

MAIN STREAM GRANTS 2015/18 - SPECIFICATION

THEME: Jobs, Skills and Prosperity

There are two specific strands under this theme, covering access routes to employment for those furthest from the labour market, and access to advice on social welfare law for those on low income. We want to support voluntary and community sector projects that can contribute to the Council's Employment Strategy and Community Plan priorities and demonstrate:

- an integrated partnership approach to addressing the needs of residents in these two priority strands :
- knowledge and understanding of the needs of any particular target group the application is proposing to target ,
- relevant expertise, knowledge skills and quality assurance systems and
- knowledge and experience of working with relevant statutory and voluntary sector providers in order to facilitate access to appropriate referral and progression routes or support services.

Details of the specifications for the two strands are outlined below

Strand 1 – Routeways to Employment Support Services (pages 1 – 7)

Strand 2 Social Welfare Advice Services (pages 8 - 28)

Strand 1 - Routeways to Employment Support Services

1. Basis of Need

The objective of this funding stream is to help increase and integrate the pathways to employment of those local residents either marginalised by the labour market or facing barriers which make this transition difficult

The funding is designed to support services that provide specialist support to address specific barriers to employment including relevant IAG support, accredited and /non-accredited training, volunteering and employment support and referral to other provision where appropriate.

To make best use of limited resources the funding is specifically targeted toward interventions that are evidenced as being effective; innovative approaches that supplements and are integrated with other employment support projects or services.

We particularly encourage applications that target key groups who are furthest from the labour market, including those who are under-represented in employment statistics and whose needs are not currently being addressed by other services.

This includes long-term unemployed or economically inactive residents, particularly people from BME communities; people whose barriers relate to health or disability particularly mental health; people most likely to be adversely affected by the impacts of recent and proposed welfare reform

Outlined below is a summary of 2014 ONS data on the composition of the claimant count

Table 1: Claimants of key out-of-work benefits by 2014 ward cluster

2014 Ward Cluster	Residents	Working Age (16-64)	Key out-of-work benefit claimants	Claimant rate
North East	68,004	49,198	6,051	12.3%
North West	69,346	53,327	5,985	11.2%
South East	76,653	57,493	5,605	9.7%
South West	63,919	47,473	4,649	9.8%
Tower Hamlets	277,923	207,491	22,290	10.7%

Source: NOMIS - DWP Benefit Claimants - working age client group, 2014 ward cluster rates calculated using GLA 2013 round of population projections SHLAA based as a denominator

The composition of the claimant count as of May 2014, by the main reason for claiming a key out-of-work benefit, is as follows:

Table 2: Claimant group of key out of work benefits – May 2014 snapshot

Job Seekers Allowance

6,580 residents (Male 4,000 Female 2,580)
 30% White ; 42% Asian , 15% Black 13% prefer not to say or unknown
 29.5% of those on key out of work benefits
 3.3% of the population aged 16 to 64

ESA and Incapacity Benefit

12,440 residents (Male 5,850 Female 4,760)
 33% White ; 30% Asian , 8% Black 29% prefer not to say or unknown
 55.7% of those on key out of work benefits
 6.2% of the population aged 16 to 64

Lone Parents

2,600 residents
 11.6% of those on key out of work benefits
 1.3% of the population aged 16 to 64

Includes all claimants of out-of-work benefits as a lone parent who are not also claiming ESA, Ir JSA

Others on income related benefit

690 residents

(3.1% of those on key out of work benefits

) 0.3% of the population aged 16 to 64

Source: Nomis DWP Benefit Claimants - working age client group

2. Target Outcomes

Proposed services will contribute to the following outcomes:

- Advancement of those residents furthest from the labour market into skills training, employment support programmes and jobs.
- Coordinated customer-focused advice and guidance with strong referral partnerships delivering holistic support to tackle individual barriers to employment.
- Increased integration of voluntary sector information advice and guidance provision with Council and other funded employment services.

The outcomes will be measured against specific milestones and targets related to individuals' progression from initial baseline assessment of skills and barriers to employment and their advancement towards sustainable work including:

- Engagement and assessment of skills and barriers
- Completion and review of Personal Action Plans
- Participation in accredited and non-accredited training
- Participation in volunteering and /work experience placements
- Job outputs

Priority will be given to activities that:

Increase the engagement of those residents identified as economically inactive and register to take part in employability activity and job search;

Enhance the skills, confidence and motivation of people who are furthest from the labour market;

Increase the number of residents undertaking basic skills training, including digital skills training , leading to improved employability skills;

Ensure residents engaged and identified as looking for work are submitted for relevant pre- employment and job related training;

Have flexibility to meet new and emerging needs and respond to the multiple and complex needs of the target groups;

Provide access to volunteering and work experience projects.

Expected Outputs

We expect organisations seeking to provide pathways to employment support services to submit a **method statement** with their application that outlines their proposed model of delivery, including specific milestones and targets related to a client's advancement towards sustainable work. Organisations are requested to set targets in their service proposals for the following standard outputs where appropriate:

Some of the standard outputs expected to be delivered under this theme are set out below if there are additional project specific outputs that you wish to propose this should be included as part of your application and will need to be clearly defined and evidenced

Outputs

- Number of residents initially engaged and assessed
- Number of residents given ongoing employment related support
- Number of residents engaged in accredited training
- Number of residents engaged in confidence building and basic skills including digital skills
- Number of residents referred to other organisations
- Number of residents referred to Job Brokerage services
- Number of residents into employment with jobs that are sustained for at least 13 weeks,

Where applicable, percentage of users expected to be retained throughout the programme/project.

Number of jobs secured directly by your agency or through progression route referral to a partner agency.

Number of these with jobs that were sustained for 13, 26 and 52 weeks

Providers should outline methods for demonstrating their contribution to appropriate output and outcome indicators.

3. Scope of Activities

Applications will need to provide a detailed outline of the activities they propose and the rationale for prioritising those particular activities, plus a summary of the expected progression routes for participants.

Applicants will need to demonstrate a track record of successful interventions with those furthest from the labour market and detail examples of successful outcomes in terms of supporting resident's progression

Applications need to evidence links to and knowledge of other services supporting those furthest from the labour market. and demonstrate strong referral processes and engagement with training providers and the Council's and other mainstream employment support services

4. Beneficiaries and Priority Groups to be Targeted

We particularly encourage applications that target key groups who are furthest from the labour market, including those who are disproportionately represented in unemployment statistics and whose needs are not currently being addressed by mainstream funders. This includes long term unemployed or economically inactive residents, particularly women from BME communities, people with health issues or a disability, particularly those with mental health issues; young people and people most likely to be adversely affected by the impacts of recent and proposed welfare reform.

Service providers should be able to evidence the rationale for their targeting of particular groups, the added value they bring to existing services where appropriate; and need to provide details of the monitoring systems in place to demonstrate the impact of the interventions.

5. Required Geographical Coverage

We wish to fund services that provide a good geographical spread across the borough through a range of accessibly located sites

We specifically wish to fund projects and activities encouraging increased economic engagement in those parts of the borough which have been identified as having the highest levels of unemployment. For details of the areas of highest unemployment levels, please see the briefing document provided at Appendix 1 to this specification.

6. Equal Opportunities

Whilst we are expecting to fund some specific services for particular target groups we expect all service providers to deliver inclusive services.

Organisations must ensure that:

- Activities are open and available to all potential users in the area where the service is being delivered.
- The needs of service users, including linguistic, disability, cultural and religious needs, are taken into consideration in the service provision.
- Activities are operated from safe and secure premises that are accessible to people with disabilities and meet legal Health & Safety requirements.
- Barriers which may exclude individuals from participation are addressed and budgeted for in the proposed activities.
- Applications need to demonstrate that they give due regard to the public sector general equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

7. Requirements for Tracking, Onward Referral and Progression

Applications are required to provide details of the method statement of the tracking and monitoring system they have in place to track individual service user's progression from initial engagement to completion of the intervention

Organisations will be required to collect baseline information on service users levels of basic skills, employment experience and other barriers to employment in relation to health , caring responsibilities etc. so that evaluation of the intervention can be assessed against these particular barriers . Recording of user profile data under the equality strands is also required.

In addition, applications should demonstrate how they will ensure the sustainability of their proposed projects, e.g. funding applications to external funders.

Priority will be given to applications that propose new projects and innovative approaches. Applications from ongoing projects need to demonstrate additionally, e.g. new elements, new partnerships that build on the achievements of the existing project.

Priority will be given to applications that can demonstrate value for money for LBTH, e.g. match funding, enhanced partnership working and pooling of resources.

Output	Definition	Evidence Requirements
Number of residents initially engaged and assessed	First contact with the programme followed by initial assessment of a client's needs	Completed registration form, and assessment of the barriers to employment.
Number of residents given ongoing employment support through the programme	Support must include an assessment of the barriers to employment and a completed individual action plan. Individual reviews tracking progress against the agreed action plan should happen throughout the time on the programme. Support should last for a minimum of 6 weeks.	Completed registration form, an assessment of the barriers to employment and an individual action plan. A record of whether the person receiving support is new to the programme or is an existing user. Individual reviews against the agreed action plan.
Number of residents engaged in accredited training.	Attendance at a programme of accredited training completed	Completed attendance sheets for training, information of training undertaken and the accreditation. Copies of relevant certificates
Number of residents engaged in confidence building and basic skills programmes.	Attendance at a non-accredited course or session.	Completed attendance sheets and information of training / activity undertaken.

Output	Definition	Evidence Requirements
Number of residents referred to other organisations	This is a formal referral following an assessment of the client's needs. The organisation the client is referred to must accept and acknowledge the referral. Note this is not the same as 'signposting' where the client is advised of another organisation that might be able to help.	Initial assessment of the client's needs, referral form completed stating the nature of the referral, written acknowledgement from organisation that has accepted the referral.
Number of residents referred to Job Brokerage services	As above but organisation receiving referral must provide a job brokerage service	As above but client should be tracked to confirm whether they were able to get a job. If so this should be reported as an indirect job outcome
Number of residents into employment with jobs that are sustained for at least 13 weeks	That a job seeker has commenced a sustainable job that is expected to last beyond a period of 13 weeks following support through the programme	Completed registration form, evidence of action planning and support provided. Supporting evidence from employer to confirm a start date and tracking at 13, 26 and 52 weeks. Proof of identity and eligibility for work.
Other appropriate outputs based on identified need	Delivery organisations / consortia should define additional outputs in line with above	Evidencing requirements must be specified as above

8. No. of Grants to be Allocated by Type and Size

The indicative budget for this stream is approx. £300K per annum and it is envisaged that in order to ensure that quality assured sustainable activities are delivered that no more than 10 projects will be funded.

9. Delivery Methods

Applicant organisations need to demonstrate that they:

- Plan and deliver flexible and responsive services that are open to everyone, and user-led
- Involve beneficiaries in how they design, run and review their services;
- Work in partnership and are involved in local networks with other groups;
- Use a range of publicity methods and channels to reach potential service users including those that are hard to reach.
- Applicant organisations are required to submit a delivery plan with their application covering the key areas outlined above and identified in (appendix)

10. Partnership Working

In order to develop effective integrated provision to meet the diverse needs of those residents furthest from the labour market, we are keen to support and encourage the development of effective partnership working. We strongly encourage the

development of consortium arrangements between providers to maximise both the use of resources as well as ensuring the use of specialist organisational knowledge and expertise in working with the target beneficiary group;

Regardless of this, all applications should detail what effective referral links they have with other providers delivering services to those in the community who are most disadvantaged. All applications are also required to detail what other funding they have in place to deliver this project and also what funding they are going to seek to increase the sustainability of the project.

Strand 2 – Social Welfare Advice Services

1. Basis of Need

Advice and legal services that support vulnerable groups and those on low incomes to access their rights and understand their obligation, play a key role in resolving civil justice problems and helping to mitigate the social, economic and health consequences of those problems

High levels of child poverty and in work poverty, combined with the impacts of welfare reforms, the housing crisis and continued economic austerity, continue to create demand locally for welfare benefits, housing, debt and employment rights advice in particular

2. Target Outcomes and Outputs

In order to meet demand for social welfare advice in Tower Hamlets and provide access through a range of channels, including face to face advice services for those most in need, this funding stream is particularly focusing on funding provision that

- Maximises access for residents to quality assured advice services through a network of generalist and specialist advice providers, that ensure the best use of available resources through effective partnership working
- Provides a high quality advice service and achieves value for money through streamlining the process for people seeking help and advice, through a range of coordinated accessible channels that ensures residents are signposted and referred to the most appropriate source of help in a timely and efficient manner
- Helps ensure the quality and sustainability of Advice Service provision in the borough through providing training and support for advisors and volunteers and promoting effective collaboration between advice projects for the benefit of local residents,

- Demonstrates measureable outcomes for local residents including:
 - empowering residents through informing them of their legal rights and responsibilities particularly in relation to benefits , housing , debt and employment rights legislation
 - maximising the income and take up of welfare benefits and tax credit entitlements by local people, particularly those residents impacted by welfare reforms and low income households moving into work;
 - reducing levels of individual resident's problem debt through providing access to qualified debt advisors and providing follow up support on budget planning
 - Supporting residents to understand their rights and responsibilities and options in relation to housing need and providing legal advocacy where appropriate for those threatened with homelessness

Providers will be required to demonstrate transparently the outcomes of their services and provide evidence of the longer-term benefits of the advice given. They will be required to record and analyse the following information:

- details of financial gains for clients – level of successful appeals and revisions on particular benefits/tax credits ; level of debt matters written off/payment renegotiated;
- Details of non-financial outcomes – number of evictions prevented; number of employment matters resolved; number of settlements negotiated etc;
- service users reports and case studies that demonstrate improved problem solving, improved ability to navigate the system, improved health and well-being/financial stability.

As minimum, the provider will ensure that at least 60% of all cases lead to a demonstrably positive outcome for the client. Direct outcomes include:

- Increased benefit and tax credit income
- homelessness prevention and sustaining tenancy
- reduced indebtedness including rent arrears and high interest payments
- prevention and reduction in avoidable costs such as court and enforcement costs
- increased employment sustainability

Indirect outcomes include:

- enhanced well-being and reduced stress
- client empowerment
- increased sense of social and financial inclusion

In order to maximise access and ensure the sustainability and quality of Advice Service provision in the borough, applications will only be considered from organisations involved in partnerships and consortiums that can demonstrate both a track record of positive outcomes for residents and effective collaboration at locality or boroughwide level to meet resident needs. Organisations are also required to have relevant Advice Quality Assurance standards in place and be registered with the FCA if providing debt and money advice

Output Volumes

Providers will be required have an effective computerised system to monitor and quantify the agreed target outputs and comply with the Council's quarterly reporting schedule. Outputs to be monitored include:

- number of sessions delivered and the method of delivery (e.g. appointments, drop-in, telephone, home visit, outreach, etc);
- number of new clients and number of repeat clients;
- breakdown of the types and levels of advice and support given across the different areas of law ;
- profile of users monitored by ethnicity, gender, age, disability, employment /socio economic status and housing status; and
- profile of referrals to other agencies/support services including employment and training.

The general performance targets under this grant will be with reference to the number of new cases/new matter starts (NMS) as well as the number of clients assisted.

This recognises that clients often present with multiple problems and that the time taken with individual clients on different matters can vary significantly depending on the nature of the client or their legal problem. Providers are required to maintain details of the number of clients seen, the number of new Enquiries by area of law dealt with as well as the outcome of the case.

The table below sets out the number of cases an average generalist advice project is expected to deliver based on the information from previous contracts. Please note that you may apply to deliver more or fewer outputs than listed below. However, if numbers are different you should provide a full explanation of the reasons.

Expected average number of cases / new enquiries by area of law per annum (based on 5% assisted information 70% general help and 25% casework)							
£30,000	£40,000	£50,000	£60,000	£70,000	£80,000	£90,000	£100,000
1200-1365	1600-1800	2000-2273	2400-2727	2800 - 3182	3200-3636	3600 - 4091	4000 - 4545

Due to the demand for Debt, Welfare Benefits and Housing advice in the Borough, it is expected that the 80% of new enquiries will be delivered in at least the following proportions at Welfare Rights 45%, Debt & Money Advice 15% and Housing 20%.

The numbers of new enquiries reported in the monitoring returns must not also be claimed against other funders. If only a limited amount of the legal work for clients is funded from other sources, approval from the Council's funding officer can be sought to cover the additional work required to assist with the client's case (e.g. representation at tribunal etc).

3. Scope of Activities

Social Welfare Advice for the purpose of this specification refers to those categories of law which govern: entitlement to state benefits and tax credits; rights in relation to access to housing and housing disrepair, the management of personal debt; employee's rights at work and access to redress for unfair treatment or discrimination.

This includes projects that provide quality assured generalist or specialist advice services in the above areas of law and respond to the multiple and complex social welfare advice needs of residents in the borough, particularly low income households and vulnerable groups;

To ensure a balanced combination of generalist and specialist services that reflect the diverse needs of local residents, the funding for Social Welfare Advice Service provision is divided into the following 5 service areas of work and specifications for each of the services are set out in the attached appendices.

- Boroughwide Generalist Advice Service (Appendix A)
- Locality /LAP Generalist Advice Service (Appendix B)
- Boroughwide Specialist Advice Service (Appendix c)
- Debt and Money Management Support Project (Appendix D)
- Advice Capacity and Volunteer training Project (Appendix £)

Detailed information on the scope of activities for particular projects is included in the attached appendices

Projects will need to demonstrate how they empower residents including identifying clear linkages and referral routes for their service users to other relevant initiatives including basic skills training, digital and financial inclusion projects, health and advocacy support initiatives as well as specialist legal advice services.

The project to increase the capacity and quality of advice provision in the borough through the provision of a training and placement programme for advice volunteers, will need to demonstrate how they are going to deliver across the different advice agencies in the borough

Access to services and Service standards

As Tower Hamlets population is diverse and consists of many communities, advice Service must demonstrate how they will ensure accessibility for all residents. Services need to be sufficiently integrated to offer clients a choice of access in terms of location, hours of operation and 'access channel' (face to face, telephone,

internet, e-mail, etc.). As advice provision is less developed in the east of the borough, with a smaller number of providers based there and less developed travel routes providers will need to clearly identify how they will ensure access to residents in those areas.

Locations should be selected so as to be easily accessible to as many clients as possible from all client groups and communities to access via public transport. Ideally these should be co-located with other public services.

Triage and Referrals Providers will be required to implement a single system of triage across all routes of accessing the service that will include a triage interview and diagnosis of the client's problem; brief advice on whether the problem is resolvable within the triage interview; plus a follow up appointment sign-posting or referral as appropriate

It will be a requirement that all clients facing an urgent situation (including imminent proceedings) will be dealt with by an appropriate adviser on the same day as contacting the provider or the next day.

Telephone access - As well as telephone services in normal operating hours, providers will be required to provide a 24-hour answer phone service outside of these hours, setting out as a minimum key information such as its own opening hours; sources of self-help advice, e.g. on-line; and where to obtain advice and assistance for urgent situations

E-mail and web-based services will need to be able to support client self-help through appropriate on-line packages.

Service interface - Providers will be required to demonstrate and ensure a good interface with other services, in particular the Council's contracts for housing advice and mortgage rescue; other local advice providers; national advice services, including those provided through electronic formats; and other public sector services.

Advice Quality Framework - Applicants are required to evidence compliance with an approved Advice Quality standard to demonstrate their suitability to deliver the service and to evidence that they have a licence with the Financial Conduct Authority to deliver Debt and Money Advice. In order to be considered for funding under this programme, applicants also need to evidence in their delivery plan:

- a minimum of 3 years' experience in delivering quality marked advice services in welfare benefits, housing and debt and equivalent level of experience in any of the other areas of social welfare law that they are seeking to deliver under this funding;
- that the staff/volunteers engaged in the delivery of the service will have relevant skills, competence and training to ensure up to date accurate advice on issues in relation to resident's legal rights and entitlements;
- that appropriate case file records will be maintained so there is a clear audit trail of the advice and support given to clients;
- the systems and procedures that will be in place to ensure quality and accuracy of advice including arrangements for file reviews and peer review;
- where debt advice proposed: the organisation is registered with the FCA ;

- where immigration advice is proposed: the organisation holds the appropriate OISC exemption to provide advice on immigration issues at that level;
- that they make effective use of the analysis of client data and case monitoring information to be able to recognise trends, and represent and give a voice to service users on any emerging social welfare issues;
- that they have appropriate electronic management information system capacity to meet the recording and monitoring requirements for this funding stream;
- that they provide self-help information and maintain data of local and national information and advice provision for signposting and referral purposes; and
- effective liaison and networking with key relevant statutory and voluntary sector organisations and networks including Tower Hamlets Community Advice Network (THCAN).

Quality Standards

Funding will only **be provided** to those organisations that hold appropriate Advice quality assurance standards and that can evidence how quality is maintained across the service.

Applicants will be asked for their quality management framework, including the use made of client feedback; internal quality checks; peer review; external accreditation; best practice and any external standards required for delivering in particular areas of law including those regulatory standards and approvals required for providing **debt advice** and **immigration advice**

5 Beneficiaries and Priority Groups to be targeted

We expect all service providers to deliver inclusive service ensure that provision reflects the needs of all potential users in the area, particularly low income residents those groups who are over represented in indices of multiple deprivation and those who experience barriers to accessing services .Linguistic, disability, and cultural needs need to be taken into consideration in the service provision and partnership arrangements with other providers are encouraged to meet the specific needs of particular communities .

6. Required Geographic Coverage

To ensure a balanced combination of generalist and specialist services that reflect the diverse needs of local residents, the funding for Social Welfare Advice Service provision is divided into both boroughwide and locality provision as detailed in Appendices A to D

For the locality provision we wish to fund projects that have a good geographical spread through a range of accessibly located sites within the following ward clusters:

<p>NW Ward Cluster (LAP 1 and 2) Bethnal Green Spitalfields and Banglatown St Peters Weavers</p>	<p>NE Ward Cluster (LAP 5 and 6) Bow East Bow West Bromley North Bromley South Mile End</p>
<p>SW Ward Cluster (LAP 3 and 4) Shadwell St Dunstan's St Katherine's & Wapping Stepney Green Whitechapel</p>	<p>SE Ward Cluster (LAP 7 and 8) Blackwall & Cubbit Town Canary Wharf Island Gardens Lansbury Limehouse Poplar</p>

7 Types and number of projects to be funded

The indicative budget allocated to the delivery of social welfare advice services in Tower Hamlets is approximately £900, 000 per annum.

The funding is prioritised to deliver integrated partnership projects across following service areas. Specifications for each of the services are set out in the attached appendices.

- 1 x Borough wide Generalist Advice Service (Appendix A)
- 4 x Locality /LAP Generalist Advice Service (Appendix B)
- 1x Borough wide Specialist Advice Service (Appendix c)
- 1x Debt and Money Management Support Project (Appendix D)
- 1x Advice Network Co-ordination and Volunteer training

The proposed amount of funding to be allocated to each area is shown at the end of each of the service specifications. However, these are indicative budget figures and are subject to the final verification of the Council's budget for each financial year.

8 Partnership/Consortium approaches

In order to achieve more coordinated social welfare advice provision, the Council is seeking to support organisations that work in partnership with other providers to deliver good quality advice services. Ideally we would like to see a range of accessible provision across the borough, with large and small organisations working together in a lead provider model to ensure a co-ordinated holistic approach to meet identified need.

In order to ensure quality of advice provided the lead agency in the partnership is responsible for ensuring the overall quality of the service including ensuring update briefings for all advice staff and undertaking file reviews for partner agencies

The specification therefore requires good partnership and referral links with other advice providers and key stakeholders to encourage early intervention and targeting of services to meet those most in need. This will help ensure:

- greater co-ordination of services to help meet demand
- reduction in potential duplication of services
- increased sharing of best practice
- increased access to advice through improved signposting and referrals
- consistent quality and standards of service
- enhanced access for excluded communities to frontline advice services
- increased capacity of the advice sector to meet identified need

All providers will be required to actively engage in THCAN, the borough's community legal advice network and to develop partnership with community-based groups that provide information and initial advice as part of their wider remit e.g. BME groups, disability groups and other community groups.

9 Requirements for Tracking, Onward Referral and Progression

Providers will be required have an effective computerised system to monitor and quantify the agreed target outputs and comply with the Council's quarterly reporting schedule. Areas to be monitored include:

- number of sessions delivered and the method of delivery (e.g. appointments, drop-in, telephone, home visit, outreach, etc.);
- number of new clients and number of repeat clients;
- breakdown of the types and levels of support given;
- number of users taking up services and the pattern of take-up across the different advice areas;
- profile of users monitored by ethnicity, gender, age, disability, employment /socio economic status and housing status; and
- profile of referrals to other agencies/support services including employment and training.

Providers will be required to demonstrate transparently the outcomes of their services and provide evidence of the longer-term benefits of the advice given. They will be required to record and analyse the following information:

- details of financial gains for clients – level of new benefits/tax credits claimed level of debt matters written off/payment renegotiated;
- details of non-financial outcomes – number of evictions prevented; number of employment matters resolved; number of settlements negotiated etc.;

- service users reports and case studies that demonstrate improved problem solving, improved ability to navigate the system, improved health and well-being/financial stability.

Providers will be required to:

- actively seek service user views and maintain appropriate records of service user feedback including any comments and/or complaints and to demonstrate how such feedback is shaping service delivery;
- evidence social policy activity – production of case studies highlighting impact of policy and practice; participation in strategic forums, responding to consultation on local issues;
- to complete an annual self-assessment review on their performance against the agreed delivery plan and targets and to outline any proposed changes in delivery to meet service demand;
- to evidence assessment of impact of the agency’s work, assessment of performance against agreed output targets and an evaluation of outcomes achieved and to evidence effective cross sector partnership activity in their annual monitoring review.

10 Delivery Plan and Service Planning

Organisations will need to provide a Delivery Plan with the completed application form which sets out in detail how all the requirements of the contract will be met. The plan should include details of:

- the proposed delivery model for assessing and managing demand including details of triage service, diagnostic interview and referral arrangements;
- the proposed access channels, opening hours, outreach sessions, pro bono sessions, including frequency of sessions, and location of sessions organised with partner organisations;
- how services will be publicised and what efforts will be made to raise awareness of services to potential service users and other stakeholders;
- the proposed number of staff and volunteers engaged in the delivery of the service and the training supervision and file review arrangements;
- the systems and procedures that the service has in place to ensure quality and accuracy of advice including arrangements for file reviews and peer review;
- how work will be monitored and outcomes evaluated;
- how the service will plan for and respond to likely changes in client demand from social welfare reforms;
- any initiatives to empower service users to deal with similar social welfare problems should they arise in the future;
- how beneficiaries and stakeholders will be involved in the design, running and reviewing of their services;

- partnerships, referral arrangements with other providers, involvement in local networks that enhances the service provided;
- consortium management arrangements;
- any proposals to bring in additional funding to deliver legal advice services in Tower Hamlets which will complement the services to be provided.

Details of strategic and business planning to ensure the stability and sustainability of the project;

- arrangements to ensure that services are accessible to all residents, particularly those who are socially excluded, including residents with specific support or access needs;
- how they maximise the capacity of the service to meet local need and demand (e.g. pro bono evening sessions, use of trained volunteers etc.);
- how they empower service users to deal with similar social welfare problems should they arise in the future;

Appendix A

SPECIFICATION FOR BOROUGH – WIDE GENERALIST ADVICE SERVICES

Scope of Service

General help level advice services primarily across welfare benefits, housing and debt categories of social welfare law. The service will also provide advice across all other areas of social welfare law.

The generalist advice service will provide initial diagnosis of presenting and associated legal problems and the provision of general advice, assistance and information, including any associated correspondence. Where appropriate, advisors will refer issues requiring specialist legal advice or representation to specialist advisers through local and national networks.

The borough – wide service provider will also be responsible for collating social policy returns from other advice agencies and providing regular feature articles promoting access to advice services.

Service Quality Standards

Organisations/consortiums wishing to be considered for funding under this programme need to demonstrate that they meet the relevant Advice Standards Quality Mark and general service delivery standards for advice services set out on page 3. The lead agency in the partnership is responsible for ensuring the overall quality of the service including ensuring update briefings for all advice staff and undertaking file reviews for partner agencies.

Type of Service

Provision of advice at, General Help and Casework levels across all areas of social welfare law. The borough-wide provider is also required to provide information and briefings on advice issues for the general public through a range of accessible channels on a quarterly basis and highlight any social policy issues.

Geographical Coverage

Boroughwide service delivered from accessible sites including outreach sites where there are identified gaps in provision.

Delivery Methods

In order to meet demand it is expected that advice services will be delivered through a range of access channels to the minimum level detailed below:

- Open Door Access – Drop in advice service with a minimum of 25 hours per week day across 5 days with at least one session set outside normal working hours.
- Telephone Access – 15 hours per week minimum
- Appointments –20 hours per week minimum
- Promoting access to on line self -help information and advice service

The provider will need to establish systems for collation and provision of Information and briefings on advice issues, including collating information from other local advice agencies in relation to social policy trends.

Delivery Plan

Organisations will need to provide a Delivery Plan, which sets out how they will meet the requirements of the contract and how they will work with other advice providers and stakeholders to ensure co-ordinated advice provision including outreach in the borough.

Partnership Working

Applicants for the Generalist borough-wide provision must demonstrate strong links with other advice agencies and key stakeholders in the voluntary and statutory sector. including partnership arrangements with the main minority language advice providers in the Borough (particularly Somali , Chinese , Vietnamese as well as languages spoken by newer migrants) The lead agency in the partnership is responsible for ensuring the overall quality of the service including undertaking file reviews for partner agencies

They must demonstrate a commitment to working with the locality advice providers to ensure effective co-ordination and information sharing on service capacity and delivery issues to avoid duplication and ensure effective referrals, through involvement in planning outreach sessions and attending the locality/LAP partnership meetings for example.

There is also a need to identify the proposed processes and protocols for ensuring regular review of signposting and referrals arrangements with other agencies.

Additionally, applicants need to identify how they will work with locality agencies to ensure there is no duplication of services and that the scope for improving service and meeting demands for advice service across the borough is regularly reviewed. Applicants will also need to identify how they will support residents through the welfare reforms including referral arrangements with employment support agencies and other referral agencies

Output Volumes

Based on information from previous contracts the projected number of cases per annum is 5000-6000 (based on 10% assisted information; 60% general help and 30% casework).

Please note that providers may apply to deliver more or fewer outputs than listed based on the available budget below. However if the proposed number of cases or the percentages for the different levels of advice is different you should provide a full explanation of the reasons.

Expected Outcomes

As minimum, providers will ensure that:

- at least 60% of all cases lead to a demonstrably positive outcome for the client;
- debt levels, including rent arrears, are reduced for individual clients as a consequence of the services provided;
- tenancies have been sustained and homelessness has been prevented in 70% of relevant cases;
- increased benefit and tax credit income;
- increased awareness of residents and service providers of advice service provision;
- 85% of clients who respond to client satisfaction monitoring, rate the quality of the Services provided by the provider and its partners as “Good” or “Very Good”.

Budget

The award for the borough-wide partnership contract including specific language provision is expected to be in the region of £245,000 per annum.

In order to meet the diverse language needs of the various smaller communities and new residents in the borough applicants will need to identify the partner agencies in their consortium that will help ensure that the borough generalist services to meet the needs of the following community groups:

Chinese and Vietnamese, Somali, new migrant communities with specific language needs

Appendix B

SPECIFICATION FOR LOCALITY BASED GENERALIST ADVICE SERVICES

Scope of Service

Organisations will be expected to deliver general help level advice services primarily across welfare benefits, housing and debt categories of social welfare law. It is envisaged that some matters will also be dealt across other areas of social welfare law including family, consumer and immigration.

The generalist advice service will provide initial diagnosis of presenting and associated legal problems and the provision of general advice, assistance and information, including any associated correspondence. Where appropriate, advisors will refer any issues requiring specialist legal advice or representation to specialist advisers through local and national networks.

Organisations must demonstrate a commitment to working in partnership with other advice providers to ensure effective co-ordination and information sharing on service capacity and delivery issues to avoid duplication and ensure effective referrals.

Service Quality Standards

Organisations/consortiums wishing to be considered for funding under this programme need to demonstrate that they meet the Advice Quality Standards (AQS) and general service delivery standards for advice services set out on page 3.

Type of Service

Advice at General Help and Casework level across the following priority areas of social welfare law:

- Welfare Rights including advice re entitlements, better off calculations
- Debt and Money Advice – including assistance with priority debts, repayment negotiations and producing personal financial statements
- Housing Advice – including, repairs, possession proceedings and tenancy issues

The Council recognise that there is a need for some flexibility to provide support in other areas of social welfare law including employment, immigration and education plus areas of new and emerging needs. Applicants should highlight which if any of these additional areas of law they propose to deliver advice in and demonstrate evidence of need in those areas.

All project proposals need to specify which categories of law will be provided at General Help and which will be provided at Casework level. For Casework Level applicants need to provide evidence of need for the provision and demonstrate their ability to deliver.

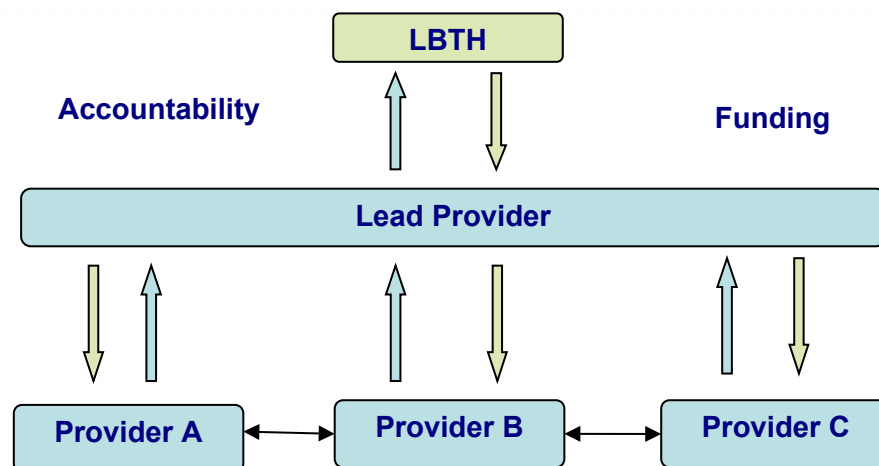
Partnership lead provider model

In order to achieve more coordinated social welfare advice provision, the Council is seeking to support organisations that work in partnership with other providers to deliver good quality advice services. To meet the requirements of the locality advice provision specifications, organisations will need to form/join an existing advice partnership or consortium.

Each partnership/consortium needs to identify a lead provider who as the contract holder will be accountable to LBTH. **The lead provider will be responsible** for the overall quality of the advice provision including undertaking file reviews.

The partnership needs to ensure that the role of each partner is clearly identified and that there is shared ownership of and commitment to the partnership with clear accountability mechanisms in place. Each partnership is required to have systems in place to regularly review advice needs and demand across the locality area. Partnerships are also required to liaise with key stakeholders including RSL's and local community groups to promote awareness of the advice service provision and early identification of problems.

Partnership Model



Geographical Coverage

Partnerships /Consortiums can bid to deliver service to cover one or more of the following areas – As there is currently less provision based in the east of the borough and less developed transport links applications will be considered for more than one provider per cluster in NE and SE ward Clusters

NW Ward Cluster (LAP 1 and 2)	NE Ward Cluster (LAP 5 and 6)
Bethnal Green Spitalfields and Banglatown St Peters Weavers	Bow East Bow West Bromley North Bromley South Mile End

SW Ward Cluster (LAP 3 and 4)	SE Ward Cluster (LAP 7 and 8)
Shadwell St Dunstan's St Katherine's & Wapping Stepney Green Whitechapel	Blackwall & Cubbit Town Canary Wharf Island Gardens Lansbury Limehouse Poplar

Delivery Methods

In order to meet demand it is expected that services will be delivered through a range of access channels as detailed below:

- Open Door Access - Drop in advice service with a minimum of 14 hours per week across each LAP area. Sessions should be spread across the geographic area throughout the week with at least one session set outside normal working hours;
- Telephone Access - 10 hours per week minimum for initial advice and signposting for new clients/enquiries;
- Appointments - 14 hours per week minimum.

Delivery agencies are also required to provide information on and access to relevant self-help information leaflets, on-line advice websites and national telephone help lines. Preference may be given to a provider(s) able to demonstrate they can offer more than the minimum number of hours per week and that they can offer a range of outreach services within the locality areas.

They also need to identify how they will work with partner agencies to ensure there is no duplication of services and that the scope for improving service and meeting demands for advice service across the borough is regularly reviewed.

Appropriate referral and service review arrangements need to be in place with boroughwide providers. Delivery agencies will also need to identify how they will support residents through the welfare reforms including referral arrangements with employment support agencies and other referral agencies.

Delivery Plan

Organisations will need to include the above details in partnership working arrangements section of the Delivery Plan as well as setting out how they will meet the requirements of the contract as detailed in page 2.

Output Volumes

Providers are required to maintain details of the number of clients seen, the number of N new enquiries assisted with and the number of hours of advice delivered as well as the outcome of the case. Due to the demand for Debt, Welfare Benefits and Housing advice in the Borough, it is expected that the 80% of new enquiries will be delivered in the following proportions Welfare Rights 45%, Debt & Money Advice 15% and Housing 20%.

Based on the information from previous contracts the projected number of cases per annum is 2000 -2500 (10% assisted information; 70% general help and 20% casework).

Please note that providers may apply to deliver more or fewer outputs than listed based on the available budget below. However, if the proposed number of cases / new enquiries or the percentages for the different levels of advice is different you should provide a full explanation of the reasons.

Expected outcomes

- at least 60% of all cases lead to a demonstrably positive outcome for the client
- debt levels, including rent arrears, are reduced for individual clients
- tenancies have been sustained and homelessness has been prevented
- increased benefit and tax credit income
- increased referrals to appropriate employment and training support, particularly for households impacted by the “benefit cap
- 85% of clients who respond to client satisfaction monitoring, rate the quality of the services provided by the provider and its partners as “Good” or “Very Good”

Budget

Awards for the ward cluster/ paired LAP / LAP contracts contract are expected to be in the region of £80,00 - £100,000 per ward cluster/paired LAP area with adjustments to reflect the needs and provision in particular areas including areas with most wards and where applications are for only part of a cluster

Appendix C

SPECIFICATION FOR THE PROVISION OF BOROUGHWIDE SPECIALIST ADVICE SERVICES

Scope of Service

Provision of specialist advice and casework to individual residents. up to and including representation.

Provision of second-tier advice and support to generalist agencies, to assist and support front line advisers in dealing with complex cases and queries
Convening specialist forums to provide legal updates and briefings on relevant areas of law and policy to front line advisers.

Service Quality Standards

Organisations/consortiums wishing to be considered for funding under this programme need to demonstrate that they meet the Specialist general service delivery standards set out on page 3 of this document.

Type of Service

Provider(s) will be required to provide access to free specialist legal advice in the following priority areas of law:

- Welfare Rights particularly in relation to Right to Reside and DLA /PIP changes
- Housing Advice
- Employment rights

Due to the demand for Welfare Benefits and Housing advice in the borough, it is expected that at least 70% of all new enquiries will be delivered in these areas of law

The Council recognise that there is a need for some flexibility to provide support in areas of new and emerging needs. Any agency wishing to provide specialist advice in another area not listed above would have to provide evidence of need for the provision and demonstrate ability to deliver.

Referrals and Second tier service

Specialist advice provider(s) are required to have systems in place to take referrals from other advice agencies, community groups and statutory agencies etc.
Specialist provider(s) will also be required to provide second-tier advice and support to generalist advice providers through telephone advice and access to training, information sharing

We also recognise that changes in the advice landscape may arise during the funding period that could impact upon the availability of specialist services across Tower Hamlets. As a consequence, changes to the services specification may need to be negotiated with the successful provider during the period of the contract.

Geographical Coverage

Provider(s) of specialist advice services will be expected to demonstrate effective partnership working with other advice agencies to ensure that the service is accessible on a borough-wide basis.

Delivery Methods

A Provider will be required to provide services through a range of methods:

- Telephone Access – 15 hours per week minimum
- Appointments – 25 hours per week minimum
- Representation – 30 number of matters per year
- Second Tier Support - 70 hours per year given to support other advice agencies

Delivery Plan

Organisations will need to include details of partnership working arrangements in the Delivery Plan as well as setting out how they will meet the requirements of the contract as detailed in page 2. The provider will also be required to demonstrate their referral arrangement and support to other advice agencies including support with individual case law queries, file reviews and briefings.

Output Volume

Providers are required to maintain details of the number of clients advised, the number of new enquiries assisted with and the number of hours of advice delivered as well as the outcome of cases. Due to the demand for, Welfare Benefits and Housing advice in the Borough, it is expected that the 75 % of new specialist legal advice enquiries will be delivered in the following proportions Welfare Rights 60%, and Housing 25%.

Based on the information from previous contracts the projected number of new enquiries at specialist casework per annum is 1,000. Potential providers of this service should indicate the number of hours to be allocated across areas of law and types of delivery method, based on their experience of levels of demand by area of law. Please note that providers may apply to deliver more or fewer outputs than listed based on the available budget below. However, if the proposed number of cases or the percentages for the different levels of advice is different you should provide a full explanation of the reasons.

Expected Outcomes

As minimum, the provider will ensure that:

- at least 60% of all cases lead to a demonstrably positive outcome for the client
- that 80% of clients who respond to client satisfaction monitoring, rate the quality of the Services provided by the provider and its partners as “Good” or “Very Good”

Budget The level of award for the borough wide contract is expected to be in the region of £150,000 per annum.

Appendix D

SPECIFICATION FOR THE PROVISION OF DEBT ADVICE and MONEY MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Scope of Service

The project will adopt a proactive approach to supporting households with multiple debt problems with debt management advice, including support with budget management and applying for individual grant to support them with dealing with particular debts.

Support will include regular reviews of a client's financial circumstances and debt action plans, help to maximise their income plus referrals to appropriate support networks, financial literacy and other relevant workshops to improve their financial capability skills.

Service Quality Standards

Organisations/consortiums wishing to be considered for funding under this programme need to demonstrate that they meet the Specialist CLS Quality Mark in debt advice and general service delivery standards set out on page 3 of this document.

Type of Service

Provision of specialist debt advice and casework to individual residents.

Provision of support with budgeting and money management to individual residents

In addition to providing advice and support to residents requesting assistance with debt problems, providers are required to offer appointments to advice service users who require additional 1:1 support to become more financially stable and confident and to offer help and support with budgeting tools and information on prioritising payments

The service will particularly target people with recurring debt problems and will support them in managing their finances to prevent debt problems escalating. The project will offer supervised placements to trained volunteer money mentors to assist with promoting information on budgeting and money management

The project will provide a resource to generalist advice providers through providing a referral route for clients who need additional support with managing their debt repayment plan. It will also provide information and training on money management and basic budgeting for front line advisers and will promote the sharing of good practice and resources on debt management support.

Geographical Coverage

Provider(s) will be expected to demonstrate effective partnership working with other advice agencies to ensure that the service is accessible on a borough-wide basis. This will include outreach services with key stakeholder agencies based on identified need and demand for the service in that area.

Delivery Methods

Provider(s) will be required to provide the service through open door access and appointments. Sessions should be spread throughout the week with at least one session set outside normal working hours. The Provider will take referrals from advice agencies and other stakeholders.

Partnership Working

Applicants must demonstrate strong links with other advice agencies and key stakeholders in the borough. They need to identify the proposed processes and protocols for ensuring regular reviews of signposting and referrals arrangements with other agencies to identify scope for improving service and meeting demands for this service across the borough. Organisations must ensure effective coordination and information sharing on service capacity and delivery issues and ensure effective referrals and outreach provision.

Delivery Plan

Applications will need to provide a Delivery Plan which sets out how they will meet the requirements of the contract as detailed in page 2. The delivery plan will include resources that the provider/consortium can bring to the bid including any existing provision that can complement the initiative.

Output Volume

The provider(s) will be required to maintain details of the number of clients seen, the number of hours of support delivered as well as the outcome of the case, it is anticipated that a minimum of 200 residents a year will be provided with money management support.

Please note that providers may apply to deliver more or fewer outputs than listed based on the available budget below. However, if the proposed number of cases is different you should provide a full explanation of the reasons.

Expected Outcomes

As minimum, the provider will ensure that:

- at least 60% of all cases lead to a demonstrably positive outcome for the client;
- debt levels, including rent arrears, must have reduced for individual clients as a consequence of the services provided; and,
- 85% of clients who respond to client satisfaction monitoring, rate the quality of the Services provided as “Good” or “Very Good”.

- **Budget**

The award for the debt advice and money management support contract is expected to be in the region of £40,000 per annum.

Appendix E

Advice Network Co-ordination and Volunteer training

Scope of Service

The project will help support and increase the capacity, quality and integration of advice provision in the borough through

- Co-ordinating and delivering a programme of volunteer advice skills training course including six monthly placements across a range of social welfare advice agencies in the borough
- Supporting the development of the THCAN network and implementation of a common approach to referrals
- Promotion of information and self-help materials on welfare advice issues on the THCAN website which can be used by all providers and residents

This will include:

Recruiting and training advice volunteers and facilitating volunteers to gain a recognised advice qualification

Maintaining, updating and promoting the THCAN website

Working in conjunction with the specialist providers to update and disseminate comprehensive factsheets, and information updates on welfare benefits issues, housing law issues, debt advice issue, employment law issues and other relevant areas of social welfare law

Coordinating the THCAN networks and Advice Providers Forum to promote information sharing and opportunities to discuss best practice on new initiatives or particular challenges will also support the coordination

Providing access for front line advisers to update information and training on specific areas of law through the network of specialist providers in the borough.

Supporting the development and implementation of a common approach to referrals

Co-ordinating and promoting law students placement in local advice agencies to help increase agencies capacity

Outputs

The provider will be required to provide and maintain details of

- the number of advice volunteers trained and the number of agencies supported with placements
- the number of factsheets, and information updates on welfare benefits issues, housing law issues, debt issues
- Analytics of number of hits on THCAN website including most frequently accessed pages

- The number of advice forums facilitated and details of mailing list for advice providers and other key stakeholders
- The number of law student placements in local advice agencies
- Update information on referrals and advice capacity issues

Expected Outcomes

As minimum, the provider will ensure that:

- at least 50% of all volunteers achieve a recognised advice training qualification
- ,that at least 5 agencies have their capacity increased through volunteer placements
- 80% of agencies who respond to satisfaction monitoring, rate the quality of the factsheets and briefing information on THCAN website as “Good” or “Very Good”.

Budget

The award for the Advice Network Co-ordination and Volunteer training contract is expected to be in the region of £45,000 per annum.

Appendix 1 - Social Welfare Advice Definition

Social Welfare Advice in the context of this specification refers to advice which involves interpreting how the law applies to a client's particular problem or set of circumstances.

It involves advising the client about their rights and obligation in relation to particular areas of welfare law including welfare benefits, debt and , housing, It is important therefore to ensure that advisers at all levels are properly trained and supervised in their role in order to ensure that the advice given is accurate .

The specification requires that the provider works to the appropriate advice quality standard in line with the Advice Quality Standard (AQS) has professional indemnity assurance and is registered with the FCA to deliver debt and money advice

There different levels of advice services provision are outlined below:

Advice - general help

This involves:

- a diagnosis of the client's enquiry and the legal issues involved
- giving information and explaining options
- identifying further action the client can take
- some assistance: e.g. contacting third parties to seek information; filling in forms.

It would usually be completed with one interview although there may be some follow-up work. The client would take responsibility for any further action.

Advice with casework

An advice with casework service includes all the elements of the general help advice service previously listed and also involves taking action on behalf of the client to move the case on. It could include negotiating on behalf of the client with third parties on the telephone, by letter or face-to-face. It will involve the advice provider taking responsibility for follow-up work.

Specialist

Specialist casework service involves the presentation of complex legal arguments often at tribunals or courts and is generally carried out by solicitors or caseworkers who are experienced in a particular area of law

Self Help and Assisted Information

The funding in this stream does not include assisted information. However it is recognised that providing information and self-help materials to clients to support and empower them to deal with their situation is an important element of the advice process. It is expected that all agencies will provide general information about accessing on line services and information about relevant national and local services.

These classifications are in line with the Advice Quality Standard (AQS)

Appendix 2 Draft service delivery plan template

Part A	Organisational information (lead plus brief outline on delivery partners)
Part B	Aim and description of the service including areas of law to be covered delivery methods and access channels
Part C	Need for the service including demand management and user involvement
Part D	Record of service delivery (lead and delivery partners)
Part E	Detailed service description including initial triage gateway assessment and detail of staff and volunteers that will be involved in delivering the project
Part F	Equality and Diversity consideration and profile of the anticipated beneficiaries
Part G	Details of monitoring and review system used for measuring success in relation to outputs, outcomes and impact
Part H	Ensuring quality - supervision and peer review arrangements
Part I	Referral arrangements into and out of service including links with non-advice providers on early intervention /literacy and employment support etc.
Part J	Partnership arrangements - project management and control arrangements
Part K	Networking with other agencies, social policy identification
Part L	Risk assessment
Appendix I	Partnership/Consortium agreement
Appendix II	Delivery schedule – Session times, outputs, outcomes
Appendix III	Funding arrangements and budget