

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 26–232

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

24 August 2026

Dear Applicant

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information – NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)

Thank you for your request received on 6 August 2026 for information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (the ICB) under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The ICB covers the areas of County Durham, Newcastle Gateshead, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Tees Valley.

Please find the information you requested on behalf of the ICB as follows.

Your Request

I am writing to request information relating to the recent award of the North Cumbria Recovery College contract to Together We CIC under the NHS Provider Selection Regime (PSR).

In the interests of understanding the application of the PSR and promoting transparency in commissioning, I would be grateful if you could provide the following, where held:

1. The PSR Decision Record relating to this award.
2. The rationale for selecting the "Most Suitable Provider" process rather than an alternative PSR process.
3. The assessment against the statutory PSR key criteria.
4. Details of the contract value, duration and commencement date.
5. Any published service specification or description of the commissioned service.
6. A summary of how conflicts of interest were identified, declared and managed in relation to this decision.
7. Details of the decision-making body or authorised officers who approved the award.
8. Any standstill notice or equivalent notification issued in relation to the award.

I appreciate that any genuinely commercially sensitive or personal information may need to be redacted. However, I would be grateful for the fullest disclosure possible in line with the transparency principles underpinning the Provider Selection Regime.

If any of the requested information is already publicly available, I would appreciate links to the relevant documents.

9. If available, I would also be grateful for any guidance, policy or local framework used by the ICB when determining whether to use the Most Suitable Provider process as opposed to a competitive process under the Provider Selection Regime.

Our Response

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB does hold the information requested.

1. To NENC ICB Procurement Team's knowledge, the most recent contract for a Recovery College service for North Cumbria with Together We CIC was put in place following a Procurement Act 2023. NENC ICB Standard Financial Instructions guided 3 quote process as procurement was notified this service did not meet the definition of healthcare services as described/falling under PSR 2023.
2. Please refer to the response to question 1. There was no "Most Suitable Provider" or PSR2023 process run by NENC ICB Procurement Team.
3. Please refer to the responses to questions 1 and 2. There was no PSR2023 process run by NENC ICB Procurement Team.
4. The value of the contract is £94,902.10. It is a 12-month contract from 1 June 2026. Related information was published to the market/public in a Procurement Act 2023 transparency notice which can be viewed at: [Recovery College Service North Cumbria – Find a Tender](#).
5. The service specification is attached to this response.
6. Conflicts of interests were identified/raised through the three quotes process, and all subsequent process using the conflict-of-interest template. None were declared.
7. Following the evaluation of the three-quote process, the award was approved by Peter Rooney, Director of Commissioning, North East and North Cumbria ICB and ratified by the Mental Health, Learning Disability, Neurodiversity and All age continuing care subcommittee on 21 July 2026.
8. To the NENC ICB Procurement Team's knowledge, the most recent contract for a Recovery College service for North Cumbria with Together We CIC was put in place following a Procurement Act 2023 and NENC ICB Standard Financial Instructions guided 3 quote process as procurement was notified this service did not meet the definition of healthcare services as described/falling under PSR 2023. This did not require a standstill period.

In accordance with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the NHS ICB website <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/>.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to request a review of our decision, you should write to the Information Governance Manager using the contact details at the top of this letter quoting the appropriate reference number.

If you are not content with the outcome your review, you do have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the ICB's complaints procedure.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or www.ico.org.uk.

Any information we provide following your request under the Freedom of Information Act will not confer an automatic right for you to re-use that information, for example to publish it. If you wish to re-use the information that we provide and you do not specify this in your initial application for information then you must make a further request for its re-use as per the Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 www.legislation.gov.uk. This will not affect your initial information request.

Yours faithfully

Information Governance Support Officer

**Information Governance Support Officer
North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board**