

Invitation to Tender

Development and implementation of a destination website

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1. Introduction

Marketing Cheshire is the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Cheshire whose responsibility is to market and promote the destination as a great place to live, work, invest and visit. We operate several distinctive brands to cover specific markets, from B2B to B2C. Our consumer facing brand Visit Cheshire is the touch point for attracting over 3m visitors annually to the county. We recognise that a strong digital offering is essential to improving on our visitor numbers, and ensuring we have the systems in place that grow with demand and flex with our specific markets. Alongside our visit brand we hold the rights to 'Meet'; a consumer facing brand for conferencing and business tourism. Marketing Cheshire is a Local Visitor Economy Partnership recognised by Visit England, bringing our visitor economy in Cheshire and Warrington together under a shared vision and set of goals.

2. Background

The critical infrastructure that underpins the Visit Cheshire brand is visitcheshire.com our destination website and DCMS (Destination Content Management System) which has been the platform for much of our digital offer since 2018 and is our primary marketing tool for consumer activity. Consumer behaviour and expectations of visitors have changed, as has website functionality, technology and design, particularly in the Destination Management industry where websites are inspirational and visual rather than informational

Our current website is nearing end of life at a time when our marketing tools and systems need to be dynamic, flexible, and adaptive to consumer trends. More significantly given our ambitions to make Cheshire a nationally recognisable destination, the infrastructure that underpins our digital offer should match this ambition.

We are therefore looking to appoint a provider to develop a new visit website and DCMS that underpins our destination led digital offer. The output from this project provides an opportunity for the provider to develop a long-term relationship with Marketing Cheshire and support on additional digital projects around visitcheshire.com and our ancillary brands.

3. Reason for review/current service description

Our approach to marketing the destination is changing. Cheshire is unique in its geographical make-up; 30 minutes away from two major northern cities, sandwiched by National Parks with the Peak District to the east and North Wales and Snowdon to the west. It is a county made up of rural towns and villages with the historic city of Chester as its heart. Our current site positions Chester as the lead destination with eastern towns almost hidden. As Warrington, Macclesfield, Congleton and Crewe develop their visitor offer it's important that our website reflects the county structure with towns like Warrington and Macclesfield as individual destinations, under the Cheshire umbrella. Each destination should be marketable in its own right.

Accessibility and Sustainability are key elements of the growth plan for our visitor economy. Our LVEP status with Visit England requires any new development to incorporate the highest standards of accessibility and consider tools and consumer behaviours around sustainability. We are currently working with bodies such as AccessAble and You Smart Thing, to enhance our offering around sustainability and accessibility.

4. Scope

To develop a new destination website from the ground up as we reshape our offer to consumers and partners with key themes around multiple destinations, accessibility, and sustainability.

- **Inspirational led user experience**
Site and page design that allows for an inspirational led approach to destination marketing, with information and content positioned in a considered way. The general user experience of the website should be clean, engaging and highly visual.
- **Destination led structure**
Site navigation and page structure should reflect the number of different destinations on offer within Cheshire alongside the wide range of activities, attractions, and itineraries.
- **Personalisation**
Tools that allow a level of personalisation for visitors, i.e. itineraries, favourites, routes/ walks and more. Flexibility to develop personalisation features, for instance an account section to save itineraries, tickets or personalisation preferences or information around forthcoming planned trips that enhances the user experience whilst in-destination.
- **Monetisation opportunities**
A range of options for partner promotion or flexibility to integrate advertising and paid opportunities with our partners as part of a partner's portal.
- **Flexible and dynamic content**
Page builder tools that allow us to rapidly create responsive landing pages for campaigns using dynamic content without reliance on the provider.

5. Specification of system requirements

A. Functional and content management orientated requirements.

1. Full access to a CMS system that enables the design and build of thematic campaign landing pages, seasonal event listings, sections with product listings for Accommodation, Events, Things to Do, Food and Drink etc. Page/site builders should allow for testing in a preview mode before publishing.
2. Capability of showing and hosting video content, with easy implementation of video content into landing pages. Dynamic content can be uploaded and organised with an easy-to-use media library for all media across a range of formats.
3. Templated category level page for each town and city displaying latest events, top attractions, latest things to do, etc, with interactive maps for each town and city, detailing key products/businesses - Interactive map functionality should also consider a way of displaying walking, cycle routes and trails. So that they are easy to follow and clearly laid out using mapping functionality.
4. An itinerary builder that consumers can use to build and share their own itineraries. That will show proximities between businesses. Designed in a logical and easy to use format, printable and able to save as part of a personalised user experience.
5. Blog functionality – designed in a clear, logical and inspirational way, able to be filtered by location, and category, and sortable by recent or trending. Ability to pull products and itineraries into blog posts.
6. Improve the partner user experience by allowing partners to add Special Offers or Ads that we can feature on individual business pages but also group into sections or themes. All managed through an online account/dashboard where partners can view, book and schedule special offers and Ads or view analytics and performance.

B. Database

1. Functionality that allows businesses and event organisers to submit their own events or business listing, which can then be managed via a queue before being published.
2. Ability to have one product page with multiple content tabs so that different info can be pulled through about the same business to different thematic pages e.g. Weddings, Travel Trade, Business Tourism etc.
3. A database of products – Accommodation, things to do, food and drink, events that can be used to build campaign pages, thematic landing pages, product lists etc.
4. A product page for each member with bespoke information depending on partner level.
5. The ability to search for products and filter based on location, type, keyword and accessible information if possible (disabled toilets, parking, accessible bedrooms etc..). Ability to search via map

C. Technical

1. A class leading approach to web innovation and development. The site build should take a mobile first approach, not only with responsive design, but also consider Google Lighthouse and Page Speed standards to

provide the best user experience. The site should be fully compliant and offer basic levels of accessibility requirements.

2. Management of all redirects and maintenance of all existing google ranking positions
3. Insights for pages and products such as page views, interactions, referrals etc. Reporting stats and web traffic for database and content pages by use of a dashboard or similar
4. GDPR compliant / Cookies
5. Provide a simple way of transferring data and content from existing site
6. Provide automatic image optimisation on upload with the ability to add enhanced meta data to images and content where possible to assist in SEO and accessibility.
7. The ability to pull through live bookable products using numerous booking engines – OTA's, Web Ticket Manager, TXGB, Digitickets, Beyonk or similar or in the least a book now button.
8. Integration with a range of third-party systems including SnapSea UGC platform, Meta channel feeds and Newsletter sign ups with our chosen mainstream supplier.

Budget and Timescales

We require this work to be completed by the end of December 2024 at the latest. Interim milestones will be agreed with the appointed consultant. Deadline for submissions is stipulated on the first page.

We require a full breakdown of costs detailing developments that are required to meet the brief and additional developments or components that can enhance the final product. The budget for this project is £65,000, whilst we will expect variations as the project develops, we expect bids to be within 10% of the budget value.

6. Anticipated work programme and proposal requirements

The process is set out below, with planning and engagement with the steering group. Design and development, testing and implementation. The key outputs from the programme are:

1. **Planning and engagement**, Scope the full programme of works from design and build through to evaluation and post-completion support. Consider how engagement with the steering group is delivered – which is essential to ensure buy-in for effective decision making. Supporting our comms and engagement with wider stakeholders to ensure the design and development processes has buy-in. All milestones, including deadlines around content provision should be outlined to allow us to correctly plan resource.
2. **Design phase**, set out the full user experience with wireframes and user flows allowing us to commit to a functional structure before development and build. Consider our unique position, where a foundational place brand has not yet been established but is progressing. How are aesthetical changes re-skins achieved at a later date.
3. **Development and Build** Outline the build process with the steering group with regular engagement throughout. For any new functionality developments, we would expect testing with the steering group to validate the build.
4. **Testing and implementation** Specify testing and wider group testing before implementation of the site ensuring there is a structured and agreed approach and how any flaws or risks are addressed. How training with the digital team is delivered before implementation to ensure day to day operations can take place without reliance or impedence. Supporting partner engagement around any new membership portal, through assisting in webinars, training and comms.
5. **Evaluation and Support** How the build and implementation process is evaluated and how any outstanding snags are addressed. Outline the support the digital team have access to in the short term i.e. training or demonstrations where required.

7. Considerations

- Team training: On-hand through the implementation process to support the team and provide training around all aspects of the system to ensure day to day delivery.
- A planned approach to SEO is pivotal in the implementation of the website, the brand currently prides itself of a high page rank, and in many instances a rank #1 for search terms. Additional support would be required ad hoc and it would be desirable to see add-on support packages.
- Warranty and aftersales support are essential in ensuring that the business and the digital team are able to continue day to day operations without impedence.
- Additional support and flexibility around integration of third-party apps or APIs as and when third party suppliers make significant changes.

Proposals should include:

- Introduction (maximum 500 words)
- Detailed approach statement (maximum 1000 words)
- Proposed timetable for production including key milestones.
- Demonstration of experience of providing similar services (maximum 1000 words)
- A video demonstration that shows the functionality of the DCMS (max 5minutes)
- Breakdown of modules and associated costs, outlining the required modules to fit the brief and additional modules that can enhance and extend functionality.
- Financial proposal with daily rates and individual consultant day/time allocations
- Financial proposal that shows recurring costs post-implementation, hosting etc.

Proposals must be in an electronic format (PDF) and emailed to : tenders@cheshireandwarrington.com by the closing date for submissions stipulated on the first page.

Bidders must complete and return the Form of Tender (Appendix 1). All prices must be fixed and firm, please include an hourly rate which can be used for any subsequent contract variation. They should be quoted in pounds sterling and exclusive of VAT. Tenders should detail any ancillary costs and expenses included in the price.

Payments for services covered by this invitation to tender will be on submission of appropriate invoices, subject to Marketing Cheshire's standard payment terms. Invoicing arrangements will be agreed with the successful provider following the award of the contract.

8. Scoring criteria and weighting

Each proposal will be scored against the following evaluation questions, weighted as follows:

Evaluation question	Score
Proposed methodology and approach to the commission	30
Experience of delivering similar projects	20
Knowledge and expertise of team	20
Price	30
Total	100

Each evaluation question will be scored using the following scoring criteria:

Scoring criteria	Score
Failure to respond or irrelevant information which fails to meet the requirement	0
Response is inadequate, significantly failing to meet the requirements	1
Response is unsatisfactory partially meets the requirement	2
Response is acceptable and meets the minimum requirement	3
Response is good - better than merely acceptable	4
Response is excellent, exceeds the requirement and gives added value	5

9. Contract

A contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose proposal is deemed to be the most economically advantageous subject to agreement on conditions of that contract. Please note that we reserve the right to cancel the tender process at any time prior to a contract being entered into. We are not bound to accept the lowest price, or any tender submitted.

10. Further information, queries and submissions

If you have any specific questions concerning this document or the process for submission of your proposal, then please email through to: tenders@cheshireandwarrington.com no later than 3 working days prior to the submission date. Only questions submitted to this email address will be answered. Queries received after this time frame will not be accepted and will not be responded to. Please ensure that queries are submitted in one single email rather than multiple. If any question or request for clarification is considered to be of material significance, both the question and the response may be issued for review by all potential providers in a suitably anonymous form. All communication received from potential providers will be treated in strict confidence but are subject to this paragraph.

The closing date and time for the receipt of submissions is **15:00 hours (3pm)** on the deadline stipulated on the first page of this document. Late submissions will not be accepted. Submissions will only be accepted if they are returned via email to tenders@cheshireandwarrington.com stating in the email subject which tender the submission relates to. Submissions sent by other means may not be accepted at the discretion of Marketing Cheshire.

11. Tender Propriety

10.1 Instructions to tenderers

Bidders:

- Shall either destroy or return all documentation related to the tender process if Marketing Cheshire so directs
- Shall ensure that tenders are both technically and arithmetically correct. Should Marketing Cheshire discover any arithmetical errors in the bidder's tender prices then these shall be pointed out to the bidder who shall immediately correct the errors or they shall be asked to withdraw its tender or hold the prices submitted, at the discretion of Marketing Cheshire
- Shall not alter the ITT documents. Tender proposals will be deemed to comply entirely with the terms stated therein unless the bidder states otherwise in writing. If any alteration is made or if these instructions are not fully complied with, the tender proposal may be rejected
- Will be deemed to have satisfied themselves as to the sufficiency of their tender proposal and to have included in it all costs which may be incurred in the delivery of the services. They shall also be responsible for satisfying themselves as to the accuracy of all information associated with the contract and that all eventualities have been included

The contract will be entered into on the basis of the total tender package (inclusive of VAT) which will be included as part of the Contract Documents including any amounts or additions made and agreed during the tender proposal assessment period. Marketing Cheshire reserves the right not to contract or contract only in part with any bidder.

The information supplied within this ITT and accompanying documents reflects Marketing Cheshire's current view of the services required. Whilst the information in this ITT has been prepared in good faith, it does not purport to be comprehensive or to have been independently verified. This ITT is issued on the basis that:

- Marketing Cheshire does not accept any liability, responsibility or duty of care to any tenderer for the adequacy, accuracy or completeness of this ITT or for anything said or done in relation to the procurement to which this ITT relates.
- Marketing Cheshire does not make any (express or implied) representation or warranty either about the information contained in this ITT or on which it is based, or about any written or oral information that may be made available to any bidder.
- Nothing contained in this ITT constitutes an inducement or incentive in any way to persuade an interested person to pursue its interest, submit a tender proposal or enter into any contract.
- Neither this ITT nor any information supplied by Marketing Cheshire should be relied on as a promise or representation as to its future requirements.
- This ITT is neither an offer capable of acceptance nor is it intended to create a binding contract nor is it capable of creating such a contract by any subsequent actions

Marketing Cheshire reserves the right to suspend, cancel or withdraw the tender process at any time and will not be responsible for any costs incurred to potential suppliers.

Terms and conditions of tender submissions

Please see below for the terms and conditions of this tender. Through submitting a bid on this tender, you are committing to meet and abide by these terms and conditions:

11.1 Confidentiality and Disclaimer

This ITT is not an offer capable of acceptance but represents a definition of specific legal service requirements and an invitation to submit a response addressing such requirements.

Neither the issue of the ITT to you, your preparation and submission of a tender, or the subsequent receipt and evaluation of your tender by Marketing Cheshire commits Marketing Cheshire to award a contract to you or any other bidder, even if all requirements stated in the ITT are met. Marketing Cheshire is not responsible directly or indirectly for any costs incurred by your firm in responding to this ITT and participating in Marketing Cheshire's procurement process.

All firms shall keep strictly confidential any and all information contained in this ITT, and other information or documents made available to it by or on behalf of Marketing Cheshire in connection with this ITT. The firms shall not disclose, nor allow any such information to be disclosed. Submission of a formal response to this ITT will confirm your agreement to observe these confidentiality requirements.

Contact by the firms with Marketing Cheshire during the bidding process should only be via the contact stated within this ITT. Respondents shall not offer or give any consideration of any kind to any employee or representative of Marketing Cheshire as an inducement or reward for doing, or refraining from doing, any act in relation to the obtaining or execution of this or any other contract with Marketing Cheshire.

6.2 Material Misrepresentation

Marketing Cheshire shall rely on the information provided by the bidder in relation to its offer. In providing the services as specified in the Invitation to Tender documents the successful bidder/tenderer shall comply with the contents of its offer as failure in this respect may constitute a material breach of contract.

6.3 Collusive Bidding

Collusive bidding is unacceptable to Marketing Cheshire. Any tenderer that is caught by Marketing Cheshire to be circumventing rules or the law during this tender process will automatically be disqualified from the tender process.

This applies to any bidder who: **a)** Fixes or adjusts the amount of his bid by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person, or **b)** Communicates to any person other than Marketing Cheshire the amount or approximate amount of his proposal (except where such disclosure is made in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the tender for instance) or, **c)** Enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other person* that he shall refrain from bidding or as to the amount of any bid to be submitted, or **d)** Offers or agrees to pay or give, or does pay or gives any sum of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any person for doing or having done, or causing or having caused to be done in relation to any Offer or proposed Offer for the Services or any act or omission will be disqualified (without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to Marketing Cheshire and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a bidder may attract)

*NB Sub-contracting is permissible where the bidder believes that this will enhance their proposal, however this must be clearly stated.

6.4 Bribery

Bribery means any offence under the Bribery Act 2010 or related Laws creating offences in relation to offering, promising or giving a bribe or requesting, agreeing to receive or receiving a bribe

The Contractor agrees with the Client that this Contract will operate on the basis of zero tolerance being shown towards any Fraud and/or Bribery. The Contractor shall take all reasonable steps, in accordance with Good Industry Practice, to prevent Fraud and Bribery by Staff and the Contractor (including its shareholders, members, directors) in connection with the receipt of monies from the Client and with the operation of this Contract.

6.5 TUPE

The following provisions regarding TUPE are extremely important. Please ensure that you read them carefully. Marketing Cheshire expects that TUPE will not apply to this contract. In cases of TUPE Tenderers are advised to seek independent professional advice on the effect of TUPE. Tenderers must be prepared to accept all liabilities which may arise as a consequence of the application of TUPE, should it apply. Marketing Cheshire takes no liability in regard to inaccuracy of TUPE information provided in this tender. When submitting a Tender, Tenderers are required to include all costs relating to TUPE in their submission.

6.6 Data Protection Act Compliance

The successful bidder must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and all applicable law concerning the processing of personal data and privacy. Full contract terms can be found within the terms and conditions (see Appendix 5). Marketing Cheshire privacy notice can be found at: <https://cheshireandwarrington.com/privacy-policy/>

6.7 Social Value

Marketing Cheshire's vision to be the healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive, and growing economy in the UK, closely aligns to the Government's social value priorities. Under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 Marketing Cheshire must consider: **a)** how what is being procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area where it exercises its functions, and **b)** how, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement.

In addition, the National Procurement Policy Statement ([National Procurement Policy Statement.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)) sets out the following national priorities that should be considered alongside individual local priorities:

- creating new businesses, new jobs and new skills.
- tackling climate change and reducing waste, and
- improving supplier diversity, innovation and resilience.

All successful suppliers must be willing to work closely with Marketing Cheshire throughout the contract duration to assist them in achieving both their vision and their social value obligations.

APPENDIX 1

Form of tender to be completed and returned

Declaration by Tenderer

ITT Title: Development and implementation of a destination website.

1. The tenderer named below certifies that they are the person duly authorised to sign tenders for and on behalf of the named company stipulated below 'tenderer', and having read the documents, offer to supply the goods, services or works:
 - a. as set out in the specification and accompanying tender documents, samples and/or drawings
 - b. under the terms and conditions indicated
 - c. at the price (or prices) specified in the attached tender documentation
2. It is agreed that any or other terms and conditions of contract or any caveats, assumptions, reservations or exclusions that may be printed on correspondence emanating from the tender, or any Contract resulting from this tender, shall not be applicable to this tender or agreement.
3. I certify that this is a bona fide tender and that I have not fixed or adjusted the amount of the tender by, or under, or in accordance with any agreement with any other person. I have not done, and undertake that I will not do at any time before the hour and date specified for the return of the tender, any of the following acts:
 - Communicate to a person other than Marketing Cheshire, the amount or approximate amount of the proposed tender, except where the disclosure, in confidence, of the approximate amount of the tender was necessary to obtain insurance premium quotations required for the preparation of the tender
 - Enter into an agreement or arrangement with any other person that he/she will refrain from tendering or to the amount of any tender to be submitted
 - Offer, or pay, or give, or agree to pay any sum of money or valuable consideration, directly or indirectly to any person for doing, or having done, or causing to be done in relation to any tender or proposed tender, for the said work, any act or thing of the sort described above
4. I further certify that the principles described in paragraph 3 have been, or will be, brought to the attention of all subcontractors, suppliers and associated companies providing services or materials connected with the tender and any contract entered into with the subcontractors, suppliers or associated companies will be made on the basis of the compliance with the above principles by all parties.
5. I understand that Marketing Cheshire reserves the right, unless the tenderer stipulates to the contrary in the tender, to accept such portion thereof as Marketing Cheshire may decide. Marketing Cheshire is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender.
6. I have obeyed the rules regarding confidentiality of tenders and will continue to do so as long as they apply.
7. I can confirm that I accept that any breach of any of the conditions could lead to any tender being rejected or to the rescission of the Contract by Marketing Cheshire.

Tenderer Company Name

Tenderer Authorised Signature

Date

Signatory Name

Signatory Job Title

Telephone Number

E-mail address

Please ensure that the form is completed and signed before being returned with any other supporting documentation requested, by the due date and time.

APPENDIX 2

Payment Schedule

1st payment on commencement of delivery of brief 50% of commission value

2nd payment on satisfactory completion of brief 50% of commission value.

The total sum payable shall not exceed £71,500 ex VAT