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Tender

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

Kent County Council

UK4: Tender notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

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Changes to notice

This notice has been edited. The [previous version](#) is still available.

While the estimated total contract value has not changed, the Council has corrected a discrepancy between the values of Lots 1 and 2

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.

Total value (estimated)

- £15,977,975 excluding VAT
- £19,173,570 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

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.

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)

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

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

Contract locations

- UKJ - South East (England)

Lot constraints

Maximum number of lots a supplier can be awarded: 2

Description of how multiple lots may be awarded:

Candidates who meet the conditions of participation will be invited to bid for any of the available contract lots (tender for the opportunity). However, those who have been invited to tenderer for the opportunity will be awarded a maximum of two lots based on the submission of the most advantageous tender based on the published award criteria (for each area). A restriction to the number of lots that can be awarded to each supplier has been implemented to increase resilience within the programme.

Further Information on the lotting restrictions and award criteria will be provided within the procurement documents.

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 value (estimated)

- £4,657,242 excluding VAT
- £5,588,690.40 including VAT

Same for all lots

CPV classifications, contract locations, contract dates and options are shown in the Scope section, because they are the same for all lots.

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 value (estimated)

- £6,378,844 excluding VAT
- £7,654,612.80 including VAT

Same for all lots

CPV classifications, contract locations, contract dates and options are shown in the Scope section, because they are the same for all lots.

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.

Lot value (estimated)

- £4,941,889 excluding VAT
- £5,930,266.80 including VAT

Same for all lots

CPV classifications, contract locations, contract dates and options are shown in the Scope section, because they are the same for all lots.

Participation

Legal and financial capacity conditions of participation

Lot 1. North Kent (IPS)

Lot 2. Mid Kent (IPS)

Lot 3. East Kent (IPS)

Please see the procurement documents for further information

Technical ability conditions of participation

Lot 1. North Kent (IPS)

Lot 2. Mid Kent (IPS)

Lot 3. East Kent (IPS)

Please see the procurement documents for further information

Particular suitability

Lot 1. North Kent (IPS)

Lot 2. Mid Kent (IPS)

Lot 3. East Kent (IPS)

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Enquiry deadline

23 July 2025, 12:00pm

Submission type

Requests to participate

Deadline for requests to participate

30 July 2025, 12:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

All submissions must be submitted via the Kent Business Portal - www.kentbusinessportal.org.uk. The procurement opportunity advert can be found at: <https://procontract.due-north.com/Advert?advertId=47feae3e-0351-f011-813a-005056b64545&p=8691483f-2f3d-e711-80e1-005056b64545>

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

English

Award decision date (estimated)

1 December 2025

Award criteria

Name	Type
Price per Quality Point (PQP)	Price
Quality	Quality

Weighting description

The Price per Quality Point (PQP) evaluation methodology shall be used as detailed in the draft tender documentation.

Other information

Payment terms

Payment will be made to suppliers in accordance with the Price per Participant submitted as part of procurement process. The Price per Participant will be split into regular payments while a participant is engaged in the programme, with an enhanced payment for programme starts (20% following month one). Further information relating to the Contract

payment terms can be found in Schedule 3 of the Terms and Conditions.

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Competitive flexible procedure

Special regime

Light touch

Competitive flexible procedure description

The Council intends to include the following stages during the procurement process: a Conditions of Participation Stage , Initial Tender Stage (ITT), Negotiation Stage (Optional), Invitation to Submit Final Tender Stage (ISFT), followed by Contract Award.

Please note that this procedure is a Competitive Flexible Procedure (CFP) under the Light Touch Regime.

At this time, the Council intends to follow the stages and process outlined above. However, it reserves the right to amend the Competitive Flexible Procedure at subsequent stages of the procurement process. The Council also reserves the right to award contracts on the basis of initial tenders received. Further information can be found in the procurement documents.

Any adjustments to the Competitive Flexible Procedure will be specified within the tender

documents at the relevant procurement stage, and communicated via the Kent Business Portal.

The Council reserves the right to amend and refine the stated award criteria at subsequent stages of the procurement process, including changes to any stated weightings. Any changes will be communicated to tenderers during the procurement process.

Documents

Associated tender documents

<http://www.kentbusinessportal.org.uk>

All tender documents can be accessed via the Council's eTendering portal. Please go to www.kentbusinessportal.org.uk. If you are already registered on a Proactis eTendering portal, you will not need to re-register.

Contracting authority

Kent County Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PLDL-8938-YGYW

County Hall

Maidstone

ME14 1XQ

United Kingdom

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

Region: UKJ45 - Mid Kent

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government