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Contract

Children's Residential Personalised Block Contracts - Phase 2

Essex County Council

F03: Contract award notice

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-016277

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-04a3a3

Published 22 April 2025, 2:47pm

Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

Essex County Council

County Hall, Market Road

Chelmsford

CM1 1QH

Contact

Ms Rachel Horne

Email

rachel.horne@essex.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UKH3 - Essex

Internet address(es)

Main address

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

Buyer's address

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

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Regional or local authority

I.5) Main activity

General public services

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Children's Residential Personalised Block Contracts - Phase 2

Reference number

DN745245

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 85000000 - Health and social work services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

Essex County Council ("the Council") were seeking to engage providers within the children's residential and fostering space to enter into a block contract agreement for registered provision to support children and young people under the age of 18 who were in unregistered settings. Providers were required to hold Ofsted registered provision and located either in Essex or within 20 miles from the Council's geographic coverage / boundaries.

Please be advised that the contracts for this service were due to be commissioned under an initial term of twelve (12) months (subject to the enactment of the break clause as detailed in the draft terms and conditions for this procurement). Thereafter, the Council, at its sole discretion, may have enacted the options to extend the contract. For the avoidance of any further doubt, please note that this service was due to be commissioned with two (2) optional extension periods, each of which provide an additional twelve (12) month term. Therefore, the maximum duration of each contract per lot would be three (3) years. In addition, please note that the provider(s) would have been required to report their delivery of Social Value in relation to this service as a condition of the enactment of the contractual extensions. The Council were due to provide further details regarding this requirement with the successful bidder(s) during the contract management of this service.

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: Yes

II.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Young Person 1

Lot No

1

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85311000 - Social work services with accommodation

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Please find below a summary of the Council's key requirements for this lot:

The Council did not mandate precise details of how a provider should support a Child in Care, instead trusting in the specialisms, knowledge, and expertise of this market. This personalised specification approach was designed to allow 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 were individually outlined in each output specification, each of which formed a Lot within this procurement. Each of these output specifications were anonymised referrals of a Young Person who were in an unregistered placement, or at risk of being in an unregistered placement, who required a registered placement.

The Council would have considered all registered children's home/foster care placements so long as they were in accordance with the child or young person's care plan, the Council were therefore able to consider solo, dual or group homes.

The Council were 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 included 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 were 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 was 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.

In addition, the provider would have been required 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 included, requiring the provider to have a registered children's home vacancy or foster care placement which could be offered within the timescales detailed within the tender.

Furthermore, this service was due to be provided in accordance with the following conditions:

- The placement must be delivered in Essex or within 20 miles.
- The provider must aspire for an Ofsted rating of good or outstanding.

This service specification was 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 was also 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. Please be advised that the full scope of the Council's requirements for this service was detailed in the overarching service specification which needs to be read in conjunction with the anonymised personal profile for this lot.

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II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Quality / Weighting: 30

Price - Weighting: 70

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

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.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Young Person 2

Lot No

2

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85311000 - Social work services with accommodation

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

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II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Quality / Weighting: 30

Price - Weighting: 70

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

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.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Young Person 3

Lot No

3

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85311000 - Social work services with accommodation

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

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II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Quality / Weighting: 30

Price - Weighting: 70

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

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.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Young Person 4

Lot No

4

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85311000 - Social work services with accommodation

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

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II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Quality / Weighting: 30

Price - Weighting: 70

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

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.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Young Person 5

Lot No

5

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85311000 - Social work services with accommodation

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

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II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Quality / Weighting: 30

Price - Weighting: 70

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

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.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Young Person 6

Lot No

6

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85311000 - Social work services with accommodation

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

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- Sexualised behaviours

- Fire setting
- Absconding

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Price - Weighting: 70

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

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.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Young Person 7

Lot No

7

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85311000 - Social work services with accommodation

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

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II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

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.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Young Person 8

Lot No

8

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85311000 - Social work services with accommodation

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

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- Clinical / nursing needs.
- Severe drug dependency not on a treatment support program.

In addition, the provider would have been required 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 included, requiring the provider to have a registered children's home vacancy or foster care placement which could be offered within the timescales detailed within the tender.

Furthermore, this service was due to be provided in accordance with the following conditions:

- The placement must be delivered in Essex or within 20 miles.
- The provider must aspire for an Ofsted rating of good or outstanding.

This service specification was 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 was also 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. Please be advised that the full scope of the Council's requirements for this service was detailed in the overarching service specification which needs to be read in conjunction with the anonymised personal profile for this lot.

These documents form part of the tender pack for this procurement which was published on ProContract and accessible to registered users via: <https://procontract.due-north.com/>

II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Quality / Weighting: 30

Price - Weighting: 70

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

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.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Young Person 9

Lot No

9

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85311000 - Social work services with accommodation

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Please find below a summary of the Council's key requirements for this lot:

The Council did not mandate precise details of how a provider should support a Child in Care, instead trusting in the specialisms, knowledge, and expertise of this market. This personalised specification approach was designed to allow 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 were individually outlined in each output specification, each of which formed a Lot within this procurement. Each of these output specifications were anonymised referrals of a Young Person who were in an unregistered placement, or at risk of being in an unregistered placement, who required a registered placement.

The Council would have considered all registered children's home/foster care placements so long as they were in accordance with the child or young person's care plan, the Council were therefore able to consider solo, dual or group homes.

The Council were 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 included 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 were 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 was 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.

In addition, the provider would have been required 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 included, requiring the provider to have a registered children's home vacancy or foster care placement which could be offered within the timescales detailed within the tender.

Furthermore, this service was due to be provided in accordance with the following conditions:

- The placement must be delivered in Essex or within 20 miles.
- The provider must aspire for an Ofsted rating of good or outstanding.

This service specification was 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.

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II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Quality / Weighting: 30

Price - Weighting: 70

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

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

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Open procedure

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

IV.2) Administrative information

IV.2.1) Previous publication concerning this procedure

Notice number: [2025/S 000-002757](#)

Section V. Award of contract

Lot No

1

Title

Young Person 1

A contract/lot is awarded: No

V.1) Information on non-award

The contract/lot is not awarded

Other reasons (discontinuation of procedure)

Section V. Award of contract

Lot No

2

Title

Young Person 2

A contract/lot is awarded: No

V.1) Information on non-award

The contract/lot is not awarded

Other reasons (discontinuation of procedure)

Section V. Award of contract

Lot No

3

Title

Young Person 3

A contract/lot is awarded: No

V.1) Information on non-award

The contract/lot is not awarded

Other reasons (discontinuation of procedure)

Section V. Award of contract

Lot No

4

Title

Young Person 4

A contract/lot is awarded: No

V.1) Information on non-award

The contract/lot is not awarded

Other reasons (discontinuation of procedure)

Section V. Award of contract

Lot No

5

Title

Young Person 5

A contract/lot is awarded: No

V.1) Information on non-award

The contract/lot is not awarded

Other reasons (discontinuation of procedure)

Section V. Award of contract

Lot No

6

Title

Young Person 6

A contract/lot is awarded: No

V.1) Information on non-award

The contract/lot is not awarded

Other reasons (discontinuation of procedure)

Section V. Award of contract

Lot No

7

Title

Young Person 7

A contract/lot is awarded: No

V.1) Information on non-award

The contract/lot is not awarded

Other reasons (discontinuation of procedure)

Section V. Award of contract

Lot No

8

Title

Young Person 8

A contract/lot is awarded: No

V.1) Information on non-award

The contract/lot is not awarded

Other reasons (discontinuation of procedure)

Section V. Award of contract

Lot No

9

Title

Young Person 9

A contract/lot is awarded: No

V.1) Information on non-award

The contract/lot is not awarded

Other reasons (discontinuation of procedure)

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

Please note that Council was unable to proceed with the contract award process of this procurement as originally intended due to unmitigated operational issues.

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

The High Court

The Royal Courts of Justice, The Strand

London

WC2A 2LL

Country

United Kingdom