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Planning

Independent Foster Care: Local Homes for Local Children

Milton Keynes City Council

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

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-038650

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-0557e5 ([view related notices](#))

Published 9 July 2025, 2:55pm

Changes to notice

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

Updated engagement deadline as did not pull through correctly from E-Tendering portal

Scope

Reference

2025-200

Description

Milton Keynes City Council ('the Council') is keen to explore how we can best work with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) to develop sufficient, good-quality local homes for children in our care.

We are a growing city, experiencing rapid expansion of our population and an increase in the number of children looked after by the local authority. We want to look beyond the traditional 'framework' model of contracting to build closer relationships with fostering providers operating locally, guarantee sustainable commissioning and work in partnership to recruit and retain foster carers.

We are particularly keen to engage with IFAs around the possibility of developing block or soft-block contracts for foster care placements to ensure the needs of our children can be met long-term. These are likely to be 'enhanced' placements, intended for children who could live in a foster home but who might otherwise enter residential care due if sufficient fostering placements are not available.

We are keen to hear from providers on the questions given in the market engagement document. The responses to the questions will help the Council in developing the specification and the tender.

Please respond to the questions within the attached document by latest 5pm on 25th July 2025 via In-Tend Correspondence section/market engagement stage. If there is sufficient interest in a scoping event to explore the proposal in more detail, this will be held w/c 11th August, please indicate in the attached document if you would like to receive an invitation.

The Market Engagement document can be accessed on our e-tendering portal: <https://in-tendhost.co.uk/milton-keynes/asp/Home>

Total value (estimated)

- £9,500,000 excluding VAT
- £9,500,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 2 November 2026 to 1 November 2031
- 5 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 85000000 - Health and social work services

Contract locations

- UKJ12 - Milton Keynes

Engagement

Engagement deadline

25 July 2025

Engagement process description

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the number of children looked after by the local authority. We want to look beyond the traditional 'framework' model of contracting to build closer relationships with fostering providers operating locally, guarantee sustainable commissioning and work in partnership to recruit and retain foster carers.

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Participation

Particular suitability

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

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

19 November 2025

Procedure

Special regime

Light touch

Contracting authority

Milton Keynes City Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PLDZ-6131-PWZH

Civic Offices, 1 Saxon Gate East

Milton Keynes

MK9 3EJ

United Kingdom

Contact name: Procurement Team

Telephone: 01908691691

Email: corporateprocurement@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/>

Region: UKJ12 - Milton Keynes

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government