

Interested in joining EM Lawshare?

Contents

Introduction	3
What it is	3
Who is in it	3
What are the benefits	3
Who can join	4
Who are the partner firms?	4
What areas of law are covered	4
Added value	4
How it works	4
Who runs it?.....	5
How you can join.....	5
Need more information	5
Appendix 1: types of work covered by the agreement.....	6

Introduction

This note is intended to give you a brief background to EM LawShare (EMLS):

- What it is
- Who is in it
- What the benefits are of joining
- Who can join
- Who are the partner firms
- What areas of law are covered
- Added value
- How it works
- Who runs it
- How you can join
- Who to contact for more information.

What it is

EMLS is a consortium of public bodies, mainly in the East Midlands, whose primary purpose is to procure legal services from specialist private firms ([see: Who are the partner firms](#)) at discounted rates through a framework agreement.

Who is in it

Launched in 2006 with 13 members, EMLS is now the largest such consortium in the country with 69 members as at 1 April 2014. The majority of its members are local authorities: county, unitary and district. However the membership also includes fire and rescue, police, NHS and housing organisations. Members are predominately drawn from the East Midlands but increasingly from elsewhere, in particular the West Midlands and South Yorkshire.

What are the benefits

EMLS offers a number of significant advantages to members:

- **Competitive hourly rates:** these are fixed until April 2018
- **No need to tender:** because the partner firms were selected following a fully compliant EC procurement exercise you will not need to go through another to appoint them
- **Non exclusivity:** you remain free to use any other law firm of your choosing
- **No subscription fee**
- **Added value:** the six partner firms offer significant added value to members ([see: Added value](#))

Who can join

Any public body can join EMLS if you are in the East Midlands, West Midlands or South Yorkshire. If you are outside these areas you may still be able to join but the management panel ([see: Who runs it?](#)) will have to agree to it but we are looking to extend our geographical boundaries.

Who are the partner firms?

After an intensive procurement exercise in 2013-14 the EMLS management panel ([see: Who runs it?](#)) appointed six 'partner' firms to the new framework agreement which started on 1 April 2014 and will last for 4 years. All six have extensive public sector knowledge and experience.

They are:

- Bevan Brittan
- Browne Jacobson
- Geldards
- Freeth Cartwright
- Sharpe Pritchard
- Weightmans

Details of each firm's hourly rates & their key contacts are included in the members pack which is sent to each member.

What areas of law are covered

There are 10 main categories of work covered by the framework agreement. In practice they include every major area of law dealt with by local authorities except child care. A full list is given in [Appendix 1](#).

Added value

The partner firms provide a package of added value services to EMLS members.

These include:

- Training programme of over 30 free courses and attracting CPD points
- Free phone help lines
- Conference every two years at a major venue.
- Use of their meeting rooms

In addition we are discussing with them further offers such as specialist workshops.

How it works

Nottinghamshire County Council is the lead authority for the consortium and enters into a framework agreement with each of the six partner firms. Each member then has to enter into a memorandum of understanding with Nottinghamshire. Any authorised officer from a member can

they directly approach and instruct any of the partner firms. It is entirely the individual member's choice which firm they chose. A copy of the pro forma for instructing a partner firm is included in the member's pack ([see: Who are the partner firms?](#)).

Who runs it?

All the major decisions regarding the consortium are taken by a management panel.

The current panel is:

- Jayne Francis-Ward Nottinghamshire County Council - lead authority
- John McElvaney Derbyshire County Council - county representative
- Anita Bradley East Cheshire - former district representative
- Stuart Portman Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council - unitary representative
- Heather Dickinson Nottinghamshire County Council - lead authority
- Stuart Leslie EMLS Coordinator

How you can join

Joining EMLS is straightforward. Firstly we need a request to join from your Chief Legal Officer or similar post holder in your organisation. This can be in the form of an email and should include the names, titles and contact details of those officers who are authorised to place instructions with the partner firms.

That email should be sent to the EMLS Co-ordinator, Stuart Leslie ([see: Need more information](#)). If your request is accepted ([see: Who can join](#)) you will be sent a memorandum of understanding to sign ([see How it works](#)). Once that is signed and returned to Nottinghamshire you will be sent a members pack giving details of the partner firms hourly rates, main contacts and added value offer. You will also receive the EMLS training programme and information on how to book a course and a password to the EMLS website.

Need more information

Contact the EMLS Co-ordinator Stuart Leslie by emailing him on SL.EMLawshare@yahoo.com.

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Appendix 1: types of work covered by the agreement

1. Adult social services
2. Education
3. Civil litigation
4. Criminal litigation
5. Planning, highways and environmental
6. Conveyancing and property
7. Contract, commercial and procurement
8. Administrative & corporate governance
9. Employment
10. Housing