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Planning

Post 18 Autism Support Services

Thurrock Council

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

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-020580

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-051139 ([view related notices](#))

Published 12 May 2025, 3:48pm

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Scope

Reference

PS/2025/066

Description

Thurrock Council is seeking to engage with providers ahead of a planned procurement exercise for the delivery of a Post 18 Autism Support Service for young people aged 18 to 25 years old with a diagnosis of autism and complex needs.

We invite interested providers to participate in this soft market testing to help shape a service model that is sustainable, innovative, and delivers high-quality outcomes for young adults with complex needs.

Thurrock Council currently provides a specialist support service for up to 10 young adults aged 18-25 with autism and complex needs. Many of these young people are non-verbal or have limited communication and need intensive support to thrive.

This service helps young people stay close to home and family, avoiding the need for expensive out-of-area residential placements. It focuses on giving them the practical, emotional, and social skills they need to live more independently-whether that's in supported housing, eventually on their own or still at home but with less reliance on parental support.

The current service approach uses Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), which many young people in Thurrock are already familiar with through their school experience at Treetops Special School.

The service aims to help young people live full and independent lives in their community. Support is built around four key areas:

- Living independently
- Health and wellbeing
- Building friendships and being part of the community
- Education, training, volunteering, and employment

Support is tailored to each young person, based on their needs, strengths, and goals. This includes:

- Help with daily living skills like cooking, cleaning, shopping, and personal care
- Travel training, road safety, and using public transport
- Attending medical appointments
- Managing money
- Support with communication and emotional regulation
- Help with learning, preparing for volunteering opportunities or work, or gaining qualifications (ASDAN level 1 or 2 in independence skills)
- Involving parents and carers in learning and reinforcing skills at home

The young people accessing this service have high needs and as such the current programme runs daily for 6 hours per day, for 48 weeks a year, over a two year period. Young people have

an allocated trained support worker and in some cases 2:1 staffing is required.

We want to understand:

- The level of market interest in delivering this service
- Providers' views on alternative delivery models or approaches, such as Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)
- The appetite for different operating models including flexible block contracts
- Indicative price range for delivering such a specialist service (hourly or per package/per annum)
- The contract duration that would support workforce stability and business sustainability
- Any frameworks or DPS arrangements you are already part of that could support call-off or direct award
- The challenges and enablers to delivering this service, particularly around staffing recruitment and retention
- What additional social value or innovation you could bring to the Thurrock community

For more information and to take part in this exercise, download the market engagement document from the In-Tend portal.

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 September 2026 to 1 August 2030
- 3 years, 11 months, 1 day

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 85310000 - Social work services
- 85320000 - Social services
- 98000000 - Other community, social and personal services

Contract locations

- UKH32 - Thurrock

Engagement

Engagement deadline

5 June 2025

Engagement process description

Questionnaire feedback

Participation

Particular suitability

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

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

5 January 2026

Procedure

Special regime

Light touch

Contracting authority

Thurrock Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PMHW-1723-WDCD

New Road

Grays

RM17 6SL

United Kingdom

Email: Procurement@thurrock.gov.uk

Region: UKH32 - Thurrock

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government