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#### Contract

# **Temporary Staffing Neutral Vendor**

Norfolk County Council

UK7: Contract details notice - Procurement Act 2023 - view information about notice types

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-043518

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0551d7 (view related notices)

Published 28 July 2025, 2:40pm

# Scope

#### Reference

NCCF43036

## **Description**

A managed service for temporary agency resources utilising the neutral vendor model. The top 5 required skillsets are:

- Educational psychologist
- Social Worker
- Lawyer
- Project Manager
- Assistant Practitioner

# **Contract 1. Temporary Staffing Neutral Vendor**

# **Supplier**

• Magnit Global GRI Ltd

### **Contract value**

- £1,400,000 excluding VAT
- £1,680,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

# **Date signed**

3 July 2025

### **Contract dates**

- 3 July 2025 to 12 October 2025
- 3 months, 10 days

# Main procurement category

Services

### **CPV** classifications

• 79620000 - Supply services of personnel including temporary staff

### **Contract locations**

- UKH15 Norwich and East Norfolk
- UKH16 North and West Norfolk
- UKH17 Breckland and South Norfolk

# Justification for not setting key performance indicators

This is a short bridging contract which is under £5m.

# Other information

# **Applicable trade agreements**

• Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

# Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

### **Procedure**

## **Procedure type**

Direct award

### **Direct award justification**

Extreme and unavoidable urgency

Extreme and unavoidable urgency

Introduction

Norfolk County Council ('NCC') found itself in a unique position, where it needed to direct award to continue the provision of essential services (a managed service for temporary agency resources) awarded under a framework. It is essentially a "bridging" contract to allow services to be successfully mobilised to a new provider further to the commencement of a new framework award on 13th October 2025.

The Direct Award will be for £1,680,000 including VAT. The term of the contract under the Direct Award will be for 3 months and 10 days.

The Direct Award to Magnit is critical in delivering core Council functions. For the reasons further set out here and in the Transparency Notice, if the contract is not awarded, there would be a failure to deliver statutory obligations including statutory EHC assessments for children and young people.

## Background

The existing contract, which expired 2nd July 2025, was procured through a NEPO framework ref NEPO508. The current provider, Magnit, manages services for temporary agency resources. As the Framework was due to expire, then with due regard to the time

required, and its obligations under the procurement legislation, NCC carried out an assessment of procurement routes and the decision was taken to undertake a further competition using a multi supplier ESPO framework.

Tenders were not released through the ESPO MSTAR4 framework until 24 October 2024.

Unfortunately, only two returns were received by the tender deadline of 25 November and to compound matters both bids were non-compliant having failed to meet mandatory accessibility requirements set by law, and so NCC declared it a failed procurement.

NCC discussed the situation with the failed procurement as a matter of urgency with NEPO. The clear advice from NEPO was that it would be possible to extend the contract under the

provisions of the Framework Agreement and extensive work was put in place by NCC with a view to extending the Framework from 2nd July to 13th October 2025.

Unfortunately, on 17th March 2025 NEPO changed their position. They advised NCC that they had identified an unusual framework clause which prevented the award of any further contracts through the NEPO framework. All that NEPO could do was recommend their alternate framework with a different provider, Comensura, which had commenced on 1st May 2025.

NCC worked extensively with NEPO to assess compliance of their solution and the transition period required. It was agreed between the parties that the very earliest Comensura can commence their services to NCC is 13 October 2025.

Direct Award and extreme urgency

A Direct Award was therefore essential, to bridge the period between 3rd July 2025 and 13th October 2025.

NCC acted entirely and properly on the advice and guidance from NEPO. Had NEPO provided the correct guidance in the first instance, NCC would have been in a position to award to Comensura from 3rd July 2025, and not October 2025. NCC therefore considers that the resultant delay was wholly beyond NCC's control.

Further, the unique situation and time constraints that have arisen from NEPO's incorrect guidance mean there is simply insufficient time for NCC to undertake a formal procurement to bridge the gap. There is also the question as to whether a formal procurement would even be successful, given the results from the previous failed procurement.

The Direct Award to Magnit is critical in delivering core Council functions. If the contract was not in place the practical implications would be a failure to deliver statutory obligations

including statutory EHC assessments for children and young people.

The Council currently has 90 agency workers including social workers, residential care for children, lawyers, educational psychologists. Without these posts in place the Council will be

unable to respond quickly as needs arise in situations where planning in advance is not possible, for example covering unplanned staff absences.

Further, during discussions with Comensura, it became clear that their minimum onboarding process is 12 weeks and with staff absences in this time, 14 weeks was agreed. Again, this

would be insufficient time for NCC to undertake a procurement to bridge the gap.

In conclusion, for the reasons set out in this Contract Details Notice and the transparency notice, NCC undertook a Direct Award to Magnit from 3rd July 2025 to 12th October 2025.

# **Supplier**

# Magnit Global GRI Ltd

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Booths Park 1

Knutsford

**WA16 8GS** 

**United Kingdom** 

Email: nikki.parry@magnitglobal.com

Region: UKD62 - Cheshire East

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Supported employment provider: No

Public service mutual: No

Contract 1. Temporary Staffing Neutral Vendor

# **Contracting authority**

# **Norfolk County Council**

Public Procurement Organisation Number: PDYH-3246-XWTR

County Hall, Martineau Lane

Norwich

NR1 2DH

**United Kingdom** 

Email: <a href="mailto:sourcingteam@norfolk.gov.uk">sourcingteam@norfolk.gov.uk</a>

Region: UKH15 - Norwich and East Norfolk

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government