**HOUSING MEDIATION SERVICES**

# Introduction

* 1. The following sets out the required delivery standards and Provider requirements. These are applicable to both of the mediation services:

1. Noise disturbance cases requiring a professional witness service (Service A).

This service shall deliver a mediation service, including professional witnessing, for noise nuisance cases. This may include the use of surveillance tools to identify perpetrators and vexatious complainants. Cases shall be closed with evidence and case notes provided to the Council with recommendations for further action or to allow the Council to take forward enforcement action.

1. Non-noise disturbance cases and more complex cases requiring more detailed involvement (Service B).

This service shall deliver a mediation service for anti social behaviour cases requiring more complex or specialist mediation to de-escalate and resolve difficult neighbour disputes. Cases shall be closed with evidence and case notes provided to the Council with recommendations for further action or to allow the Council to take forward enforcement action.

# Price

* 1. The number of cases that may be referred by the Council is to be set by the Provider for a fixed price/year, and will be allocated by the Council on that basis.
  2. In circumstances where the number of cases that the Council wishes to refer exceeds the limit set by the Provider’s quotation, the quotation price/case shall apply.

# Outcomes expected

* 1. One of the following outcomes is expected for all cases referred to the mediation services:
* Case closed with satisfactory feedback from at least one party
* Case closed with a signed good neighbour agreement
* Case closed due to lack of evidence
* Sufficient evidence provided to enable the Council to pursue enforcement action.
  1. The Provider shall record the case outcome in a full case report, including any recommendations for further referral or escalation, to be sent to the relevant council officer following case closure.

# Location for provision of services

* 1. The service shall be delivered to residents (service users) in their own Council-managed homes, or in other suitable locations agreed between the service user(s) and Provider. It is expected that the Provider will make use of Council offices; where alternative locations are agreed between service user(s) and Provider these should satisfy requirements for accessibility under the Council’s equality policy.

# Process for accessing the services

* 1. Service users shall give their consent to the Council for the case to be referred to mediation. An authorised officer (or officer designated by the authorised officer) of the Council shall then send a service request referral into the mediation service for a case to be opened.
  2. Service requests accompanied by a completed referral form shall be sent from the authorised officer of the Council (or officer designated by the authorised officer) to the Provider, authorising the opening of a case. On receipt of the information provided by the Council, the Provider shall email an acknowledgement to the Council.
  3. The Provider shall then liaise with the service user(s) in respect of timings and locations for mediation, and conduct mediation sessions to reach a suitable outcome.

# Service availability

* 1. The service shall be delivered at times agreed as satisfactory between the service user and the Provider. The Provider shall act as a single point of contact for the service user and be available to the service user when necessary, both inside and outside Council office hours (9am – 5pm), seven days a week.

# Timing of referrals

* 1. All service request referrals shall be made during Council office hours (9am – 5pm). The fixed maximum budget for mediation services means that referrals will be made on a regular basis throughout the year, with referral volumes (and maximum number of referrals) determined by the Provider quotation. It is likely that the number of referrals will increase during summer and Christmas holiday periods. The Provider shall make initial contact with the service user within two weeks of the referral.

# Meeting the service users’ needs

* 1. Following a service request from the Council the Provider shall liaise with the service user(s) during mediation to reach an expected outcome.
  2. The Provider shall agree a mediation process with the authorised officer of the Council (or officer designated by the authorised officer), and any standard documents and templates to be used.
  3. The Provider shall be responsible for management of the case (including risk management), ensuring that appropriate documents and records are maintained for audit purposes.
  4. The Provider shall work with the Council to gather evidence where enforcement action is necessary.
  5. The Provider shall be expected to give evidence in court where the Council chooses to pursue legal enforcement action.
  6. The Provider shall liaise with the relevant Council officer to resolve any service user complaints, following the Council complaints process.
  7. The Provider shall ensure that staff responsible for delivering mediation or professional witness services are suitably qualified, with related experience of working with housing providers and residents preferred.

# Number of service users who may be referred for access to the services

* 1. This will be agreed as part of the quotation process.

# Performance monitoring & key performance indicators

* 1. For each mediation case the Provider shall maintain an audit log and records of text messages, emails and other communications.
  2. The Provider shall compile a case report to be sent to the relevant Council officer at the closure of each case.
  3. The Provider shall meet with the authorised officer of the Council (or officer designated by the authorised officer) for a monthly performance meeting to review: case feedback; delivery against outcomes; case exceptions or escalations; service user complaints.
  4. The Provider shall maintain for performance monitoring purposes:
* a record of open and closed cases
* case reports for open and recently closed cases
* feedback ‘satisfaction survey’ records completed by service users following case closure
* complaint records
* records of payment of the London Living Wage where applicable.
  1. The Provider shall endeavour to meet the following key performance indicators:
* All initial visits to service users conducted within two weeks of case referral.
* 90% or more cases resolved with an expected outcome.
* Less than 10% of cases require multi-agency involvement three months after case opening.
* 5% or fewer cases reopened within a 12-month period.

# London Living Wage (LLW)

* 1. The Council has committed to including the London Living Wage (LLW) in new contracts for the provision of services which are to be performed either on Council premises or in the Greater London area, and where best value can be demonstrated on a case by case basis. Providers of the service will be required to pay relevant staff as a minimum the LLW.