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# Soft Market Testing

**For**

**Floating support solution**

**Ref: KL291024**

# Section 1: Introduction

## General Requirements

The purpose of this document is to briefly explain to suppliers the business and technical requirements along with the expected scope of the West Northamptonshire Council’s Floating Support Solution, in order that suppliers can explain the relevance of products, services and their experience to the requirements.

**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. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is issuing this request for **information only**. Any supplier responding to WNC is doing so to support market research only and to help make any potential procurement process more focused and efficient.

## Confidentiality and Freedom of Information (FOI)

Please note: all information included in this Soft Market Test is confidential and only for the recipients’ knowledge. No information is for disclosure from either this document or discussions by any responders to any other party without prior written authorisation.

Responses are treated with confidentially by WNC. 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 to be labelled as such. If a request is subsequently made for disclosure under FOI, the request will be dealt with in accordance with the legislation.

## Background

West Northamptonshire is a rural and urban area with a population of around 425,700 and an area of around 531.79 sq. mil, located in the East Midlands.

Formed in 2021 WNC is a Unitary Authority responsible for half of the historic Northamptonshire and covers the former authority areas and responsibilities of Daventry District Council, South Northamptonshire Council, Northampton Borough Council, as well as the responsibilities of Northamptonshire County Council.

Its functions include Revenues & Benefits, Waste Collection, Regeneration, Museums, Planning, Children and Adults Social Services, Housing, Libraries and Education to name a few.

WNC focuses on the following 6 priorities to make West Northants a place to thrive:

* + - Green and Clean
    - Improved Life Chances
    - Connected Communities
    - Thriving Villages and Towns
    - Economic Development
    - Robust Resource Management

Details of the above can be found in our [Corporate Plan.](https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/corporate-plan)

## Soft Market Test Timetable

Please read this document and if you feel that your organisation can contribute to this exercise, please complete the questionnaire at the end of this document and return, via email to [procurement@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@westnorthants.gov.uk?subject=Housing%20Management%20Solution%20-%20SMT) **by 17.00 on Tuesday 12th of November 2024.**

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

WNC may contact organisations who have responded to this document to ask for further information at their own discretion.

# Section 2: Identification of Requirement

## Current Situation

WNC invites suitable providers to express an interest in a potential opportunity for a 9-month pilot Floating Support Service. The proposed aims for providing Floating Support are to support and proactively assist households residing in Temporary Accommodation (TA) to move out of TA and secure longer term and sustainable Private Rented Sector accommodation.

With the increasing demand and costs of TA for the Council and the challenges in accessing the private rental market in West Northants, often households remain in TA for longer than necessary with limited move-on opportunities to their own tenancy.

The Council has introduced a Landlords’ Incentive Scheme to encourage reputable private landlords with good quality accommodation to rent to homeless families but there is a need for more landlords and more accommodation.

## Our Requirements

We are looking for input from the market that will help us to develop a service that will provide:

* + - A service that matches WNC’s economic, environmental, and social values
    - Is fit for purpose for a modern, forward-thinking organisation
    - Value for money for the taxpayers

Your solution should support WNC in effectively and efficiently delivering the following:

* + - Support and proactively work with households referred by WNC to the service to secure a 12-month private rented tenancy
    - Support households whom have secured a tenancy for an additional 12 months after the tenancy start date
    - Support households to access and maintain appropriate and secure employment and / or maximise income
    - Help households with any support needs, including mental health, substance misuse etc. to manage their needs by engaging and working with support providers to overcome the barrier to accessing accommodation and employment
    - Work with the Council on promoting initiatives for landlords
    - Work with the Council’s operational Housing Solutions Team to ensure that any services provided complement existing support and activity

# Section 3: Supporting information

Please note you do not need to resize the table; it will automatically adjust to fit your response.

## Section A: Organisation and Contact Details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Question** | **Response** |
| Name of your organisation |  |
| Registered office (if applicable) |  |
| Trading address (if different from office) |  |
| What if any local connections do you have with the authority? |  |
| Name of person with whom any queries relating to this questionnaire, should be addressed? |  |
| Telephone Number(s) |  |
| Email |  |
| Address if different to above |  |
| Please provide a brief overview of your company and its experience in providing floating support services |  |
| How many years have you been in the market? |  |
| What frameworks are you registered on, if any? |  |
| Can you provide case studies or references from similarly sized organisations? If yes, can you provide examples |  |

## Section B: Qualitative Questions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Question - Costs** |  |
| **1** | What is your pricing model (e.g., mobilisation fee, on-going fee structure, payment by results)? |  |
| **2** | Please provide an estimated implementation cost, and ongoing costs? |  |
| **3** | Please provide a payment schedule (i.e. when invoices would be issued) |  |
|  | **Question – Knowledge of local area and experience** |  |
| **1** | What do you think West Northants key challenges are in relation to Temporary Accommodation and how can your service help? |  |
| **2** | What presence or relevant links do you have in the local area? |  |
|  | **Question – Service model and performance** |  |
| **1** | What is / are your communication method/s with clients? |  |
| **2** | Are there any client groups that you do not work with and how is this decided? |  |
| **3** | How would you ensure that you work with reputable landlords to deliver good quality properties that are affordable to the client group? |  |
| **4** | What are your internal performance monitoring processes and how do you measure success? |  |
|  | **Question – Additional Information** |  |
| **1** | Is there anything else that you would like to add that you believe would benefit the council at this early stage of engagement? |  |