

Soft Market Investigation

For

A Framework for Library Design,
Furnishings & Wayfinding

Cambridgeshire County Council

Section 1: Introduction

1. General Requirements

- 1.1. The purpose of this document is to briefly explain to suppliers the business and technical requirements and the expected scope of Library Design, Furnishings & Wayfinding in order that suppliers can explain the relevance of products, services and their experience to the requirements.
- 1.2. Suppliers can find out more about the Procurement and Commercial Teams tender process, role and strategies via the [Supplying to the Council](#) webpage.
- 1.3. Suppliers should also note that Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) also evaluates Social Value within its tender process where appropriate and utilises the services of the Social Value Portal (SVP) as part of the process.
- 1.4. SVP run monthly training sessions for bidders/Suppliers on Social Value, please see [here](#) for details of the sessions that you can join to understand more about Social Value. Additionally, there is further resources from SVP here as well [Win More Bids \(socialvalueportal.com\)](#).
- 1.5. **Please note:** this market testing exercise is **not** an invitation to tender or a request for formal expressions of interest. This document does not form any part of an invitation to tender. CCC is issuing this request for **information only**. Any supplier invited to present to CCC is doing so to support market research only and to help make any potential procurement process more focused and efficient. No supplier selection or supplier preference is implied.

2. Confidentiality and Freedom of Information (FOI)

- 2.1. **Please note:** all information included in this Soft Market Testing is confidential and only for the recipients' knowledge. No information included in this document or in discussions connected to it may be disclosed to any other party without prior written authorisation.
- 2.2. All responses will be treated confidentially. However, please be aware that we are subject to the disclosure requirements of the FOI Act and that potentially any information we hold is liable to disclosure under that Act. For this reason, we strongly advise that any information you consider to be confidential is labelled as such. In the event that a request is subsequently made for disclosure under FOI the request will be dealt with in accordance with the legislation.

3. Background

3.1. Cambridgeshire is the fastest growing area in the UK, including new towns such as Northstowe, Alconbury and Waterbeach alongside expansions of Cambridge City itself. Therefore, the library network is expanding to meet demand.

3.2. We are looking to understand the market better and create a tender process that will allow us to set up a framework that will encompass future library plans.

3.3. Examples of upcoming works:

Darwin Green Library. 200sqm branch library in Cambridge City with core building delivered by supplier (to cat A). Looking for fitout in 2024

Sackville House/Cambourne Library Expansion – fitout of an increased library space adding 100sqm of public space and reconsidering use of the space (total 300sqm). Looking to fitout towards end of 2024

Huntingdon Library internal modifications primarily ground floor. Design in 2024 for delivery in 24/25 financial year, including external signage.

Whittlesey Library internal modifications including accommodating partnership. Design 2024 for delivery in financial year 25/26

Northstowe Library 1000sqm library due for design and work with architects in 2025 for delivery 2027.

Waterbeach and Alconbury new branch libraries approx. 250sqm due by 2030

3.4. The value of projects can range from:

Small : £10k-£40k usually updating an area within a library

Medium: £40k-£200k kitting out a library with new furniture and redecoration works

Large: £200k+ for full new library design, furniture, signage and decoration

4. Soft Market Test Timetable

4.1. Please read this document and if you feel that your organisation is able to contribute to this exercise, please complete the questionnaire at the end of this document and return, via email by 30th November 2023 to:

Andrew.Stoter@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

4.2. Potential responders will not be prejudiced in any future procurement processes by either responding or not responding to this soft market test exercise.

4.3. We are initially asking for you to fill out the questionnaire but may also reach out and consider some face-to-face supplier days to help understand the feedback

further. We would hope to be starting a procurement pathway before the end of the year.

Section 2: Identification of Requirement

5. Current Situation

- 5.1. We have been treating each development as an individual project, using past templates for procurement to deliver a design and work with the community. Time frames have often been short due to uncertainty over building handover and pressures from the community for a quick turnaround.
- 5.2. While we are happy with the outcomes the process has not always felt like it gave us enough scope to challenge and refine designs or work to understand what is possible and engaging to maximise potential.
- 5.3. We hope to be able to stretch what can be done with buildings and learn from previous works. Particular trends we want to embrace are:
 - Change in working habits to create suitable out of office working spaces.
 - The challenge of accommodating that vs a library offer that is increasingly used by children and young families.
 - Adapting the space as a community asset to accommodate partners, events and activities without completely losing the core library offer.
 - Signage that is innovative, contemporary and aesthetics aligned to functionality for multiple customer use.

6. Our Requirements

- 6.1. We are looking for a way to procure the services we need as part of designing and fitting out a modern library. We want to allow for more engagement around our needs and outcomes of the design element, type of furniture and signage. Our current thought is to appoint bidder(s) to a framework which will cover multiple projects over a number of years. This could be bidders of multiple disciplines or single discipline bidders (i.e. separating out fit out, design and signage/graphics). Lots could then be called off for design, furniture, or wayfinding services (and/or a combination) to suit project identified or by cost of the project.
- 6.2. We are looking for a solution that will offer:
 - Library design that incorporates elements of feedback and workshopping with both staff and identified partners, such as members of the public or other council services.
 - Library furniture that can be flexible, hard wearing and aesthetically pleasing.
 - Wayfinding and graphics that both instruct and enhance the space.

- Consideration for use by a diverse range of the public, including but not limited to: Dementia Friendly, considerations for neurodiverse users and compliance with the Equalities Act.

7. Background – Social Value

- 7.1. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires public authorities to have regard to economic, social and environmental wellbeing in connection with public service contracts; and for connected purposes.
- 7.2. CCC now look to include social value as part of all its procurement opportunities which forms part of the overall Award criteria where appropriate.
- 7.3. Please note that any social value commitments should be appropriate to the local area. For CCC, 'local' is defined as being within the Cambridgeshire boundary area.
- 7.4. CCC will actively seek bidders who share their commitment to proactively deliver additional social value within Cambridgeshire outside of any core requirements within the specification.
- 7.5. Following the publication of the 2022 National Targets, Outcomes, and Measures (TOMs), the Council, working with the Social Value Portal developed a CCC specific set of TOMs.
- 7.6. The Council TOMs can be view here: [Cambridgeshire TOMS](#)
- 7.7. Please refer to and for more information about social please click on the link below: [Social Value Portal](#).