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| Image result for ware town council  logoWare town councilCommunity Banking business appraisal | Introduction The council is seeking a suitability experienced consultant to support this project work to evaluate if there is a requirement for a community bank hub in Ware, and how that need might be met. Terry Philpott:Town Clerk |

**Ware Community Banking strategy – specification**

**1. Background**

Ware, Hertfordshire is a market town with a population of c20K. The Town Centre has a mix of mostly independent businesses. Over the last five years all of the town’s high street banks have closed. The post office is based in McColl’s in the High Street and offers both personal and business banking facilities, there are various ATMs distributed around Ware. The county town of Hertford approximately four miles away has banking facilities provided by Nat West, Santander, Lloyds and HSBC.

The council is seeking suitability experienced consultancy support with this strategic work.

**2. The overall remit**

We wish to commission the following specific outputs:

To identify - Is there a need for a community bank hub in Ware or could the needs of the community be better met in another way for both personal and business banking.

To define - What a community bank hub is, providing options and examples from other communities in the UK and further afield if relevant.

To create - A business plan with SMART objectives for a community bank to include (but not limited to) the following.

* Legal structure / Governance arrangements
* Ownership
* Cost and income proposals
* Space required
* Security arrangements
* Partner organisations
* Grants available, capital and revenue
* Hours of operation
* Staffing
* Capital costs
* Revenue income and costs 1 to 5 years
* Marketing

And produce a business plan / scoping document with SMART objectives for the other options if the community bank hub scheme is not progressed.

* Legal structure
* Ownership
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* Grants available, capital and revenue
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* Revenue income and costs 1 to 5 years
* Marketing

The consultant may be asked to produce an opening plan with costs and timescales dependent on the evaluation of the business plan by the Council, (a separate cost should be included for this item)

We envisage the appointed consultant(s) working with council officers and members and our various partners and stakeholders in a collaborative way to find solutions.

The consultant is encouraged to liaise with the following groups or individuals.

* Derek French
* The Banking Hub company
* Post Office Counters
* Access to Cash Group

**3. Detailed requirements**

Specifically, we would like support in the following areas:

* a desk top review supplemented by interviews/discussion with key contacts locally in order to reflect back to the council
* a reasoned, evidence-based discussion of the issues and potential solutions
* a clearly laid out action plan containing SMART actions and targets
* reference to the latest thinking and best practice regarding banking services
* a reasoned discussion of which agencies, stakeholders and other interested parties are best placed to lead on which actions.
* any matters on which the consultant believes the council may wish to lobby central government, whether unilaterally or through local authority bodies.
* a list/compendium of currently or potentially available funding support delivery of the action plan,
* reasoned, evidence-based proposals for how existing stakeholders and any additional interest parties the consultant believes should be involved and can work together in streamlined fashion

**4. Outputs**

The consultant should prepare a tender price on the assumption of:

* however, many interviews, visits to Ware, hours spent on the project the consultant believes would be required to complete this work. Although we recognise that some interviews may be conducted virtually, we believe it imperative that the consultant visits Ware town centre a number of times and at different times of the day to gain a direct insight into the local issues
* a series of ‘round-table’ meetings, potentially including hosted sessions to gather initial ideas, feedback emerging thoughts and present final draft versions of the reports. We are open to some of these meetings being held virtually
* the production of a well-reasoned and evidence-based written report that covers all the requirements as detailed in Section 3 of this specification, including the SMART action plan and methodology can use in the future to replicate this kind of work
* the report to be given to the council in electronic form; no hard copies are required.

**5. Timetable**

The council envisages that the consultant will work with the council and partners for a total of three to six months from the date of engagement to the delivery of the final report.

**6. What the council commits to provide in support of this project**

The council is committed to ensuring a successful project. To that end, we shall:

* provide a named single point of contact to act as the liaison with the consultant
* bring to the attention of the consultant and make freely available relevant data, policies and reports produced by the council and/or partners
* make available officers and members of the council for interview
* provide introductions if/as required to the council’s key partners and stakeholders
* make office space available at the council’s offices if/as required
* respond in a timely way to any requests from the consultant throughout the project to ensure the consultant can meet agreed deadlines.

**7. What the consultant commits to provide in support of this project**

The consultant shall commit to:

* provide a named single point of contact to act as the liaison with the consultant
* only vary the members of the team assigned to this project with the council’s consent, which will not be unduly denied
* maintain the confidentiality of all information provided by the council
* provide the council with adequate notice, explanation and mitigations should the consultant envisage any requirements, milestones or deadlines cannot be met.

It should be noted that the council’s standard contract terms and conditions shall apply.

**8. How to tender**

Consultants wishing to tender for this work should provide in writing:

* a method statement explaining how the consultant will meet the requirements of this project within the timescale set
* details of relevant similar work conducted by the consultant
* an indicative timetable for the constituent elements of the project, within the overall timescale
* CVs for all personnel who will work on this project, clearly identifying the lead project manager and the relevant specialisms of all involved
* a price for the work as described in this brief, itemising assumptions about any travel and subsistence costs or additional costs which have been included. Note: the council will not pay for travel and subsistence above the overall quoted tender price unless agreed during the project
* the details of at least two named referees
* if the consultant wishes, prices for additional work that the consultant wishes to suggest to the council in connection with this work, but which is not essential to meet this research brief. Please note there is no requirement to provide such optional extras and they will not form part of the tender evaluation process.

Tenders should be sent to Terry Philpott tenders@waretowncouncil.gov.uk by no later than 9am on 29th April 2022.

**9. Tender evaluation**

The tender evaluation will be based on the written information provided to the council. The council reserves the right to call all or a shortlist of the consultants bidding for this work to a selection interview to explain in more detail their written submissions.

The evaluation will be based on the following:

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|  | **% of total score** |
| **Quality** | **60%** |
| *Method statement* | *30%* |
| *Track record of similar relevant work and CVs of the personnel who will work on the project* | *30%* |
|  |  |
| **Price** | **40%** |
| *Tender price excluding any optional extras offered. The lowest tender shall receive a 40% score with the other bids receiving lower scores in relation to the difference between their tender and the lowest tender* | *40%* |
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| **Total** | **100%** |

**10. Timeline**

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|  | Key dates  |  |
| Tender issued  | 7th April 2022 |  |
| Tender closing date  | 29th April 2022 9.00AM  |  |
| Tender evaluation  | 29th April 2022 |  |
| Formal approval WTC  | 16th May 2022 |  |
| Project work commences | May 2022 tbc  |  |
| Interim review  | Monthly  |  |
| Final Draft  | June – Sept 2022 tbc  |  |
| Presentation to WTC  | September 12th 2022 |  |
| Final report  | September 30th 2022 |  |