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# Expression of Interest

For

**Household Support Fund Distribution**

North Northamptonshire Council

# Section 1: Introduction

## General Requirements

* 1. The purpose of this document is to briefly explain to suppliers the business and technical requirements and the expected scope of the distribution of funds to householders who are suffering financial hardship as part of the Household Support Fund. This will enable prospective suppliers to describe the approach, governance, reporting and their experience to the requirements.
  2. **Please note** this is **a** request for formal Expression of Interest (EOI). This document does not form any part of an invitation to tender but may lead to a procurement process. Any supplier responding to this Expression of Interest is doing so to help develop a procurement process that is accessible to the market.

## 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

Household Support Fund 2 (HSF2) in the County of Northamptonshire is in place, via the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide households, within the region, financial support to mitigate increases in the cost-of-living. The DWP stipulate how each Unitary must distribute the funds within a range of household categories i.e., families with children, pensioners and households evidencing severe financial hardship.

The main purpose of the EOI is to identify organisations that are capable of managing the 3rd category ‘households evidencing financial hardship’. This category requires:

* + 1. Current management of a significant scale of reach to downstream voluntary organisations (up to 30 organisational relationships),
    2. Systems in place to meet real-time data collection,
    3. Evidence of experience in distribution and interpretation of financials (in the region of £1m),
    4. Detailed reporting, meeting DWP and WNC reporting requirements,
    5. Augmenting the NNC Household Support Fund grant with funds from other sources,
    6. Trusted advisor approach,
    7. High level of financial control, auditing, reconciliation and oversight

We would like to invite Expressions of Interest for highly governed organisation for a period of 3 months to evidence capability, capacity and experience in funds distribution to the voluntary sector. This will require a management layer that is experienced in managing downstream suppliers (i.e., local voluntary organisations).

Organisations interested in this project **must** also be able to augment the DWP HSF2 available funds with existing identified funds which can enhance the total distribution of HSF2 funds in the region

**4. Local Government Review**

4.1 Since April 2021 the eight existing sovereign councils of Northamptonshire comprise of; Wellingborough, Corby, Daventry, East Northants, Kettering, Northampton, Northamptonshire County Council and South Northamptonshire and have been replaced by two new unitary Councils:

* a new West Northamptonshire unitary council (WNC) serving the areas of Daventry District, Northampton Borough Council and South Northamptonshire and
* a new North Northamptonshire unitary authority (NNC) serving Wellingborough, Kettering, Corby and East Northants.

The funding and decision making for Household Support Fund schemes has been divided between NNC and WNC.  However, this HSF distribution approach has been agreed by both Councils and the intention is to, where appropriate, identify a common Social Enterprise Distribution Partner.

4.2 To diversify the market we are encouraging Expressions of Interest from medium to large enterprises who have a wide NNC geographical reach.

4.3 Potential/expected local bidders may include:

* Social Enterprises
* Existing deliverers of alternative provision
* Registered Foundations
* Small group of voluntary partners working together or as a consortium
* Large local partnerships – possibly working as joint ventures

4.4 The Expressions of Interest submitted will be considered against the following so that we can broaden the market and bring in innovative approaches:

* Medium/Large Enterprises with a background in innovation in people’s services
* A verifiable track record in delivering successful outcomes for individuals and communities in people’s services
* Commercial and operational capacity to deliver the distribution
* Systems in place to meet real-time data collection
* Ability to augment the NNC Household Support Fund grant with funds from other external sources,
* High level of financial control, auditing, reconciliation and oversight

## PIN Timetable

* 1. Please read this document and if you feel that your organisation is able to contribute to this exercise please prepare an Expression of Interest (EOI) and return, via email to [procurement@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@northnorthants.gov.uk) by **17.00hrs Monday 13th June 2022.** The EOI should cover, as a minimum the criteria set out below.
  2. Potential responders will not be prejudiced in any future procurement processes by either responding or not responding to this EOI.

# Section 2: Minimum Requirements

## Our Requirements

* 1. Household Support Fund 2 (HSF2) in the County of Northamptonshire is in place, via the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide households, within the region, financial support to mitigate increases in the cost-of-living. The DWP stipulate how each Unitary must distribute the funds within a range of household categories i.e., families with children, pensioners and households evidencing severe financial hardship.
  2. In order to meet the needs of households who are in severe financial hardship, especially regarding food and energy costs, we are looking for organisations who can operate locally for NNC in distributing HSF funds to households who evidence severe financial hardship. These funds will be issued mainly in the form of supermarket vouchers. The distribution will be in the first instance to smaller and bespoke voluntary and charitable organisations and thereafter directly to residents who meet the HSF criteria.
  3. Priority will be given to organisations who have a track record in this type of distribution, managing financial processes, demonstrating financial control and real time record keeping.

We are looking for proposals that would address all or most of these issues:

* + 1. Management of the distribution of financial payments to downstream voluntary organisations (up to 30 organisational relationships), and the oversight of these voluntary organisations with regard to payments to local households against set criteria
    2. Systems in place for capturing data from the downstream organisations, managing data protection requirements and mitigating duplicated payments to households,
    3. Evidencing previous experience in the distribution and interpretation of grant financials (in the region of £1m),
    4. Detailed reporting, meeting DWP and NNC reporting requirements,
    5. Evidence of providing high levels of financial control, auditing, reconciliation and oversight of the grants process

Funding is being made available for the HSF2 scheme, until 30th September 2022. The proposed funding for this pilot sits outside of the base budgets and would not therefore impact on existing grant distributions in place. If successful during HSF2 then the incumbent could be extended to support the distribution of funds during HSF3 which is due to be in place from October 2022 until March 2023.

Your EOI should also detail the nature of the service proposed and how it can be evidenced and how outcomes for households in severe financial need can be tracked. We expect proposals scaled for a minimum of managing 30 voluntary organisations and the delivery of grants to 8,000 households. This could rise to a maximum of 9,000 households for NNC. We have the potential of identifying funding of between £1m and £1.5m for the initial HSF2 scheme

An independent evaluator may be appointed to test the effectiveness of this distribution. Participation in the evaluation is a requirement

# 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.

|  |
| --- |
| **Question** |
| **1.** How will your proposal meet the need to deliver the Household Support Fund Financial Distribution for NNC **(maximum 1000 words)** |
| **Response** |
| **2.** Please describe your interest and capacity to develop the work in North Northamptonshire **(maximum 1000 words)** |
| **Response** |
| **3.** How long would your organisational structure and systems take to implement? |
| **Response** |
| **4.** If your proposal is already in use elsewhere: please give an example of your proposed solution in use and state how it has met the requirements of the customer. **(maximum 500 words)** |
| **Response** |