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Thame Town Council

Brand & Website Re-Design

Invitation to Tender

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Introduction

Thame Town Council is seeking to develop a new website and brand re-design to reflect the organisation's forward-thinking approach to local governance and the diverse future of the town as a whole.

The following elements will need to be included within the project:

- New easy to use CMS website
- New branding scheme
- Website training for staff
- Ongoing technical support
- Website hosting

The Council is aware that people are turning more and more to the internet to obtain information and the current site does not service these needs as best it could. Similarly, for prospective visitors to Thame, the Council's website may form a large part of their first impression of the town and the website does not accurately reflect the incredible things that are happening within the community.

It is essential, therefore, that the website and branding strengthens the public's impression of the organisation and meets the needs of all of the Council's stakeholders including residents, local businesses and tourists. Both must encourage confidence and trust in the organisation and reflect our mission statement:

- To be an efficient and effective council
- To improve the physical environment
- To raise the standards of recreational facilities
- To help articulate the needs of the community
- To promote the cultural well-being of Thame

Our Objectives

- Establish a modern branding scheme to include new logo, colour scheme and typeface.
- Increase online service delivery to complement those offered in person at the Town Hall Information Centre (e.g. online payments, street issue reporting, local information).
- Provide a more organised and comprehensive source for local information that falls within the requirements of the Local Council Award Scheme - <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/lcas/1373-lcas-guide-jan-2015-v2/file>
- Increase visitor numbers to the site.
- Increase subscribers to the weekly newsletter.
- Promote engagement with the Town Council's social media sites (Twitter, Flickr, Vimeo)
- Improve site security to prevent hackers.
- Provide a multi-platform site
- Include site analytics

Budget

The budget for the project is up to £10,000 excl. VAT.

The Town Council is aware there will be additional and ongoing maintenance costs. These must be stated at the time of quotation.

Timeframe

Due to the compromised security of the current site, launching a new website is one of the Council's priorities. However, it is aware that a project such as this is complex and to achieve our desired outcomes will take time, particularly as both Members and officers are to be involved in the development process.

It is requested that a realistic and reasonable timetable is included at the time of quotation.

About Thame Town Council

Thame Town Council is the parish authority of Thame, Oxfordshire, which has a population in excess of 11,000. It is responsible for local services including:

- Allotments
- Annual Events, e.g. Christmas Event, Remembrance, Civic Ball, and ad hoc events
- Bus Shelters and Street Furniture
- Planning Application Recommendations
- Management of Fairs
- Grants to local organisations
- Hire of Upper Chamber and Meeting Room at the Town Hall
- Markets (including Tuesday Street market, Farmers' markets and continental markets)
- On-street parking outside Town Hall and in Upper High Street
- Publications, including quarterly Residents' newsletter and Town Guide
- Recreation areas, e.g. Skate Park, Play Areas, and Open Spaces, e.g. Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve
- War Memorials and garden

The Town Council is a service provider for the Thame community, an influence and conduit for local views and works effectively in partnership with other local and national organisations. It has an important role in representing the town's interests and encouraging the work and achievements of the local community.

The Council is compiled of 16 Councillors and 16 members of office/maintenance staff who deal with local issues in the parish.

Thame was one of the first local authorities to adopt a Neighbourhood Plan, following a referendum in May 2013.

About Thame

Thame is a thriving and historic Oxfordshire market town with a unique heritage and a dynamic future. It has an attractive and well-maintained town centre that boasts many award-winning and unique shops and restaurants. Thame is a 'living' market town, hosting regular street and livestock markets, frequently cited by many as the town's major asset.

Community life is extremely active within the town, representing many different groups and organisations. Recreation opportunities are extensive, with a number of clubs and facilities for sports, there is also a library, museum and a theatre. Thame has a rich calendar of community events including a food festival, music festival, art and literature festival, two street fairs, two agricultural shows and a Christmas event.

Thame is ideally situated to enjoy the beauty and tranquillity of the Thame and Chilterns area. The town has its own nature reserve and has excellent connections to the Chiltern Hills, Ridgeway Path, Phoenix Trial and Oxfordshire Way. Due to its picturesque location and rich character, the town and surrounding area is a popular location for filming for television and film, most notably Midsomer Murders.

Its proximity to London means Thame has high levels of commuting, nevertheless, the town has an attractive industrial market. Many national and international companies have their headquarters within Thame: DAF, Travelodge, Kubota, Purite, CPM, Atlet.

Our Key Audiences

Residents

Those who live in Thame who are seeking regular information about events and services.

Councillors/Staff

Employees or Members of Thame Town Council often use the website as a source of information e.g. to look up past minutes or reports.

Visitors – Tourists – Prospective Residents

Non-locals wishing to find out more information about places of interest, accommodation and local events.

Press

Whilst the Town Council does issue regular press releases, the website is also a source of key information for local press such as Thame.net, BBC Oxford, Thame Gazette and Mix96.

Professionals

As a decision-maker within the local area, the Town Council regularly engages with industry professionals such as developers, landowners and business owners.

Community Organisations

Local groups/individuals who may be seeking support from the Town Council e.g. grant funding, facility hire, publicity.

Other Councils

Similar organisations who are investigating how other local authorities are operating (this has increased dramatically since the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan).

Website Re-design

Our Current Website

The current Thame Town Council website (www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk) was launched in 2012 and is a Joomla-based site. It is edited on a daily basis by members of office staff who are responsible for updating the news stories, meeting minutes and agendas, and the event list. There are permanent articles such as local history, tourist information and details about council services. In addition, the Council must also publish and update certain information as part of the Transparency Code for Authorities e.g. contracts, payments, councillor details.

In recent months the website has experienced problems with security, particularly from internet hackers. This is mainly due to the outdated version of Joomla the site currently uses. In addition to the poor security, the site and content management system is not very intuitive and difficult for staff to use.

Website positives	Website negatives
<i>Reasonably intuitive search engine</i>	Complicated back-end configuration
<i>Text adjust tool</i>	Dated design
<i>Councillor contact forms</i>	Complicated front-end navigation
	Not secure
	Images and attachments lengthy to upload

Website Key Features

The Town Council would like the following elements to be included in the new website:

<i>A-Z Service Directory</i>	Alphabetised list of Council services and information with clear link. This should be editable.
<i>Contact Forms</i>	Automated response contact forms for individual councillors, key staff members and the main contact email.
<i>Councillor Profiles</i>	Contact form, bio and headshot for each Member.
<i>Directory</i>	Editable directory of local services, groups and organisations able to be ordered by name/subject etc. 'Submit entry' feature for the public to post entries subject to administrator approval.
<i>Events Page/Calendar</i>	Live calendar(s) for room/pitch bookings, Council meetings and town events. To include a 'submit an event' feature.
<i>Members Area</i>	Secured access area for Members only. To include shared calendars, forum, contact details.
<i>Online Payment</i>	Online payment system for settling parking fines (powered by Chipside), room hire, stall payment.
<i>Report It Function</i>	Online form to report local issues e.g. potholes, street cleaning, fly tipping. Compatible with FixMyStreet if possible (see www.fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk).
<i>Search Engine</i>	Intuitive search engine that is able to anticipate common spelling mistakes and abbreviations.
<i>Site Analytics</i>	

Technical Requirements

<i>Accessibility</i>	The site must be DDA compliant.
<i>Content Management System</i>	The website must be able to be updated/edited on a regular basis by the website administrator(s) including new articles, text, documents, images and video. This process must be straight-forward, easy to use and be achieved from any computer/internet connection.
<i>Design</i>	The design of the website should incorporate the logo, colour scheme and typography as proposed for the brand redesign.
<i>Domain</i>	The website domain name must remain as www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk .
<i>E-newsletter Integration</i>	Must be compatible with MailChimp and include a sign-up form and newsletter archive.
<i>Maintenance and Support</i>	<p>The day to day maintenance of the website will be the responsibility of Council officers, however, ad-hoc support for any arising technical issues should be available if needed within office hours (Mon-Fri, 9am – 5pm).</p> <p>Training for staff should be available if required.</p>
<i>Navigation</i>	Navigation should be clear and logical. A breadcrumb trail should provide a clear journey back to previous pages without the need for using the 'back' button.
<i>Social Media Integration</i>	Live twitter feed for @ThameTC and social share buttons.
<i>Usability</i>	The site must be computer, tablet and mobile friendly.

Website Content

The copy for the new site can be generated in-house so a web copywriter would not be required. Most of the current content of the site can be updated and transferred whilst some sections can be permanently removed. This will be at the discretion of Council officers. Similarly, the Town Council has a broad image library and a good connections with local photographers so images would be supplied.

Our Competitors

www.thame.net – Local reporter/press

www.southoxon.gov.uk – District Council website

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk – County Council website

www.visitoxfordandoxfordshire.com – Tourism website

www.southernoxfordshire.com/thame.php - Tourism website

www.thametoday.co.uk – Local press

Brand Re-design

Our Current Branding

In 2009, the Town Council commissioned a design agency to create a masthead and spread design for the annual report, which was delivered to every household in Thame. The masthead that was created was subsequently adopted as the Town Council's official logo and letterhead and the design and colour scheme (yellow, blue, mint and white) was incorporated into the design of the website.

The Town Council currently uses Arial as its default typeface in all word-processed documents. Whilst its ubiquity is an advantage, the typeface is general deemed to be quite uninteresting. The Council wishes to adopt a new house style that is both functional yet modern.



The Thame Emblem

Thame has an unofficial shield that the Council has incorporated into its branding and is widely considered by the public as the official emblem for the organisation. Unfortunately, the emblem is not recognised by the College of Arms and therefore it is freely used by other organisations. In 2014, the Town Council chose not to petition for official armorial bearings, however, it is hoped that aspects of the current shield can be incorporated into designs for the new logo with a view to obtaining copyright on any final logo design.



Tender Process

You are invited to submit a proposal, evidence of previous work and a quote for the required work by **3pm on Friday 12 February 2016**. You are also invited to deliver a 15-minute presentation on your proposal to the Town Council at a meeting scheduled for 4.00pm on Tuesday 16 February 2016 at Thame Town Hall, in a sequence to be decided by the Chairman drawing lots.

Proposals should include:

- Full registered business/company name, main office address and contact details;
- Brief details of the organisation and financial standing;
- An indication of how the project would be approached to ensure both timely delivery and fulfilment of the requirements set out in the brief;
- A project timetable and management plan;
- Full details on costs of development and delivery of the project including costs of ongoing support and payment terms;
- Details of the proposed project team including evidence of previous experience;
- Contact details of the proposed delivery team;
- Two references from previous clients;
- Declaration of any association with a Member of Thame Town Council.

Decision Process

On completion of the presentations, the Council will deliberate and choose the company it believes can best deliver the project whilst offering the best value for money. The following scoring system will be used to support the final decision-making process:

Criteria		Weighting
• Demonstrable ability to meet the requirements detailed in the Tender document		25%
• Delivery, Maintenance and Development Methodology		20%
• Technical Capability and Quality Assurance		20%
• Previous Experience		15%
• Costs	• Initial development	10%
	• Ongoing maintenance	5%
	• Training	5%
TOTAL		100%

The successful bidder will be notified within 5 working days of that meeting and a project initiation meeting then set as soon as practically possible afterwards.

Enquiries

Enquiries regarding this Invitation to Tender should be addressed to the Lizzie Spokes, via e-mail at lizzie.spokes@thametowncouncil.gov.uk or 01844 212833.

Please acknowledge receipt of this Invitation to Tender confirming your intention to submit a tender as invited.