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Planning

Earnse Hub - Preliminary Market Engagement Notice

Westmorland and Furness Council

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-018575

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-065ff8

Published 2 March 2026, 3:29pm

Scope

Description

This is NOT a tender opportunity at this stage.

The Earnse Hub represents a fantastic opportunity to shape a vibrant, new, coastal community space providing a new chapter for communities and partners alike who share a passion for nature, the outdoors, and building strong community connections. Set within a newly landscaped park this picturesque area of Cumbria brings together play areas, growing spaces, and a network of pathways that weave around the site; the hub offers an exceptional opportunity for an operator who is ready to capitalise on the growing demand for nature-based wellbeing and the diverse income streams and social value this brings.

Combining a café with outdoor terrace space, a fully serviced campsite, and set within parkland with access to the beach, the hub is designed to pull in a strong, year round footfall and cater to a range of audiences. This provides a unique platform for an operator who is ready to enable the site to realise its full potential as place where people can come together to explore, create, learn, eat, play, and stay.

The Earnse Hub is a shared site; a small section of the site will home a beach school which is to be constructed and operated by Natural England. This site is positioning itself to attract families, residents, visitors and education partners, creating a powerful platform

for commercial growth with an abundance of community impact.

Westmorland and Furness Council is seeking to engage with the market to explore options for the new Earnse Hub development and to source a partner who will be responsible for delivering a collective vision for the site, alongside managing one or more aspects. Funded by the UK Governments Town Deal programme in partnership with Westmorland and Furness Council and the Barrow Town Deal.

The Earnse Hub is situated on Walney Island in Barrow in Furness and the opportunity consists of one or more of the following:

- a café/community space providing internal seating for 40 covers with further external seating available on the wrap around terrace
- a segregated campsite including 4 camping pods, 4 hard standing pitches catering for small campervans, and additional grass pitches
- a camping support building including shower facilities, toilets and a kitchen area
- parkland and community growing spaces

The hub has been designed to enable access to a variety of facilities that promote community-focused activities. The ethos of the hub is to foster social interaction, promote health and wellbeing, and provide access to a range of volunteering opportunities and aid skill development.

Currently we expect the concession opportunity offered as a minimum 5 years in duration with options to renew; the Heads of Terms will be available in the tender documents which we anticipate will be published April/May 2026.

We are seeking an operator to commence the lease from Summer 2026, opening to the public late Summer/ early Autumn 2026.

Engagement process description:

As part of this exciting opportunity, we are inviting interested organisations to join an engagement event in person in Barrow. An option to join the event via teams will also be available. The event will take place on Monday 16th March; we will confirm the time and location upon receipt of your expression of interest to attend. The event will be followed by an optional site visit.

Organisations wishing to attend must register their interest prior to attending by no later than 14.00pm on Friday 13th of March.

If you are interested in attending this session, please email kelly.alty@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

The purpose of the session is to engage with the market and gather general feedback on the opportunity, this may include the proposed lease terms and indicative timelines.

This preliminary market engagement is intended to help us better understand market interest and any considerations ahead of the formal tender process.

This information notice does not commit Westmorland and Furness Council to any future procurement or any subsequent decisions based on the output of the market testing exercise.

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 August 2026 to 31 July 2031
- 5 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 55000000 - Hotel, restaurant and retail trade services

Contract locations

- UKD1 - Cumbria
-

Engagement

Engagement deadline

16 March 2026

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Participation

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
 - Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)
-

Procedure

Special regime

Concession

Contracting authority

Westmorland and Furness Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PYYD-1758-YNVR

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Region: UKD12 - East Cumbria

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government