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Planning

## **Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) - Resource and Funding Maximisation Soft Market Test**

Essex County Council

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-041127

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04bd21

Published 20 December 2024, 10:07am

### **Section I: Contracting authority**

#### **I.1) Name and addresses**

Essex County Council

County Hall, Market Road

Chelmsford

CM1 1QH

#### **Contact**

Ms Rachel Horne

#### **Email**

[rachel.horne@essex.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.horne@essex.gov.uk)

#### **Telephone**

+44 3330322307

**Country**

United Kingdom

**Region code**

UKH3 - Essex

**Internet address(es)**

Main address

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/>

Buyer's address

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/>

**I.3) Communication**

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

**I.4) Type of the contracting authority**

Regional or local authority

**I.5) Main activity**

General public services

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## Section II: Object

### II.1) Scope of the procurement

#### II.1.1) Title

Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) - Resource and Funding Maximisation Soft Market Test

Reference number

DN751562

#### II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 79400000 - Business and management consultancy and related services

#### II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

#### II.1.4) Short description

Further to the previous FTS PIN (ref. no: 2024/S 000-037463), which was published on 20th November 2024 regarding this forthcoming procurement opportunity, Essex County Council ("the Council") would like to invite prospective providers to engage in a soft market test as part of the market engagement for this project.

The soft market test has been designed to establish the potential level of interest from organisations to deliver a Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) - Resource and Funding Maximisation service and to invite feedback on the proposed structure of this service to inform the Council's commissioning intentions.

Pending a review of the market feedback for this soft market test, the Council intends to commission a VCS Resource and Funding Maximisation Service offer which will work collaboratively with:

- A VCS Universal Standard Support Offer, providing digital business, compliance and learning resources.
- A VCS Community Participation partner, working strategically to develop a culture of participation across Essex and:
- Geographically based resources offering targeted and bespoke support across a range of outcomes.

The primary scope of the VCS Resource and Funding Maximisation service is predicated upon investing in a partner to enable a more strategic approach to maximising the funding and resources for the VCS. This partner will leverage financial and non-financial resources, strengthen the VCS capacity to secure funding, and support a strategic approach to distributing funding and non-financial resources.

For the avoidance of any further doubt, please note that the Council will finalise the scope of this procurement opportunity following the conclusion of the market engagement phase of this project. Therefore, the inclusion of any proposed scope of this procurement alongside any dates and budgetary information for the forthcoming procurement is provided for indicative purposes only. The Council reserves the right to amend this information following confirmation of the procurement timetable for this project. Full details of the structure of this procurement and associated timetable will be detailed within the corresponding Contract Notice in due course.

Further details of the Council's current commissioning intentions for this service and a copy of the online soft market test questionnaire can be accessed via the Council's e-tendering portal: <https://procontract.due-north.com/>

Please note that you will need to complete the registration process to secure a user account to access the soft market test questionnaire on ProContract. However, please be advised that the registration process is free of charge and provides access to all the current and forthcoming procurement opportunities for Essex County Council alongside several other public sector organisations.

Please note that the deadline for the soft market test responses will be Monday 20th January 2025 at 12:00 noon and all responses must be submitted via the response functionality within ProContract.

#### **II.1.5) Estimated total value**

Value excluding VAT: £1,000,000

#### **II.1.6) Information about lots**

This contract is divided into lots: No

### **II.2) Description**

#### **II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)**

- 73000000 - Research and development services and related consultancy services
- 98133100 - Civic betterment and community facility support services

**II.2.3) Place of performance**

NUTS codes

- UKH3 - Essex

**II.2.4) Description of the procurement**

The Council is seeking to commission provider(s) to deliver a Funding and Resource Maximisation partner for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Essex which will act as a conduit of funding and resources alongside advocating for the resource needs of the local VCS sector. This approach is designed to secure the strong foundations of the VCS sector in Essex, supporting their resilience and ability to continue contributing to meeting the needs of communities.

The proposed contract commencement date is 1st April 2025 until 31st March 2031 with a break clause at 31st March 2028, subject to governance approval. However, prospective bidders are advised that the Council will finalise the scope of the forthcoming procurement opportunity following the conclusion of the market engagement stage and reserves the right to amend the scope of this service accordingly

**II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice**

3 February 2025

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**Section IV. Procedure**
**IV.1) Description****IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)**

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

**IV.2) Administrative information****IV.2.1) Previous publication concerning this procedure**

Notice number: [2024/S 000-037463](#)