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Tender

North Northamptonshire Council - North Northamptonshire Council - Supportive Steps - Early Parenting and Child-Parent Relationship

North Northamptonshire Council

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

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Published 10 July 2025, 3:43pm

Scope

Description

North Northamptonshire Council (hereafter referred to as the "Council") wishes to invite Tender Responses for a 2 + 1 year Service to support early parenting and child-parent relationships. This service builds upon the two-year test-and-learn pilot, Supportive Steps, which Family Action has successfully delivered as part of the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme.

Initially commissioned in June 2023, the Pilot aimed to support parents with early parenting within the 1001 critical days, enhance parent-infant relationships, and provide early intervention for mild to moderate perinatal mental health challenges and parent-infant relationship difficulties.

During the pilot phase, the service supported more than 150 families through targeted and universal interventions focusing on integrated, evidence-based parenting programmes and peer support.

Given the success of this approach, we are now transitioning from a test-and-learn phase to a longer-term model. This next phase will embed key learnings from the pilot and align

with North Northamptonshire's broader early intervention strategy, ensuring continuity of support while enhancing service effectiveness

The Service will provide early parenting and child-parent relationship support for mothers, fathers, and co-parents with children under two years old, including children up to the age of five, to engage in evidence-based programmes, e.g., the Solihull Approach.

The Council proposes to enter into one (1) Contract for an initial period of 24 months with the preferred Potential Supplier for each Lot, with an option to extend for 12 months, making 36 months in total. This is subject to further funding from DFE (Department for Education) Family Hub funding.

The contract for this project will be awarded via the Open Process, subject to the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 do not apply to this award.

Total value (estimated)

- £478,950 excluding VAT
- £574,740 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027
- Possible extension to 31 December 2028
- 3 years

Description of possible extension:

The Council proposes to enter into one (1) Contract for an initial period of 24 months with the preferred Potential Supplier, with an option to extend for 12 months, making 36 months in total. This is subject to further funding from DFE (Department for Education) Family Hub funding.

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 85000000 - Health and social work services

Contract locations

- UKF25 - North Northamptonshire
-

Lot 1. Lot 1: Parenting Support

Description

The 'transition to parenthood' refers to a period of normal psychological and social changes associated with pregnancy and the arrival of a new baby, which may be stressful.

All parents, but first-time parents, should be offered the opportunity to attend antenatal education classes that include modules aimed at preparing parents for these psychological and role changes.

Parenting education programs can help improve communication skills between parents and children, resulting in a better understanding between family members. It also encourages nurturing behaviour and increases parents' knowledge of child development and communication styles.

North Northants acknowledges that expecting parents with complex social factors may have additional needs. These parents require enhanced access to care through maintained antenatal care, evidence-based parenting support and accurate advice and information for mothers and families to make informed decisions.

The Service will deliver evidence-based parenting programmes that prepare expecting mothers, parents and their partners for labour, birth, and the immediate postnatal period to support the transition to parenthood.

This form of social support should be responsive to the priorities of participating parents. Interventions should address the transition to parenthood, relationship issues, the preparation for new roles and responsibilities, and problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills. In addition to the topics covered in traditional antenatal education (e.g., birth, physical changes in pregnancy).

The Service will deliver intensive support for expectant mothers, parents and those with babies from conception who need targeted evidence-based parenting interventions.

The Service will provide access to Family Hubs and other specialist services according to the family's needs and situation to improve outcomes for the whole family.

The Service will provide opportunities for mothers, fathers, and co-parents to meet parents with similar experiences in community settings.

The support will offer the chance to socialise and share parenting techniques, skills and knowledge. Children and parents will have more opportunities to get outside and attend regular groups that will provide stability, consistencies and the prospect of making friends.

Lot value (estimated)

- £239,475 excluding VAT
- £287,370 including VAT

Same for all lots

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

Lot 2. Lot 2 - Perinatal Mental Health and Child-Parent Relationship Support

Description

The pandemic has contributed to increased rates of mental illness among pregnant and new mothers in the UK. The lack of support during the intrapartum period due to changes to service provision are associated with increased stress, depression, and anxiety. This includes service changes such as introducing digital healthcare and attending antenatal appointments without partners or loved ones.

Although the long-term implications are largely unpredictable, the prevalence of perinatal mental health problems is high. Estimates suggest that around 20% of women will develop a mental disorder, such as depression, anxiety, or psychosis, in the perinatal period. (Cambridge University, 2023).

North Northants acknowledges the importance of the quality of the parent-child relationships and parenting on emotional well-being, social development, and adult mental health and well-being.

Infant mental health describes the social, emotional, and cognitive brain development in the first two years of life. Positive infant mental health is created and supported primarily through the development of positive early relationships between the baby and key caregivers.

Maternal mental health problems and mental illness can significantly impact infant mental health and early attachment. Women experiencing high levels of stress, anxiety, depression, or distress during pregnancy may struggle to develop a bond with the growing baby.

The Service will deliver evidence-based antenatal and postnatal support programmes for mothers, fathers and co-parents.

Parents will have access to advice and support on perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships in the community, working holistically to connect families to vital support where needed.

The Service will provide emotional and practical support to families where a parent struggles with their well-being or is at significant risk of developing mild to moderate mental health issues. This could include a diagnosis such as anxiety and depression during pregnancy and the first two years after birth.

The Service will support access to Family Hubs and other specialist services according to the family's needs and situation to improve outcomes for the whole family.

Lot value (estimated)

- £239,475 excluding VAT
- £287,370 including VAT

Same for all lots

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

Participation

Particular suitability

Lot 1. Lot 1: Parenting Support

Lot 2. Lot 2 - Perinatal Mental Health and Child-Parent Relationship Support

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

Submission

Enquiry deadline

31 July 2025, 5:00pm

Tender submission deadline

7 August 2025, 12:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

Please visit the North Northamptonshire Council e-Procurement Portal (<https://in-tendhost.co.uk/nnc/aspx/Home>) to apply for this opportunity and to access the documentation.

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

English

Award decision date (estimated)

1 September 2025

Award criteria

Name	Type	Weighting
Quality	Quality	80%
Price	Price	20%

Other information

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Open procedure

Documents

Associated tender documents

<https://in-tendhost.co.uk/nnc/aspx/Home>

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Contracting authority

North Northamptonshire Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PQCM-5634-HGCN

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United Kingdom

Email: procurement@northnorthants.gov.uk

Region: UKF25 - North Northamptonshire

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government