

# North Lanarkshire Council Report

## Education, Children & Families Committee

Does this report require to be approved?  Yes  No

Ref: NLC-CPT- 25-111

Date: 03 March 2026

## Contract Award - Flexible Framework for Vocational & Skills Based Interventions 2026-2030

**From** Barry Smedley, Chief Officer (Education North)

**E-mail** Smedleybar@northlan.gov.uk

**Telephone:** 07919 245004

### Executive Summary

In accordance with the councils General Contract Standing Orders (GCSOs), the Committee is asked to approve the award of a Flexible Framework Agreement for Vocational & Skills Based Interventions (the 'Framework Agreement') following the undertaking of a procurement procedure as detailed within this report below.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that the Education, Children and Families Committee

- (1) Approves the award of the Framework Agreement and appointment of the Contractors listed within Appendix.1. The value of the call-offs under this Framework Agreement shall not exceed Five Million Pounds Sterling (£5m), exclusive of VAT across the Framework Agreements full term which is made up of a period of 4 years with no extensions available. It is anticipated to commence on 04 May 2026.

### The Plan for North Lanarkshire

**Priority** Support all children and young people to realise their full potential

**Ambition Statement** (10) Engage with children, young people, parents, carers, and families to help all children and young people reach their full potential

**Programme of Work** Brighter Futures

#### 1. Background

1.1 A previous Framework for these services was in place from September 2021-2025; this agreement expired on 12 September 2025.

1.2 There was a retender to establish a new Framework; this was carried out and the results were presented to Education, Children & Families Committee on 09 September 2025 for approval.

- 1.3 Following Committee, and prior to finalising the award, errors were identified within the tender that could not be resolved and consequently the procurement was abandoned.
- 1.4 The underlying issues were addressed, and a new procurement exercise was launched. The revised process ensured full adherence to procurement legislation and internal governance requirements.
- 1.5 The Framework Agreement focuses on providing school leadership teams with access to a broad range of short courses and interventions that can support post school pathways, employability skills and opportunities for children and young people with barriers to employment. The Framework Agreement complements wider education initiatives and programmes to ensure that all children and young people in North Lanarkshire are supported to achieve their full potential.
- 1.6 The list below provides a summary of the main course categories for vocational and skill-based training offered by tenderers at the establishment of this Framework Agreement.

Hair & Beauty	Early Learning & Childcare	Health & Social Care
First Aid & Safety	Construction	Sustainability / Net Zero
Hospitality & Food	Customer Service & Retail	Employability & Core Skills
Digital & Media	Logistics & Warehouse	Other Specialist Areas

- 1.7 The Framework Agreement is available for use by all North Lanarkshire Council schools. By procuring services through this Framework Agreement, the Service can reduce duplication of effort associated with separately sourcing and tendering for individual school requirements.
- 1.8 To enable appropriate development and execution of the procedure required to form the Agreement, a panel of technical and procurement representatives (the “User Intelligence Group (UIG)”) was formed.
- 1.9 The UIG were responsible for developing the required internal contract strategy (the “Contract Strategy “) for the Agreement. The Contract Strategy sets out the parameters and approaches the council would apply within the procurement, tendering, contracting and end of life stages of the Agreement following appropriate analysis, research and investigation to ensure the council achieves maximum benefit where possible. In accordance with GCSO 4.4, the Contract Strategy for the Agreement was approved on 18 November 2025.

## **2. Report**

- 2.1 The initial estimated value of the Framework Agreement dictated that the procurement procedure be undertaken in accordance with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015. An advert for the contract opportunity was published on the Public Contracts Scotland portal and the UK Find a Tender (FTS) website.
- 2.2 As determined within the Contract Strategy, the procurement procedure was undertaken as an “Open Procedure”. The Open Procedure is a single stage competitive procurement procedure where following the publication of the Contract Notice, any interested party could submit a tender.
- 2.3 Based on the evaluation criteria and scoring methodology set out in the procurement procedure (including a minimum score requirement on “Question 1 - Individual Course Offered”), an evaluation of tenders received was completed by members identified by the

UIG as having the technical knowledge and experience to evaluate tenders in a professional and fair manner.

- 2.4 Following completion of the procurement procedure in line with the terms, conditions and processes contained within, 102 Course Offerings from 23 tenderers have been evaluated and 87 Course Offerings from 22 tenderers submitting the most economically advantageous tenders and recommended for appointment to the Framework Agreement.
- 2.5 This new Framework Agreement will be in place for a period of 4 years with no option to extend and is anticipated to commence on 04 May 2026 and end on 03 May 2030.
- 2.6 This Framework Agreement has been designed with a flexible approach, allowing for further entry points throughout its duration. These entry points will be held annually to allow new entrants to join the Framework Agreement for academic years 2027-28, 2028-29, and 2029-30. All approved tenderers will remain on the Framework Agreement until 03 May 2030, regardless of their date of entry.
- 2.7 The value of the call-offs under this Framework Agreement shall not exceed Five Million Pounds Sterling (£5m), exclusive of VAT however there is no guarantee of spend/volume of work for any Contractors appointed.
- 2.8 Call-off contracts (“Learner Group Package”) will be based on the Council’s assessment of the children and young people’s needs.
- 2.9 Appendix 2 provides a summary of the procurement procedure undertaken including the key considerations and outcomes.

#### **Financial / Budget Consideration**

- 2.10 The pre-tender whole life estimated budget for the Agreement was £5M. The Framework Agreement is not expected to deliver cashable procurement savings.
- 2.11 The costs associated with Framework Agreement delivery will primarily be contained within individual education establishment budgets, although additional call-off contracts may be made via other funding sources within Education, Children and Families.

#### **Price Stability**

- 2.12 Prices submitted by tenderers shall be fixed and unchangeable for the duration of the Framework Agreement.

#### **Community Benefits**

- 2.13 The Council is committed to maximising the delivery of community benefits. The Framework Agreement includes a community benefit requirement; this approach is designed to deliver local community benefits where possible.
- 2.14 23 of the 23 tenderers confirmed their commitment to delivering community benefits once they achieve specific annual spend thresholds as prescribed by the Framework Agreement.
- 2.15 Accordingly, there are no community benefits as part of the appointment to the Framework Agreement. However, as call-off contracts and annual spend thresholds are achieved, community benefits will be delivered.
- 2.16 The community benefits delivered via a call off contract from the Framework Agreement may include the creation of jobs or apprenticeships.

## **Fair Work First**

- 2.17 Within their tender submission, tenderers advised that they will commit to the Scottish Government's "Fair Work First" initiative should they be successful in being awarded a call-off contract from the Framework Agreement.

## **Contract Management**

- 2.18 Officers from central support functions within Education and Families Service, will be responsible for managing the Framework Agreement which will be undertaken in accordance the contract and supplier management conditions applied within the Framework Agreement.

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## **3. Measures of success**

- 3.1 The Framework Agreement will deliver the following outcomes;
- Engagement with the Framework Agreement and the provision of additionality and flexibility of choice for all schools.
  - The appointment of Contractors who have subject matter expertise to work with the Council and individual schools to support objectives.
  - Contracts awarded by the Council are compliant with procurement legislation and internal procedures.

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## **4. Supporting documentation**

- 4.1 **Appendix 1** Summary of Tenderers Identified for Appointment to the Framework Agreement and Evaluation Score
- 4.2 **Appendix 2** Summary of Procurement Procedure
- 4.3 **Appendix 3** SME Status and Location of All Tenderers
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*B Smedley*

**Barry Smedley**  
**Chief Officer Education – North**

## 5. Impacts

<p><b>5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty</b> Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? All relevant checks were completed as part of standard procurement processes.</p> <p>If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? <a href="https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments">https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments</a> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>5.2 Financial impact</b> Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p><b>5.3 HR policy impact</b> Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p><b>5.4 Legal impact</b> Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>All procurement procedures will have potential legal implications however throughout this Agreement, compliance with the councils General Contract Standing Orders and the relevant procurement regulations has been maintained with advice from colleagues in Corporate Procurement and Legal Services sought as and when required.</p>
<p><b>5.5 Data protection impact</b> Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to <a href="mailto:dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk">dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk</a> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>5.6 Technology / Digital impact</b> Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p>

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?

Yes  No

**5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact**

Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

**5.8 Communications impact**

Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

**5.9 Risk impact**

Is there a risk impact?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?

Primarily around service delivery, financial impact, timelines, and reputation. All risks have been assessed and recorded in the Project Risk Register and mitigated through contract management, accurate forecasting, planning arrangements, and stakeholder communication.

**5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty**

Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

**5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact**

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The Framework Providers have outlined how they will support young people and their families. They have outlined the desired positive impact their services will provide to schools, staff, young people and families.

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes  No

## Appendix 1 – Summary of Tenderers Identified for Appointment to the Framework Agreement and Evaluation Score

Tenderer name and course title as per tender submission.

Tenderer Name	Course Title	Total Score	Appointed to Framework
Action for Children	1) Skills for Work	90.11%	Yes
Angela Harvey Salon Training and Education	2) Adult Learning & Transition Award	74.86%	Yes
	3) Barbering	74.86%	Yes
	4) Beauty Care	74.86%	Yes
	5) Early Learning and Childcare	74.86%	Yes
	6) Hairdressing	74.86%	Yes
	7) Make-up-artistry	74.86%	Yes
B-Active Ltd	8) Sports Coaching & Mentoring	43.00%	No
Be-Inn Unity C.I.C.	9) Dare to Venture	85.00%	Yes
	10) First Aid for Mental Health SCQF Level 6	85.00%	Yes
	11) Mental Health First Aid SCQF Level 5	86.67%	Yes
	12) Outdoor First Aid Level Ofqual 3	86.67%	Yes
	13) The Bothy	92.00%	Yes
effectivenow Ltd	14) effectiveskills schools programme	77.00%	Yes
Enable Scotland (Leading the Way)	15) Stepping Up	89.87%	Yes
Equinox Outdoor Training	16) General Outdoor Education & Training	52.64%	Yes
FLAVOUR5 LTD	17) Flavours' Crème de la Crème	84.83%	Yes
	18) Flavours' Sugar & Spice	84.83%	Yes
	19) "Flavours' What's For Dinner?"	76.83%	Yes
Getting Better Together Ltd	20) Cycling Award	84.29%	Yes
	21) The SQA National 3 Media course	85.00%	Yes
KER Training Ltd	22) Introduction to Plumbing & Domestic Gas	49.88%	Yes
LAMH Recycle Ltd	23) Employability Skills - Certificate of Work Readiness	91.43%	Yes
	24) Employability Skills - Introduction to Workplace skills	95.00%	Yes
	25) Technology and Digital Skills - Certificate of Work Readiness	91.43%	Yes
	26) Technology and Digital Skills - Introduction to Workplace Skills	95.00%	Yes
	27) Warehouse and Recycling - Certificate of Work Readiness	91.43%	Yes
	28) Warehouse and Recycling - Introduction to Workplace Skills	95.00%	Yes

Merged Education	29) Emergency First Aid at work	69.14%	Yes
	30) Fire Safety	77.14%	Yes
	31) First Aid at work	69.14%	Yes
	32) First Aid at work and Paediatrics First Aid combined	77.14%	Yes
	33) First Response Emergency Care level 3	69.14%	Yes
	34) Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace	69.14%	Yes
	35) Paediatrics First Aid	77.14%	Yes
	36) Safe Moving and Handling	77.14%	Yes
	37) Working safely	77.14%	Yes
Next Generation Training Limited	38) Highfield, SQA or REHIS - Emergency First Aid at Work	86.67%	Yes
	39) Highfield, SQA or REHIS - First Aid at Work	86.67%	Yes
	40) Highfield or SQA - Emergency Paediatric First Aid	86.67%	Yes
	41) Highfield or SQA - Paediatric First Aid	86.67%	Yes
	42) Highfield Level 1 Award in the Principles of Fire Safety Awareness	86.67%	Yes
	43) Highfield Level 2 Award in Conflict Management	86.67%	Yes
	44) Highfield Level 2 Award in Customer Service	86.67%	Yes
	45) Highfield Level 2 Award in the Principles of Fire Safety	86.67%	Yes
	46) REHIS Elementary Cleaning & Disinfection	86.67%	Yes
	47) REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene	86.67%	Yes
	48) REHIS Elementary Health & Safety	86.67%	Yes
	49) REHIS Elementary Infection Prevention & Control	86.67%	Yes
50) REHIS Safe Manual Handling	86.67%	Yes	
NURTURE @ ACADEMY	51) SQA Blow Drying Techniques	83.64%	Yes
	52) SQA Hairdressing - An Introduction	83.64%	Yes
	53) SQA Shampoo, Conditioning and Scalp Massage	85.00%	Yes
Phantom's Legacy	54) Equido Level 1 Course	72.00%	Yes
QUALITAS INTERNATIONAL LTD	55) SKILLS FOR CUSTOMER CARE HAIRDRESSING	72.27%	Yes
Remit Group Limited	56) IMI Level 1 Award in Electric / Hybrid Vehicle Awareness	61.06%	Yes
	57) National 4 Skills for Work	65.77%	Yes
The Larder West Lothian	58) Core Skills	83.64%	Yes
	59) Dream Big Programme	83.64%	Yes
	60) Get Employed: Employability Programme	83.64%	Yes

The Larder West Lothian (continued)	61) Get Into Barista	83.64%	Yes
	62) Get Into: Customer Care	83.64%	Yes
	63) Get Into: Hospitality	83.64%	Yes
	64) Get Work Ready	83.64%	Yes
	65) Into Work: Interactive Workshops and Sessions	83.64%	Yes
	66) Introduction to Cookery	83.64%	Yes
	67) Introduction to Food Hygiene	83.64%	Yes
	68) Power To Grow	83.64%	Yes
	69) Skills For Work: Hospitality	83.64%	Yes
The Lennox Partnership	70) Customer Service Product and Service Requirements	77.46%	Yes
	71) "Responsibilities of Employment"	77.46%	Yes
	72) "Skills for Customer Care"	77.46%	Yes
	73) "Social Media for Customer Service"	77.46%	Yes
The Scottish Vocational Training Foundation C.I.C.	74) Rural Horticulture & Outdoors	80.67%	Yes
The Verdancy Group Ltd	75) Achieving Net Zero: A Circular Approach to Workplace Compliance (REHIS and The Verdancy Group Joint Award)	83.64%	Yes
	76) Carbon Literacy	75.64%	Yes
	77) SCQF Level 4 Future Stewards: The Net Zero World	83.64%	Yes
	78) SCQF Level 4 Sustainable Construction Skills	83.64%	Yes
	79) SCQF Level 5 Award in Understanding Domestic Retrofit	83.64%	Yes
	80) SCQF Level 5 Waste in the Circular Economy Award	83.64%	Yes
	81) SQA Core Skills SCQF L3, 4, 5 (with embedded sustainability and green learning)	83.64%	Yes
Tigers Ltd	82) A Foundation Apprenticeship in Civil Engineering at SCQF level 6	83.64%	Yes
	83) Flexible Framework for Vocational and Skill Based Interventions SCQF 6, SCQF 7, SCQF 9, SCQF 10	75.64%	Yes
	84) Foundation Apprenticeship: Construction at SCQF Level 4	83.64%	Yes
	85) Foundation Apprenticeship: Construction at SCQF Level 5	83.64%	Yes
	86) Foundation Apprenticeship Social Services Children and Young People SCQF Level 6	83.64%	Yes
	87) Pre-Apprenticeship	75.64%	Yes

Triage Central Limited	88) Step Towards Logistics – Additional Offer	63.42%	Yes
	89) Steps Toward Admin – Additional Offer	39.42%	No
	90) Steps Toward Admin – Intensive Offer	39.42%	No
	91) Steps Toward Admin – Universal Offer	39.42%	No
	92) Step Towards Customer Service Hospitality – Additional Offer	39.42%	No
	93) Step Towards Customer Service Hospitality – Universal Offer	39.42%	No
	94) Step Towards Customer Service Retail – Additional Offer	39.42%	No
	95) Step Towards Customer Service Retail – Universal Offer	39.42%	No
	96) Step Towards Early Years – Additional Offer	39.42%	No
	97) Step Towards Early Years – Universal Offer	39.42%	No
	98) Step Towards Employability (1) – Intensive Offer	39.42%	No
	99) Step Towards Employability (2) – Universal & Additional Offer	39.42%	No
	100) Step Towards Logistics – Universal Offer	39.42%	No
	101) Step Towards Social Care – Universal Offer	39.42%	No
	102) Step Towards Social Care – Additional Offer	39.42%	No

\*As above, in the Column “Appointment to the Framework” where the answer is “No” this is because the course offering was deemed not to meet the minimum evaluation score required on “Question 1 - Individual Course Offered”.

## Appendix 2 – Summary of Procurement Procedure

<b>Overview</b>	<b>Reference</b>	NLC-CPT-25-111				
	<b>Title</b>	Flexible Framework for Vocational & Skills Based Interventions 2026-2030				
	<b>Classification</b>	Services - Social & Specific				
	<b>Responsible Chief Officer and Position</b>	Barry Smedley, Chief Officer (Education)				
<b>Competition</b>	<b>Governance by Value</b>	Higher Threshold - Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015				
	<b>Route to Market</b>	Open Procedure				
	<b>Tenders Received</b>	<b>Total No. of Tenders Received</b>	23 (102 course offerings)	<b>No. of Tenders from SME's</b>	21	
		<b>Total No. of Tenders recommended for award</b>	22 (87 Course Offerings)			
		<b>No. Tenders from NLC Based Businesses</b>	8	<b>No. of Tenders from Supported Businesses</b>	1	
	<b>Award Criteria</b>	<b>Quality Weighting</b>	70%	<b>Price Weighting</b>	30%	
	<b>Evaluation Scoring</b>	<b>Successful Contractors Scoring Range</b>	95.00% - 49.88%	<b>Unsuccessful Tenderer Scoring Range</b>	43.00% - 39.42%	
<b>How Has "Best Value" Been Demonstrated?</b>	<p>Cost efficiencies will be realised by minimising price variability across multiple contracts and ensuring all agreements are compliant. This approach enhances effectiveness by eliminating duplication in sourcing similar provisions and reducing unnecessary resource expenditure.</p> <p>The Framework Agreement is designed to support national and local priorities around local employability and lifelong learning.</p>					
<b>Award Details</b>	<b>General Overview</b>	<b>Total / Maximum Value</b>	£5m	<b>Contract Duration (Months)</b>	48	

Impacts Summary						
Impacts Summary,	Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty <input type="checkbox"/>	HR Policy Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Data Protection Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment / Carbon Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Risk Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Financial Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Legal Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Technology / Digital Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Comms Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Armed Forces Covenant Duty <input type="checkbox"/>	

### Appendix 3 – SME Status and location of all Tenderers

Name of Tenderer	Size of Tendering Organisation (Micro, Small, Medium or Large)	Location (Local Authority / Council Area)	Paying Living Wage	Living Wage Accredited
Action For Children	Large	Glasgow	Yes	Yes
Angela Harvey Salon Training and Education	Micro	Glasgow	Yes	No
B-Active Ltd	Micro	Paisley	Yes	No
Be-Inn Unity C.I.C	Micro	East Kilbride	Yes	No
effectivenow Ltd	Micro	Dalkeith	Yes	No
Enable Scotland (Leading the Way)	Large	North Lanarkshire	Yes	Yes
Equinox Outdoor Training	Micro	Falkirk	Yes	No
FLAVOUR5 Ltd	Micro	North Lanarkshire	Yes	No
Getting Better Together Ltd	Small	North Lanarkshire	Yes	No
Ker Training Ltd	Micro	North Lanarkshire	Yes	No
LAMH Recycle Ltd	Small	North Lanarkshire	Yes	No
Merged Education	Micro	Glasgow	Yes	Yes
Next Generation Training Limited	Micro	South Lanarkshire	Yes	Yes
NURTURE @ ACADEMY	Micro	Glasgow	Yes	No
Phantom's Legacy	Micro	North Lanarkshire	Yes	No

Qualitas International Ltd	Small	North Lanarkshire	Yes	Yes
Remit Group Ltd	Medium	Nottingham	Yes	No
The Larder West Lothian	Small	Livingston	Yes	Yes
The Lennox Partnership	Small	Clydebank	Yes	Yes
The Scottish Vocational Training Foundation C.I.C	Micro	North Lanarkshire	Yes	No
The Verdancy Group Ltd	Small	Livingston	Yes	Yes
Tigers Ltd	Small	Glasgow	Yes	Yes
Triage Central Limited	Medium	Stirling	Yes	Yes