

South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan Brief for Consultants

Introduction

South Woodham Ferrers Town Council is looking to appoint a suitably qualified consultant(s) with knowledge, skills and experience in neighbourhood planning to help in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.

We are just starting on the journey of producing a Neighbourhood Plan and this a great opportunity for the appointed consultant(s) to be involved through the life of this project from the inception stage all the way through to adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan. We are looking for the consultant to be an integral part of our team.

We are at an early stage of producing a Neighbourhood Plan, but the Neighbourhood Plan area has been designated as the whole of our Town Council area.

The Town Council is keen to build upon an earlier planning document "A Plan for South Woodham Ferrers" and has established a Neighbourhood Plan Committee under the leadership of Councillor Donna Eley.

However, we need help and support to ensure that we are on the right track, avoid common pitfalls and produce a Neighbourhood Plan that we can be proud of.

Context

South Woodham Ferrers is a new town built in the 1970/80s. It is the second largest settlement after Chelmsford in Chelmsford City Council's administrative area. Its town centre performs an important role and would need improvement and enhancement in terms of its retail, cultural and leisure offer. The town itself has many other attributes including primary schools and a secondary school, various businesses, key transport links including a railway station. South Woodham Ferrers incorporates the River Crouch and associated creeks. It is home to approximately 16,500 residents.

Chelmsford City Council has recently submitted a new Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate. In that emerging Local Plan, land north of South Woodham Ferrers is proposed as one of a number of strategic growth areas providing new housing and employment development together with associated infrastructure improvements. Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan recognises it cannot change the quantum of development or the extent of the identified site, it would like to help shape the concept including building style, infrastructure and open spaces.

We have a constructive relationship with the local planning authority.

Reasons for undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan

We would like to shape the type and quality of development in the strategic growth area to ensure that it integrates with the existing town and creates a sustainable community. We are therefore looking for urban design expertise.

We would like to ensure that monies gained from the Community Infrastructure Levy are utilised well and wisely. We are therefore looking for priorities to be set.

The existing town with particular attention to the centre has been identified as needing enhancement. We are therefore looking for retail knowledge and understanding, and town centre expertise including design and public realm expertise.

We are a riverside town that has potential both in terms of its use and development and for its natural environment. We are looking for expertise that will help realise this.

Scope of work

The Town Council is seeking support on:

- Project management and leadership of the production of the Neighbourhood Plan including close liaison and support to the Chair and attendance at Committee meetings as necessary. Consultants will be required to provide a named person to act as project manager who will lead and be the main point of contact;
- Community engagement including the compilation, distribution, collection and analysis of questionnaires/surveys for residents and businesses and events;

- Development of a vision with supportive objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Development and production of a proportionate evidence base;
- Production of policies for the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Production of the pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan;
- General advice on the pre-submission stage;
- Assistance with the analysis of any pre-submission representations received;
- Finalisation of a submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Production of supporting documents for Neighbourhood Plan submission including the Basic Conditions Statement and Consultation Statement
- Advice on meeting current Obligations including Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulation Assessment
- Advice and support on applying for grants and funding and completing associated application forms as required

Submission of bids

Written bids should be addressed to Town Clerk Karen Hawkes and be received by 12pm on Friday 21st September 2018.

Bids should include the following information:

1. An outline of your suitability for the commission and other Neighbourhood Plans worked on;
2. An explanation of your approach to delivering each aspect of the scope of work including examples and demonstration of relevant experience in those areas or identification of any areas where you would not wish to assist;
3. A programme of work including indicative timescales and the number of meetings assumed for each phase;
4. The person or persons carrying out the work and their CVs including details of other Neighbourhood Plans worked on;
5. A fixed price for the project based on the elements stated in the statement of works;
6. Additional fixed rates costs for any further statement of works; based on items you believe are necessary to complete a valid Neighbourhood Plan;
7. Day rates for additional works detailed by job role estimated cost for contingencies that may arise;
8. Confirmation that no conflicts of interest exist or declaration of any actual or potential conflicts of interest;

9. Confirmation of levels of professional indemnity insurance, employer's and public liability insurance;
10. Names of two referees from other Neighbourhood Plans you are or have worked on.

The bids will be assessed using the following criteria:

- A. Approach to the production of the NP
- B. Skills and experience
- C. Track record of working on similar NPs
- D. Quality of submission
- E. Cost and value for money

In addition, the Town Council may invite consultants for interviews to help with the appointment decision. Any interviews will be scheduled for week commencing 2nd October 2018.

The Town Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender nor does it undertake to make an appointment from this exercise.

The Town Council is open to considering alternative ways of achieving its aims and objectives, so you are welcome to include this in your proposal if you consider it relevant.

For further information or any queries please contact Town Clerk Karen Hawkes on 01245 429441.