TENDER SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

**Specialist Retail Business Support Adviser**

**Tender for the supply of specialist advice services for Retail sector businesses across West Lindsey**

Date: September 2020

East Midlands Business Ltd

Registered Office:

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LE19 1RJ

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# Introduction

* 1. East Midlands Business Ltd (EMB) is a private company which provides a range of business consultancy and programme management services.
  2. EMB is seeking to appoint a sector specialist adviser to deliver specialist business advice to Retail sector businesses in West Lindsey.

# Background

* 1. EMB is procuring a Specialist Retail Business Support Adviser on behalf of West Lindsey District Council.
  2. West Lindsey District Council is to receive a share of the Governments £50m Re-opening the High Street Safely Fund, which has been made available to support Local Authorities to put in place measures that deliver a safe environment for businesses and consumers in the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic.
  3. Significant work has already been undertaken by West Lindsey District Council to create Covid-19 secure environments in its retail areas, including enhanced signage, flyers, posters, shop window stickers, floor stickers, additional cleaning, and hand sanitiser stations. The regular market has been resigned to allow for social distancing and the Council’s Environment Protection Team have offered support and a virtual toolkit to support businesses to re-open safely. More widely public facing campaigns, including new digital imaging, have been commissioned in order to re-engage customers with places, and to ensure that post lockdown, the District’s retail spaces are somewhere that consumers feel safe to return to.
  4. Through the Action Plan, West Lindsey District Council have identified the following key retail areas as the focus for the delivery of additional advice and support:

# Gainsborough Market Place and Town Centre

# Caistor Market Place

# Market Rasen Market Place

# Nettleham

# Saxilby

# Cherry Willingham

# Welton

# Scotter

* 1. The Retail Business Support Adviser role is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and provides support to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in the retail sector across West Lindsey.

# Tender Specification

* 1. EMB is seeking to appoint a specialist Retail Business Support Adviser who can deliver specialist advice to Retail sector SMEs operating across West Lindsey.
  2. The successful contractor will proactively engage Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) retail businesses in West Lindsey district, to understand their challenges and opportunities and provide high quality business advice and effective signposting to support the business through the post-COVID-19 reopening phase.
  3. The following key retail areas have been identified by West Lindsey District Council as the focus for the delivery of the advice and support:
* Gainsborough Market Place and Town Centre
* Caistor Market Place
* Market Rasen Market Place
* Nettleham
* Saxilby
* Cherry Willingham
* Welton
* Scotter
  1. The Retail Business Support Adviser will:
     1. Proactively identify and engage with at least 30 retail businesses, building effective working relationships and proactively working with clients to support their business post lockdown.
     2. Examine in detail the elements and structure of the client business in order to diagnose barriers to and opportunities to maximise their sustainability.
     3. Accurately identify client support and development needs, identifying support required to improve their operations and support long term sustainability.
     4. Effectively develop and support a caseload of SMEs, focusing on businesses that are ineligible for existing targeted support programmes, by means of using diagnostic tools, business planning (including generic business support), financial / management accounting and the use of specialist support.
     5. Attend and present at relevant virtual events, meetings, networking events, and exhibitions to promote the programme and provide support to companies attending. Deliver workshops, individual and group training sessions, where appropriate, and identify as needed by the retail business community.
     6. Prioritise activity and agree an Action Plan with the client to support the sustainability of the business.
     7. Refer to appropriate business support provision, including the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub, where necessary.
     8. Prepare high quality management information reports to a variety of audiences including the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Council’s Management Team on the performance of the programme and its activities.
     9. Produce case studies working with the Communications Team to support the ongoing promotion of the programme and its benefits to the business community.
  2. The successful contractor will deliver advice and support to eligible SMEs, ensuring that all required forms evidencing the support took place are completed and signed by the client.

# The Retail Business Support Adviser will be invited to take part in meetings of the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub Advisers to ensure that the post is connected to the business support network in Lincolnshire.

* 1. West Lindsey District Council will provide on-the-ground contact to the Retail Business Support Adviser, as well as day-to-day support to facilitate the delivery of the contract objectives.

* 1. The Retail Business Support Adviser will issue an invoice to EMB on a monthly basis for all work completed in any given month. This invoice should be accompanied by a summary of activities delivered during the month, along with any supporting evidence and paperwork.
  2. All specialist advice services must be delivered under the West Lindsey District Council brand. The supplier’s own brand should not be used when delivering services under this contract. The successful supplier will be asked to comply with some simple brand guidelines.

# Knowledge, Skills & Experience

* 1. Suppliers are required to demonstrate that they have the following knowledge, skills and experience relevant to the role:
     1. Extensive knowledge and experience of working with retail sector businesses.
     2. Knowledge of all aspects of running a business, including business development and growth, with the ability to identify and solve business issues.
     3. Extensive experience of working in a private sector environment to ensure credibility with clients.
     4. An understanding of the challenges, needs, and issues experienced by small and medium sized businesses, and the support required to overcome these challenges – both pre and post COVID-19.
     5. Knowledge and awareness of Government organisations, national business support organisations and initiatives, and policy and funding initiatives. An up-to-date knowledge of sources of finance available to small businesses is desirable.
     6. The ability to quickly interpret complicated Government funding programmes and present them to businesses in a simple way.
     7. Knowledge of local business support provision, including programmes, services and networks.
     8. Knowledge of sector specific trade support provision, including services and networks.
     9. An understanding of the skills / marketing challenges, needs and issues within small and medium sized businesses.
     10. Experience both of working as part of a team in a multi-project environment, as well as on a one-to-one basis with SMEs and carrying out in-depth diagnostic and training needs analysis.
     11. Familiarity with delivering complex publicly funded projects and associated reporting and propriety requirements
     12. Awareness of the business mix, growth sectors and profile in Greater Lincolnshire
     13. Awareness of legislation regarding the collection of personal data and financial probity.
     14. Awareness of COVID-19 Secure measures for the retail sector.
     15. Confidentiality – protection of brand reputation.
  2. Suppliers are required to demonstrate experience of using creative and innovative interpretation and problem solving skills in a number of diverse areas, including:
     1. Delivering an effective service in a rapidly changing external environment.
     2. Responding to change quickly and thinking outside the box on issues that have not been encountered before because of coronavirus.
     3. Developing innovative solutions to problems.
     4. Writing potentially complex reports and action plans.
     5. Assessing the options available and making recommendations based on the information and evidence available.
     6. Being flexible in their approach and thinking on their feet whilst still being mindful of the constraints faced by retail sector businesses.
     7. Thinking innovatively to help businesses safeguard jobs after COVID.
  3. The supplier may be required to regularly attend on-site meetings with retail businesses across West Lindsey, subject to COVID-19 secure measures being in place. If face-to-face meetings are not possible due to COVID-19, the supplier is required to demonstrate methods of innovative virtual delivery.

The supplier will have access to and deal with complex information which may be of a sensitive nature and will require a high level of confidentiality at all times.

# Duration of Contract

* 1. The contract is planned to run for an initial 6 month period from November 2020 until April 2021. The contract may be subject to a further extension, dependent upon additional funding being allocated by West Lindsey District Council.

# Requirements

* 1. EMB is inviting tenders from suitably qualified suppliers for the provision of sector specialist business advice services. Suppliers must be able to demonstrate a proven track record in delivering similar services to retail sector businesses.
  2. Suppliers must be able to deliver throughout the District of West Lindsey.
  3. Suppliers should possess and maintain public and professional indemnity insurance and employer’s liability insurance (if applicable). Evidence of current insurance policies and the limits of these policies must be provided as part of your tender submission.
  4. The above specification points are not an exhaustive list. The successful tenderer may therefore be requested to provide additional services. Such services will be agreed between the supplier and EMB.

# Payment

* 1. The maximum day rate payable is £300 + VAT. Travel and subsistence expenses will be paid at the HMRC agreed rate of £0.45 per mile to a maximum of £50 per day.

# The total budget available for the 6 month contract period is £18,900.

# Suppliers should provide details of their proposed day rate when submitting the tender response.

* 1. The Retail Business Support Adviser will issue an invoice to EMB on a monthly basis for all work completed in any given month. This invoice should be accompanied by a summary of activities delivered during the month, along with any supporting evidence and paperwork.
  2. EMB’s normal payment terms for approved invoices is 30 days.

# Content of Tender Submission

* 1. A template for your response is attached at Appendix A. Potential suppliers are asked to provide the following within their submission:
* Your understanding of the requirements;
* The proposed methodology that you will use to deliver the specialist support and the expected outcomes from that support;
* Details of the key personnel who will be responsible for managing and undertaking the work, including their experience and professional qualifications;
* Copies of full accounts for the last two years;
* Evidence of current insurance policies and value of indemnity (as a minimum this should include public and professional indemnity and employers liability if applicable);
* Evidence of previous work relevant to this contract (including client details, approximate scale of work, and dates / confirmation of delivery);
* Names and contact details of two referees to whom you have provided a similar service in the last three years.
* Evidence of any membership of professional bodies that are relevant to this contract.

7.2 Potential suppliers should note that answering ‘No’ to questions in sections 4-7 inclusively of the template will not preclude your bid from being considered. These are standard questions that we include in all our procurement exercises.

* 1. If successful, you will be required to supply copies of any certificates for any standards identified in Sections 4 – 7 of the Response Template.

# Evaluation of Tenders

* 1. Tenders will be evaluated by an Evaluation Panel, which will determine which of the submissions provides EMB with the most confidence that those suppliers have the relevant experience, personnel and capability to meet the requirement’s objectives.
  2. Scores will be agreed for each response in line with the Scoring Methodology and criteria set out below:

| *Criteria:* | *Assessment / Score:* | *Weighting:* | *Total possible:* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Tenderers financial stability | Pass / Fail |  |  |
| Understanding of the requirement | 0(unacceptable)-4 (excellent) | 5 | 20 |
| Methodology | 0(unacceptable)-4 (excellent) | 5 | 20 |
| Previous experience | 0(unacceptable)-4 (excellent) | 5 | 20 |
| Personnel | 0(unacceptable)-4 (excellent) | 5 | 20 |
| Total score available | | | 80 |

* 1. Scores will be given based on the following assessment of responses:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Score:** | **Assessment:** | **Description of assessment:** |
| 0 | Unacceptable | Nil or inadequate response. Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement. |
| 1 | Poor | Response is partially relevant and poor. The response addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient/limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled. |
| 2 | Acceptable | Response is relevant and acceptable. The response addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details on how the requirement will be fulfilled in certain areas. |
| 3 | Good | Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled. |
| 4 | Excellent | Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full. |

# Instruction to Tenderers

* 1. Please submit your full tender submission by 12 noon on 12th October 2020 to: [**tenders@embltd.co.uk**](mailto:tenders@embltd.co.uk)
  2. Submissions should be titled “**Tender for Retail Business Support Advice Services**”.
  3. Subject to the number of tenders received, tenderers may be invited to give a virtual online presentation which will form part of the final evaluation of the tenders. Tenderers are therefore requested to reserve 19th October 2020 and will be notified should they be required to attend and present.
  4. Tenderers should note that in the event that a bid is considered to be fundamentally unacceptable on a key issue, regardless of its other merits, that bid may be rejected.
  5. Tenders submitted after the stipulated time and date advised will be rejected.
  6. If you require further information concerning the tender process, or the nature of the proposed contract, in the first instance please contact [tenders@embltd.co.uk](mailto:tenders@embltd.co.uk) with the subject line “*Tender for Retail Business Support Advice Services*”. No questions will be answered that provide a competitive advantage to any party tendering.
  7. Should questions arise during the tendering period, which in our judgment are of material significance, we will post additional information in the Business Lincolnshire section on [www.emb-group.co.uk](http://www.emb-group.co.uk)/east-midlands-business

to explain the nature of the question, and our formal reply. All tenderers should then take that reply into consideration when preparing their own bids, and we will evaluate bids on the assumption that they have done so.

# Conditions of Tender

* 1. Tenderers may contact EMB using the e-mail address [tenders@embltd.co.uk](mailto:tenders@embltd.co.uk) to obtain any further information about the requirements of the contract or the tendering procedures if these are not evident or clear from the documents supplied to tenderers.
  2. For the avoidance of doubt, the tender specification document shall include all requirements explicit or implied within the invitation to tender.
  3. EMB reserves the right to withdraw this tender document and all funding contained within it without notice.
  4. No tender will be considered for acceptance if the tenderer has indulged or attempted to indulge in any corrupt practice or canvassed the tender with an officer of EMB. If a tenderer has indulged or attempted to indulge in such practices and the tender is accepted, then grounds shall exist for the termination of the contract and the claiming of damages from the successful tenderers.
  5. It is unlikely that any tender will be accepted which (a) is incomplete or inaccurately or inadequately completed or which purports to impose conditions other than those provided in the contract documents and (b) is delivered out of time or in a manner other than specified in the specification.

# Collusive Tendering

* 1. In submitting a tender against this contract, the tenderer confirms that he has not fixed or adjusted the amount of the tender by or under or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person.
  2. The tenderer also certifies that at no time, before or following the submission of the tender, has the tenderer carried out any of the following acts:

1. communicating to a person other than the person calling for the tenders the amount or approximate amount of the proposed tender, except where such disclosure is required for the purpose of obtaining insurance;
2. entering into any agreement or arrangement with any person that he shall refrain from tendering or as to the amount of any tender to be submitted;
3. offering or paying or giving or agreeing to give any sum of money 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 other tender or proposed tender for the said work any act or thing of the sort described above. The context of this clause the word ‘person’ includes any persons and/or any body or association, corporate or unincorporated; and ‘any agreement or arrangement’ includes any such transaction, formal or informal, and whether legally binding or not.

# Timetable for Submission

* 1. The procurement timetable is as follows:

| **Date** | **Activity** |
| --- | --- |
| 25th September 2020 | Invitation To Tender published |
| 6th October 2020 | Deadline for queries |
| 12 noon, 12th October 2020 | Tender submission deadline |
| 14th/15th October 2020 | Panel Tender scoring and review |
| 19th October 2020 | Tender presentation meetings (if applicable) |
| 19th October 2020 | Decision on selected supplier(s) and notification to unsuccessful bidders |
| 2nd November 2020 | Contract commencement |

* 1. Bidders should note that although the submission date is fixed, the remainder of this timetable may be subject to change.

# Appendix A: Template for Response

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section 1** | **Applicant information** | |
| **Question number** | **Question** | **Response** |
| 1.1(a) | Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information |  |
| 1.1(b) – (i) | Registered office address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(b) – (ii) | Registered website address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(c) | Trading status   1. public limited company 2. limited company 3. limited liability partnership 4. other partnership 5. sole trader 6. third sector 7. other (please specify your trading status) |  |
| 1.1(d) | Date of registration in country of origin |  |
| 1.1(e) | Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(h) | Registered VAT number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(i) | Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)[[1]](#footnote-1)? | **YES**  **NO** |
| 1.1(j) | Details of immediate parent company (if applicable):  - Full name of the immediate parent company  - Registered office address  - Registration number  - Head office DUNS number  - Head office VAT number  (Please enter N/A if not applicable) |  |
| 1.1(k) | Details of ultimate parent company (if applicable):  - Full name of the ultimate parent company  - Registered office address  - Registration number  - Head office DUNS number  - Head office VAT number  (Please enter N/A if not applicable) |  |
| 1.1(l) | Would the parent company be willing to provide a guarantee if necessary? | **YES**  **NO** |

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| **Section 2** | **Previous experience and contract examples** |
| **2.1** | Please provide details of three different instances where you have provided similar support to that outlined in the specification during the past three years.  The named customer contact should be willing to provide written evidence to confirm the accuracy of the information provided below which we reserve the right to verify. |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Instance 1** | **Instance 2** | **Instance 3** |
| Name of customer organisation |  |  |  |
| Contact person in the organisation |  |  |  |
| Position in the organisation |  |  |  |
| E-mail address |  |  |  |
| Description of support and the impact it had. |  |  |  |
| Support start date |  |  |  |
| Support completion date |  |  |  |

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| **2.2** | If you cannot provide at least one example for question 2.1, in no more than 500 words please provide an explanation for this, e.g. your organisation is a new start-up |
| **Response:** |  |

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| **Section 3** | **Financial and Economic Standing**  Please indicate which of the following you have provided to demonstrate your economic/financial standing: | |
| **3.1** | 1. Copies of your full accounts for the last two years | **YES**  **NO** |
| 1. A statement of the turnover, Profit and Loss Account/Income Statement, Balance Sheet/Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Cash Flow for the most recent year of trading for this organisation. | **YES**  **NO** |
| 1. A statement of the cash flow forecast for the current year and a bank letter outlining the current cash and credit position. | **YES**  **NO** |

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| **Section 4** | **Quality** | | |
| Is your organisation assessed and certified to a recognised Quality Management Standard? (e.g. ISO 9001) | | **YES** | **NO** |
| **If YES, please attach a copy of your current certificate with your submission and go to Section 5** | | | |
| **If NO, please answer the following questions:** | | **YES** | **NO** |
| Do you have a written Quality Policy? | |  |  |
| Do you have a Quality Manual and/or Quality Procedure? | |  |  |
| Is there a system which ensures control of Documents? | |  |  |
| Is there a system for controlling non-conforming products? | |  |  |
| Do you have a system for traceability and maintain records? | |  |  |
| Do you monitor and audit your suppliers? | |  |  |
| Is there a system for calibration of inspection, measuring and test equipment? | |  |  |
| Do you regularly carry out internal audits of your Quality Management System? | |  |  |
| Do you have a system in place for monitoring/resolving customer complaints? | |  |  |

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| **Section 5** | **Environmental Management** | | |
| Is your organisation assessed and certified to a recognised Environmental Management Standard? (e.g. ISO 14001) | | **YES** | **NO** |
| **If YES, please attach a copy of your current certificate with your submission and go to Section 6** | | | |
| **If NO, please answer the following questions:** | | **YES** | **NO** |
| Do you have a written Environmental Policy? | |  |  |
| Have you identified and assessed the main environmental impacts of your business activities? | |  |  |
| Do you carry out internal environmental audits? | |  |  |
| Have you ever been prosecuted for breaches of environmental legislation? | |  |  |
| Do you segregate/recycle any of your waste? | |  |  |
| Do you have any energy reduction programmes in place? | |  |  |

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| **Section 6** | **Health & Safety** | | |
| Is your organisation assessed and certified to a recognised Health & Safety Management Standard? (e.g. OHSAS 18001) | | **YES** | **NO** |
| **If YES, please attach a copy of your current certificate with your submission and go to Section 7** | | | |
| **If NO, please answer the following questions:** | | **YES** | **NO** |
| Do you have a written Health & Safety Policy? | |  |  |
| Do you have a Health and Safety at work management system in place? | |  |  |
| Do you carry out Risk Assessments of your business activities/processes? | |  |  |
| Do you regularly carry out internal audits of your Health & Safety Management System? | |  |  |
| Are there controls in place for visitors and contractors attending your premises? | |  |  |
| Do you have a system for reporting accidents and near miss incidents? | |  |  |

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| **Section 7** | **Information Security** | | |
| Is your organisation assessed and certified to a recognised Information Security Standard? (e.g. ISO27001, Cyber Essentials Plus) | | **YES** | **NO** |
| **If YES, please attach a copy of your current certificate with your submission and go to Section 8** | | | |
| **If NO, please answer the following questions:** | | **YES** | **NO** |
| Do you have an Information Management System? | |  |  |
| Do you utilise an email and web filter? | |  |  |
| Do you take regular back-ups and store copies off site? | |  |  |
| Do you have information security systems in place i.e. up-to-date Anti-Virus Software, perimeter firewalls, regular patching of software and computer operating systems? | |  |  |
| Do you have independent penetration testing of your networks and websites? | |  |  |
| Have you experienced a cyber attack that has disrupted your business? | |  |  |
| Do you have staff awareness training in place to raise awareness of cyber security risks? | |  |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section 8** | **Data Protection** | | | |
| Is your organisation registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) under the Data Protection Act? | | | **YES** | **NO** |
| **If YES, please provide your registration number and then go to Section 9** | |  | | |
| **If NO, please answer the following questions:** | | | **YES** | **NO** |
| Do you comply with the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018? | | |  |  |
| Do you use personal information fairly and lawfully? | | |  |  |
| Do you collect only the information necessary for a specific purpose(s)? | | |  |  |
| Do you ensure it is relevant, accurate and up to date? | | |  |  |
| Do you only hold as much as you need, and only for as long as you need it? | | |  |  |
| Do you allow the subject of the information to see it on request? | | |  |  |
| Has your organisation experienced a data breach that has resulted in the loss or revealing of personal data? | | |  |  |

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| --- | --- |
| **Section 9** | **Requirement Specific Questions** |
| **9.1** | Please provide details of the key personnel who will be responsible for managing and undertaking the work, including their experience and relevant qualifications. Please identify one named Account Manager who will co-ordinate your services. |
| **Response:** |  |
| **9.2** | Please outline your understanding of our requirements and your proposed methodology for meeting our requirements. Please include details of likely outcomes of the support delivered. |
| **Response:** |  |

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| **Section 10** | **Insurances** | | | |
| Do you have Public Liability Insurance? | | **Yes** | **Limit: £** | **No** |
| Do you have Employers Indemnity Insurance? | | **Yes** | **Limit: £** | **No** |
| Do you have Product or Professional Indemnity Insurance? | | **Yes** | **Limit: £** | **No** |
| If yes, please attach evidence with your submission. | | | | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 11** | **Contact Details and Declaration**  I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.  I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation’s suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.  I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.  I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation. |
| Contact name: |  |
| Name of organisation: |  |
| Role in organisation: |  |
| Phone number: |  |
| E-mail address: |  |
| Postal address: |  |
| Signature (electronic is acceptable): |  |
| Date: |  |

1. See EU definition of SME <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)