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# Call for Competition Prior Information Notice (hereafter referred to as an Expression of Interest (EOI))

For a:

**Partner to develop one or two Children’s Homes in Northamptonshire as part of the Department for Education Children’s Home Capital Programme 2022 - 2025**

Northamptonshire Children’s Trust (hereafter referred to as “NCT”)

# Section 1: Introduction

## General Requirements

* 1. The purpose of this document is to explain to suppliers the business and technical requirements and the expected scope of a potential innovative project to develop one or two children’s home in Northamptonshire, as part of the Department for Education Children’s Home Capital Programme 2022 – 2025.

The contents of this document is designed to aide suppliers in demonstrating their ability to deliver the service and outline their experience in relation to this requirement.

* 1. **Please note:** this EOI is **a formal** request for competition which may result in a contract awards.

## Confidentiality and Freedom of Information (FOI)

* 1. **Please note:** all information included in this EOI is confidential and only for the recipients’ knowledge. No information included in this document or in discussions connected to it may be disclosed to any other party without prior written authorisation.
  2. All responses will be treated confidentially. However, please be aware that we are subject to the disclosure requirements of the FOI Act and that potentially any information we hold is liable to disclosure under that Act. For this reason, we strongly advise that any information you consider to be confidential is labelled as such. In the event that a request is subsequently made for disclosure under FOI the request will be dealt with in accordance with the legislation.

## Background

The Department for Education (DfE) have announced a capital funding opportunity to local authorities (including NCT’s delivering services on behalf of a Local Authority) to provide matched capital funding between Autumn 2022 and March 2025 to create additional provision in children’s homes for children and young people in their area.

* 1. This capital funding programme is designed to support local authorities (LAs) - individually or in a partnership or consortium - to establish new children’s homes provision via expansion, refurbishment, or new building work.  This funding will be available to local authorities to help create provision to:

* establish innovative local and/or regional approaches to reduce the number of children needing care over time,
* ensure sufficient provision for children with more complex needs, and
* address current shortfalls, including in geographic areas with fewer children’s homes.
  1. The DfE will provide up to £64m capital funding over three financial years on a match-funded (50/50) basis (this is for all programmes).
  2. There are two lots available, with NCT having an interest in Lot 2 which is for those in early planning/discussion stages but can demonstrate a clear plan to capital works beginning in 2023 which must be completed by 31st March 2025. NCT’s intention is for this to be completed within 9-12 months (Summer 2023).
  3. NCT will need to submit their bid, including details of partners by early September 2022 with notification of the outcome being received in late October 2022. Mobilisation is expected immediately after this if successful. Please see section 5 “Key Milestones” for further information.

## EOI Timetable

* 1. Please read this document and if you feel that your organisation is able to contribute to this exercise please prepare an EOI) and return, via email to [procurement@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@northnorthants.gov.uk) by **12.00hrs on Tuesday 9th August 2022. .** The EOI should cover, as a minimum the criteria set out above and below.
  2. Potential responders will not be prejudiced in any future procurement processes by either responding or not responding to this EOI.
  3. The successful supplier will be informed week commencing Monday 15th August 2022 of NCT’s intention to award.

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| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **TIME AND DATE**  **(as applicable)** |
| Publish Date of EOI | Friday 29th July 2022 |
| Deadline for Tender responses | 12:00hrs on Tuesday 9th August 2022 |
| Anticipated Award week commencing\* | Monday 15th August 2022 |
| Mobilisation By | Late October 2022 |

* 1. No information in this document is, or should be relied upon as, an undertaking or representation as to NCT’s ultimate decision in relation to the requirement. NCT reserves the right, without notice, to change the process detailed in this document, or to amend the information provided, including, but not limited to, changing the timetable, the scope and nature of the requirement and the process. This will be subject to the normal rules of public law and procurement principles and rules.

* 1. Moreover, NCT reserves the right to provide further information or to supplement and/or to amend the process. Participation in this process is at your own risk. NCT shall not accept liability nor reimburse you for any costs or losses incurred by you in relation to your participation in this process, whether NCT has made changes to the procurement process or not.

* 1. NCT also reserves the right, at any point and without notice, to discontinue the EOI without awarding a contract, whether such discontinuance is related to the content of Responses or otherwise. In such circumstances, NCT will not reimburse any expenses incurred by any person in the consideration of and/or response to this document. You make all proposals and submissions relating to this requirement entirely at your own risk.

# Section 2: Minimum Requirements

## Our Requirements

[NCT](https://www.nctrust.co.uk/Pages/home.aspx) is an independent, not-for-profit company established in November 2020 to deliver the best possible opportunities for the children in Northamptonshire. Our responsibility is to deliver children’s social care and targeted early help services on behalf of [West Northamptonshire Council](https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/) (WNC) and [North Northamptonshire Council](https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/) (NNC); replacing Northamptonshire County Council from 1 April 2021.  
  
Our vision is for “**Children, Young People and Families at the heart of all we do -in every decision we make and every action we take”**  
  
Our business plan can be found at [Northamptonshire-Childrens-Trust-Business-Plan-2021-22.pdf (northamptonshirehcp.co.uk)](https://northamptonshirehcp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Northamptonshire-Childrens-Trust-Business-Plan-2021-22.pdf)

* 1. Part of NCT’s role is to support the WNC and NNC Sufficiency Duty to take steps that secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within the authority’s area which meets the needs of children that the local authority are looking after, and whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation that is in the local authority’s area.
  2. As part of this, NCT are working in partnership with both WNC & NNC on this capital bid as described above. The budget is in the region of £700,000 per annum.
  3. Suitable properties across Northamptonshire are currently being sourced to adapt to use as Ofsted registered Children’s Homes. The final number of placements required will be determined by the suitability of the property or properties; but is likely to be for no more than 4 young people in each property. This will be on a “block bed” arrangement.

NCT seek a partner to develop (including the project management of any refurbishment and adaptation) and then manage on their behalf this home for children with complex needs.

This contract between NCT and the successful provider is expected to commence in August 2022 for an initial period of 3 years, with the option to extend for a further 5 years. Please see “Key Milestones” below. This is dependent on the success of the DfE bid.

The particular provision required will depend on the nature and location of the property/ properties identified to deliver the provision from. We are therefore seeking a partner with the experience and expertise to support children with the following needs, which may also include experience of neglect, abuse and/ or trauma:

1. Older children/ young people at risk of or engaged in;  
   **- Child criminal exploration.**  Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child under the age of 18 to undertake criminal acts. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual.  
   **- County lines.** County lines is a specific model of child criminal exploitation. The national definition of county lines: ‘A term used to describe gangs or organised criminal groups involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more areas using dedicated mobile phone lines. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and will often use coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons.’  
    **- Gangs and organised crime groups**. The term ‘gang’ is often open to interpretation depending on what areas of business you work in. Often associated with an image of a group of young people or adults who are ‘up to no good’ or committing crime. Gangs can be highly organised and sophisticated in exploitation as seen within trafficking, modern slavery, and county lines. It is therefore usually more appropriate to use the term Organised Crime Group (OCG) in these contexts rather than ‘gang’. Of note, is that the provider will be expected to develop strategies for working with young people who may be carrying knives.
2. Children / young people with **mental health needs.** This could include diagnosed and undiagnosed mental illness; attachment disorder, self harm and/ or suicide attempts. Children may have stepped down from hospital or needing support to prevent a hospital admission.
3. Children/ young people with **complex disabilities**. This may include children and young people with autistic spectrum condition, behaviour that challenges others, learning disabilities.

The provider will be expected to provide (or have access to) trauma informed and theory approaches to deliver therapeutic support for young people who are likely to have experienced trauma from their exploitation or other event in their lives.

The successful partner must:   
- Be registered with Ofsted as a Children’s Home provider and comply with the requirements of Ofsted with regard to inspection;  
- Employ individuals that have the necessary (includes all statutory requirements) expertise, qualifications and support to manage and mitigate the risks children and young people face, especially those with challenging and complex needs:  
- Ensure staff are appropriately trained and have emotional resilience to support and manage the child or young person’s complex needs.

- Have the necessary project management skills and resources to oversee the refurbishment and adaptation of the property on behalf of NCT in the mobilisation period, and to continue to maintain the property once the service commences.

A full service specification will be developed if the bid is successful which the provider will be expected to deliver a service in line with and can contribute to this specification.

Key milestones;

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity and comments | Date |
| Expression of Interest issued | Friday 29th July 2022 |
| Expression of interests returned | 12:00hrs Tuesday 9th August 2022 |
| Providers notified of outcome | Mid - August 2022 |
| Provider contract with NCT starts. | Mid / Late August 2022 |
| Successful provider supports NCT with DfE bid  Note, funding is not expected to be available for the provider for this support | Mid/late August 2022 to 9th September 2022 |
| NCT notified by DfE if successful (and will notify partner provider) | Week Commencing 24th October 2022 |
| Mobilisation of property refurbishment/adjustments and staff recruitment to deliver the service   Note, as part of the Capital Bid to the DfE, this will include funding for project management costs including those of the provider. The provider will be expected to contribute to financial modelling for this as part of their support with the bid submission. It is also recognised that the provider will have revenue costs prior to the commencement of the service (for example employment of staff, utility costs). Funding will be made available in respect of this subject to negotiation | November 2022 to July 2023 |
| Service commences with placement of young people | August 2023 |
| Initial contract period ends | August 2025 |
| Contract extension period option | September 2025 to August 2030 |

# Section 3: Supporting information

Please note you do not need to resize the table; it will automatically adjust to fit your response.

## Section A: Organisation and Contact Details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Question** | **Response** |
| Name of your organisation |  |
| Registered office (if applicable) |  |
| Trading address (if different from office) |  |
| Number of employees (FTE) to ascertain SME status. For larger organisations this should be the total FTE |  |
| Annual Turnover in the last full year prior to Covid – include value for consortium/joint ventures/partnerships where proposed |  |
| Name of person whom any queries relating to this questionnaire should be addressed |  |
| Telephone Number(s) |  |
| Email |  |
| Address if different to above |  |

## Section B: Questions

Please note: you do not need to resize the table; it will automatically adjust to fit your response. The response will be evaluated as per section 8 below.

Suppliers must be explicit and comprehensive, keeping the information provided specific to and located within the question asked as this will be the single source of information on which responses will be scored and ranked.

|  |
| --- |
| **Question** |
| **1. Please demonstrate how you will work with NCT & the Council(s) to ensure this new provision is in place within timescales agreed. Please include your understanding of requirements to project manage the set-up of this type of provision (Maximum 750 words - excludes any words used in charts) WEIGHTING 20%** |
| **Response** |
| **2. Please describe how you will ensure you recruit and retain suitable staff to set up and deliver this service. Also, the staff training and performance management arrangements your organisation would have in place to ensure the quality and sustainability of the service provision and mechanisms in place to ensure staff feel supported and able to cope with the complex needs of the young people they are supporting (Maximum 1000 words) WEIGHTING 25%** |
| **Response** |
| **3.Please demonstrate how you will support NCT to improve outcomes for children in your care through your involvement in this provision. Please include the care model you would work with and how this will contribute to positive outcomes. (Maximum 1000 words) WEIGHTING 25%** |
| **Response** |
| **4.**  **Please demonstrate how you will commit to creating employments and training opportunities for those who face barriers to employment and/or who are located in deprived areas. For clarity this is in relation to opportunities for the community, not for the young people in this provision (Maximum 750 words) WEIGHTING 15%** |
| **Response** |
| **5.** **Please describe specific risks or issues for you as a partner in delivering the proposal. Also describe the contingencies that would be put in place to mitigate them. (Maximum 750 words) WEIGHTING 15%** |
| **Response** |
| **6.** **Please can you confirm if your organisation is a current framework provider for Northamptonshire Children’s Trust? For Information purposes only and will not be scored.** |
| **Response** |

## Evaluation and Moderation of Quality (Award Criteria Questionnaire)

* 1. The Award Criteria Questionnaire carries a total weight of 100%, split between Quality and Price.
* Quality (60%)
* Price (40%)
  1. The scores from these sections will be added together and the Potential Supplier with the highest overall score will be awarded the contract. The scores for each of these two sections will be calculated as per the methodologies described in the following sections. In the event two providers score the same the provider with the highest quality score will be the preferred provider.
  2. Potential providers should note that irrespective of the methodology described above, a quality score (i.e. total score for responses to method statements - Award Criteria – Quality) of less than 60% of the total score available for the response to method statements (Award Criteria – Quality) shall result in their being excluded from the process, as the Authority requires a minimum quality threshold to ensure an overly low price does not skew a bid whose quality is fundamentally unacceptable.
  3. Each Tender Response will be evaluated by an Evaluation Panel, which may include, but not be limited to Children’s Trust officers, members, technical advisors and/or stakeholders (such as members of user groups, focus groups and/or tenant/resident panels).
  4. An initial examination may be made to establish the completeness of the Tender Responses.
  5. Any moderation meetings will be attended by the Evaluation Panel and a member of the Procurement Team, who will facilitate the moderation meeting.
  6. As the result of any moderation, the Evaluation Panel may choose to revise a Potential Supplier’s score for each response to a Quality Assessment question, either up or down to reach a final score.
  7. All responses to the Award Criteria Questionnaire will be assessed against the Criteria set out in the Table below:

| **Score** | **Criteria for Awarding Score** |
| --- | --- |
| 0 | Considered to be a **poor response** on the basis that:   * No response is provided; or * It does not answer the question or is completely irrelevant. |
| 1 | Considered to be a **limited response** on the basis that:   * Overall, it lacks sufficient detail or is perceived to be unclear, meaning that evaluators are not confident that the criteria will be delivered to an acceptable level. |
| 2 | Considered to be an **acceptable response** on the basis that:   * It addresses most of the relevant criteria; and/or * The supporting detail is clear for the most part and provides evaluators with an understanding that the criteria it does address will be met to an acceptable level. |
| 3 | Considered to be a **good response** on the basis that:   * It addresses all relevant criteria; and/or * The supporting detail is clear and provides evaluators with confidence that the criteria will be delivered to a good standard. |
| 4 | Considered to be an **outstanding response** on the basis that:   * It addresses all relevant criteria; and/or * The supporting detail is clear and robust and provides evaluators with the utmost confidence that all criteria will be delivered to the highest standard. |

* 1. The evaluated score as detailed in Table above, will be divided by 4 and multiplied by the question weighting (within Total) (%), to provide a final score (%) for each question, in accordance with the following example:
     1. If the question weighting (within Total) is 20% and the Potential Supplier’s response is scored ‘2’, their final score (%) will be:

1. 2 / 4 x 20 = 10% for that question.
   * 1. The Potential Supplier’s response to each question will be evaluated and scored a maximum of 4 marks as per Table F.
   1. Should the Evaluation Panel, in its reasonable judgement, identify a fundamental failing or weakness in any Tender Response then that Tender Response may, regardless of its other merits, be excluded from further consideration.
   2. For the avoidance of doubt, there are no sub-criteria elements in the Award Criteria Questionnaire, which will be scored. The score allocated will be against the total answer submitted and factored against the maximum percentage awarded for that question in accordance with the calculation formula.
   3. Where a particular question may list “elements”, Potential Suppliers are informed that no such individual element will be scored, per se; instead, the “elements” as listed are given for information only to assist Potential Suppliers to submit their most comprehensive Response and therefore their most competitive Tender Response in all the circumstances.
   4. The award criteria questions will be evaluated, using the scheme set out in the below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SECTION TITLE** | **SECTION WEIGHTING (%)** | **QUESTION NUMBER** | **QUESTION SUB-WEIGHTING (%)** |
| **Quality** | 60% | 1  2  3  4  5 | 20%  25%  25%  15%  15% |
| **Price** | 40% |  | 100% |

## Evaluation and Moderation of Quality (Award Criteria Questionnaire)

* 1. Potential Suppliers should satisfy themselves of the accuracy of all fees, rates and prices quoted, since they will be required to hold these or withdraw their Tender Response in the event of errors being identified after the Deadline for Submission of Bids, set out in Table C.
  2. If a Potential Supplier fails to provide fully for the requirements of the ITT it must either:

absorb the costs of meeting the Council’s / Children’s Trust’s full requirements within its tendered price; or

withdraw its tender.

The following criteria will be applied to evaluate price:

The potential provider with the lowest overall compliant price will be awarded the full score of 40%. All other bids will be scored in accordance with the following calculation:

𝐿𝑜𝑤𝑒𝑠𝑡 𝑠𝑢𝑏𝑚𝑖𝑡𝑡𝑒𝑑 𝑝𝑟𝑖𝑐𝑒

= () 𝑥 𝑃𝑟𝑖𝑐𝑒 𝑊𝑒𝑖𝑔ℎ𝑡𝑖𝑛𝑔

𝑌𝑜𝑢𝑟 𝑠𝑢𝑏𝑚𝑖𝑡𝑡𝑒𝑑 𝑝𝑟𝑖𝑐𝑒

An example is provided below; this example is based on a 40% price weighting where the lowest compliant price is £1,000,000.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Bid Price** | **Price Calculation** | **Price score** |
| Potential Provider 1 | 1,000,000.0 0 | =40% (lowest compliant price) | 40 |
| Potential Provider 2 | 1,100,000.0 0 | =(1000000/1100000)\*40 | 36.36 |
| Potential Provider 3 | 5,000,000.0 0 | =(1000000/5000000)\*40 | 8 |
| Potential Provider 4 | 1,300,000.0 0 | =(1000000/1300000)\*40 | 30.77 |