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Planning

Connect to Work

Essex County Council

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

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Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-051695

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Scope

Reference

PL0106

Description

This notice is intended to alert providers to an opportunity to deliver the Connect to Work programme for Greater Essex (Southend ,Thurrock and Essex) through its Accountable Body - Essex County Council (ECC).

The e-tendering system used by ECC is ProContract. Potential applicants for Connect to Work are encouraged to register on ProContract as soon as possible. It is free to register and use the system.

You will need to create an account on ProContract to access and bid for public sector opportunities issued by ECC, including this Connect to Work opportunity. Visit

<https://procontract.due-north.com/Register> to register an account.

Connect to Work

The recently launched "Get Britain Working" White Paper outlines Government's strategy to invest £240m to support the ambition of a national 80% employment rate and help improve workplace health and keep people in work, including trials of combined public services for those out of work due to ill health. Connect to Work is the first major element of the Get Britain Working Strategy.

By encouraging join-up between health systems and employment support, Connect to Work will support those, primarily, currently outside the workforce and facing greater labour market disadvantages, to stay in work and get back into work. In turn, supporting the Government's ambition for a more inclusive economy, supporting local people to realise their potential and supporting local and national growth. Connect to Work funding will support around 100,000 disabled people with health conditions and those with complex barriers to get into employment and on in work. In Greater Essex, Connect to Work will support 7,804 residents across the entirety of the programme.

ECC is the Accountable Body for Connect to Work in Essex and, working in partnership with both Unitary Local Authorities, Thurrock Council and Southend-on-Sea City Council, responsible for the commissioning of Connect to Work delivery.

Connect to Work is a voluntary programme, delivering the evidence-based Supported Employment model, 'place, train, and maintain', via two different types of interventions based on the needs of the participant - Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF). This opportunity relates to both models of delivery.

Total value (estimated)

- £10,698,000 excluding VAT
- £12,837,600 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2028
- Possible extension to 31 January 2030
- 4 years, 1 month

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 79611000 - Job search services
- 79634000 - Career guidance services
- 80000000 - Education and training services

Contract locations

- UKH3 - Essex

Engagement

Engagement deadline

1 July 2025

Engagement process description

The Market Engagement Session is divided into three parts

- Webinar on Wednesday 4th June 2025 10:00 - 11:30 for Employment Providers.
- Webinar on Tuesday 10th June 2025 10:00 - 11:00 for Voluntary Sector.
- In person session on Wednesday 25th June 2025 1:30 - 3:00pm at Watt Tyler Country Park for all.

The, in person, event will provide an overview of the Connect to Work delivery model for Greater Essex, what SEQF/IPS provision (supported employment) Essex County Council as the Accountable Body will be procuring and the timescales for the procurement process and answer any questions on that.

The event will then introduce local organisations, often but not exclusively, VCSE organisations providing employment support to specified Connect to Work cohorts i.e Refugees across Greater Essex to potential Prime providers that want to deliver Connect to Work across Greater Essex.

Outcomes for attendees:

- An understanding of the delivery model for Connect to Work in Greater Essex,
- An understanding of what ECC will be procuring and the timescales for this and how it fits with existing supported employment in Great Essex
- Introductions/contacts between potential Prime providers and supply chain partners.

All interested Suppliers who wish to register to take part in any sessions from above to complete the form using the link below to receive an invite to the webinar or in person event:

<https://forms.office.com/e/7HFd3ReTCr>

Participation

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

- Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

1 October 2025

Procedure

Special regime

Light touch

Contracting authority

Essex County Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PWVM-4844-NRQH

County Hall, Market Road

Chelmsford

CM1 1QH

United Kingdom

Email: ProcurementSandA@essex.gov.uk

Region: UKH36 - Heart of Essex

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government