury districts)

Lot 3 - East Kent (IPS) (comprising the Shepway, Dover and Thanet Districts)

A Contract Lotting Map has been provided within the procurement documents, to provide a visual representation of contract lotting and geographical boundaries for the service.

Lot 1. North Kent (IPS)

Description

The North Kent (IPS) lot includes the following district areas: Gravesham and Medway. The successful provider will be expected to deliver all IPS Supported Employment provision within this lot area.

It is anticipated that c.1358 participants in total will be supported within this area for the duration of the programme. Further information relating to the services and volumes to be delivered can be found in the procurement documents.

Lot 2. Mid Kent (IPS)

Description

The Mid Kent (IPS) lot includes the following district areas: Swale, Ashford and Canterbury. The successful provider will be expected to deliver all IPS Supported Employment provision within this lot area.

It is anticipated that c.1860 participants in total will be supported within this area for the duration of the programme. Further information relating to the services and volumes to be delivered can be found in the procurement documents.

Lot 3. East Kent (IPS)

Description

The East Kent (IPS) lot includes the following district areas: Swale, Ashford and Canterbury. The successful provider will be expected to deliver all IPS Supported Employment provision within this lot area.

It is anticipated that 1441 participants in total will be supported within this area for the duration of the programme. Further information relating to the services and volumes to be delivered can be found in the procurement documents.

Contract 1. Lot 1 - North Kent (IPS)

Lots

Lot 1. North Kent (IPS)

Supplier

- THE FORWARD TRUST

Contract value

- £5,588,690.40 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Award decision date

20 February 2026

Date assessment summaries were sent to tenderers

23 February 2026

Standstill period

- End: 4 March 2026
- 8 working days

Earliest date the contract will be signed

5 March 2026

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2028
- Possible extension to 31 March 2030
- 4 years

Description of possible extension:

There will be an optional extension period, up to a maximum of 2 years (24 months). This is subject to availability of funding and supplier performance during the initial contract term.

Main procurement category

Services

Options

The right to additional purchases while the contract is valid.

The Council reserves the right to amend the service areas a supplier is delivering in, and modify these contracts to include additional participant volumes, and/or service areas (in accordance with Section 74 of the Procurement Act) in the following circumstances:

- There has been a supplier failure within other lot area(s) within Kent and Medway, leading to termination or suspension of contract/services and/or reduction in participant profile or scope of the contract.
- An awarded supplier has declined to deliver further services under this programme, or is unable to meet the specified participant targets within their lot area(s).
- The Council terminates a Connect to work contract in line with the provisions of the terms and conditions, including but not limited to supplier insolvency or change of control.
- Local government reorganisation changes to current district boundaries necessitate an amendment to existing service areas and/or participant profiles.

Should additional service areas be awarded via a contract modification process, the total estimated value of this contract could range from: Lot 1 - £4,657,242 to £15,977,975 Lot 2 - £6,378,844 - £15,977,975, Lot 3 - £4,941,889 - £15,977,975 (estimated option values exclusive of VAT, based on indicative participant profiles)

CPV classifications

- 75131000 - Government services
- 80000000 - Education and training services
- 85000000 - Health and social work services

Contract locations

- UKJ - South East (England)
-

Contract 2. Lot 2 - Mid Kent (IPS)

Lots

Lot 2. Mid Kent (IPS)

Supplier

- SHAW TRUST LIMITED(THE)

Contract value

- £5,930,266.80 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Award decision date

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23 February 2026

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CPV classifications

- 75131000 - Government services
- 80000000 - Education and training services
- 85000000 - Health and social work services

Contract locations

- UKJ - South East (England)
-

Contract 3. Lot 3. East Kent (IPS)

Lots

Lot 3. East Kent (IPS)

Supplier

- THE FORWARD TRUST

Contract value

- £5,930,266.80 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Award decision date

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CPV classifications

- 75131000 - Government services
- 80000000 - Education and training services
- 85000000 - Health and social work services

Contract locations

- UKJ - South East (England)

Information about tenders

Lot 1. North Kent (IPS)

- 9 tenders received

- 9 tenders assessed in the final stage:
 - 4 submitted by small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
 - 3 submitted by voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)
 - 1 supplier awarded contracts
 - 8 suppliers unsuccessful (details included for contracts over £5 million)
-

Unsuccessful suppliers

- [SHAW TRUST LIMITED\(THE\)](#)
 - [CXK](#)
 - [FEDCAP EMPLOYMENT LIMITED](#)
 - [GET SKILLS EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING LTD](#)
 - [Reed in Partnership Limited](#)
 - [RUNWAY APPRENTICESHIPS LIMITED](#)
 - [STANDGUIDE LIMITED](#)
 - [TWIN TRAINING INTERNATIONAL LIMITED](#)
-

Lot 2. Mid Kent (IPS)

- 6 tenders received
 - 6 tenders assessed in the final stage:
 - 3 submitted by small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
 - 2 submitted by voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)
 - 1 supplier awarded contracts
 - 5 suppliers unsuccessful (details included for contracts over £5 million)
-

Unsuccessful suppliers

- [CXK](#)
 - [FEDCAP EMPLOYMENT LIMITED](#)
 - [GET SKILLS EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING LTD](#)
 - [RUNWAY APPRENTICESHIPS LIMITED](#)
 - [PEOPLEPLUS GROUP LIMITED](#)
-

Lot 3. East Kent (IPS)

- 7 tenders received
 - 7 tenders assessed in the final stage:
 - 3 submitted by small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
 - 3 submitted by voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)
 - 1 supplier awarded contracts
 - 6 suppliers unsuccessful (details included for contracts over £5 million)
-

Unsuccessful suppliers

- [SHAW TRUST LIMITED\(THE\)](#)
 - [CXK](#)
 - [FEDCAP EMPLOYMENT LIMITED](#)
 - [GET SKILLS EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING LTD](#)
 - [RUNWAY APPRENTICESHIPS LIMITED](#)
 - [PEOPLEPLUS GROUP LIMITED](#)
-

Submission

Submission type

Requests to participate

Procedure

Procedure type

Competitive flexible procedure

Special regime

Light touch

Suppliers

CXK

- Companies House: 4399340
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PDXQ-7712-PYWP

The Old Court, Tufon Street

Ashford

TN23 1QN

United Kingdom

Website: <http://www.cxk.org>

Region: UKJ45 - Mid Kent

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): Yes

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): Yes

FEDCAP EMPLOYMENT LIMITED

- Companies House: 11842787
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PWNX-2652-BMMT

Boaz House, Massey Road,

Thornaby, Stockton-On-Tees

TS17 6DY

United Kingdom

Website: <https://fedcap.org.uk/employment/>

Region: UKC11 - Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

GET SKILLS EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING LTD

- Companies House: 07083531

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PCWM-2653-WRMG

86-90, Paul Street

London

EC2A 4NE

United Kingdom

Website: <https://www.getsetuk.co.uk/>

Region: UKI41 - Hackney and Newham

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): Yes

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

PEOPLEPLUS GROUP LIMITED

- Companies House: 05722765

- UK Register of Learning Providers (UKPRN number): 10036431

The Quorum, Bond Street South

Bristol

BS1 3AE

United Kingdom

Website: <https://peopleplus.co.uk/>

Region: UKK11 - Bristol, City of

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Reed in Partnership Limited

- Companies House: 00851645
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PRBL-7293-HRJP

Academy Court, 94 Chancery Lane

London

WC2A 1DT

United Kingdom

Website: <http://www.reedinpartnership.co.uk>

Region: UKI31 - Camden and City of London

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

RUNWAY APPRENTICESHIPS LIMITED

- Companies House: 08957135
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PZRP-6983-QJVQ

8-10 South Street

Epsom

KT18 7PF

United Kingdom

Website: <http://www.runwaytraining.co.uk>

Region: UKJ26 - East Surrey

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): Yes

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

SHAW TRUST LIMITED(THE)

- Companies House: 01744121
- Charity Commission (England and Wales): 287785

Black Country House, Rounds Green Road

Oldbury

B69 2DG

United Kingdom

Email: business.development@shaw-trust.org.uk

Website: <http://www.shawtrust.org.uk>

Region: UKG37 - Sandwell

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): Yes

Supported employment provider: Yes

Public service mutual: No

Associated people/organisations:

Below is the current list of sub-contractors for this contract. Sub-contractors may change throughout the life of the contract. The contracting authority will ensure compliance with the procurement regulations in the event of a change to the list of sub-contractors.

Proposed Subcontractors:

Migrant Help (04172880)

Royal British Legion Poppy Factory Limited (The) (00204405)

Contract 2. Lot 2 - Mid Kent (IPS)

STANDGUIDE LIMITED

- Companies House: 02563257
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PXVG-4195-YZCQ

Unit G.01 Clarence Arcade

Ashton-Under-Lyne

OL6 7PT

United Kingdom

Website: <http://www.standguide.co.uk>

Region: UKD35 - Greater Manchester South East

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

THE FORWARD TRUST

- Companies House: 02560474
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PBNG-1368-PHZN

Unit 106, Edinburgh House, 170 Kennington Lane

London

SE11 5DP

United Kingdom

Email: development@forwardtrust.org.uk

Website: <http://www.forwardtrust.org.uk>

Region: UKI45 - Lambeth

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): Yes

Supported employment provider: No

Public service mutual: No

Associated people/organisations:

Below is the current list of sub-contractors for this contract. Sub-contractors may change throughout the life of the contract. The contracting authority will ensure compliance with the procurement regulations in the event of a change to the list of sub-contractors.

Contract 1. Lot 1 - North Kent (IPS)

Contract 3. Lot 3. East Kent (IPS)

TWIN TRAINING INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

- Companies House: 03118260
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PYLY-3825-NNCQ

12 Lambarde Square

London

SE10 9GB

United Kingdom

Website: <https://www.twingroup.org/en/>

Region: UKI51 - Bexley and Greenwich

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): Yes

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Contracting authority

Kent County Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PLDL-8938-YGYW

County Hall

Maidstone

ME14 1XQ

United Kingdom

Contact name: Alison Blackman

Email: alison.blackman@kent.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/>

Region: UKJ45 - Mid Kent

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government