

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION REQUESTED ON THE BRIEF

Business Support Commission

March 2017

- 1) How will the business support service work with the Local Enterprise Partnerships' Growth Hubs?

The commissioned organisations or individuals will need to work with the two Growth Hubs that cover the Winchester District to cross promote business support activities and to avoid duplication of support.

The Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Hub (www.enterprisem3growthhub.co.uk) covers the majority of the Winchester District. However, some businesses in the southern wards of the District will be covered by the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Hub (www.solentgrowthhub.co.uk/transforming-solent).

The map below shows the area covered by the Solent Growth Hub and you can check individual post codes on the website's postcode checker.



- 2) Do you imagine any digital/smart training work would be procured through the attached specification, or is it potentially something Winchester City Council may look at separately?

Training businesses in how to make best use modern technologies would be part of this commission. Winchester City Council would want to identify the subjects of any training with the successful bidder, which may well include digital skills, as well as other subjects.

3) What is covered in the commission fee?

The fee for the commission is £20,000 per annum for two years. There should be no anticipation of further funding from the City Council for the costs of running the service. This means that the commission fee includes all costs associated with the commission including: venue hire, the commissioning of business support consultants, trainers and speakers as well as management costs. Bidders can choose to charge a minimal cost for training courses in order that delegates place a value on the training and to help augment the budget. Bidders need to include a breakdown of their anticipated costs as part of their bid.

4) Question around the financial weaknesses or associated risks and capacity of the bidder to deliver and why this is a consideration for the council.

Winchester City Council needs to make sure that the service can be sustained over the period of the contract, and with fairly minimal intervention from us. The Council does not want to have to get too closely involved in delivering the service, as we need to focus our resources on other things.

5) Can you please explain if the networking you anticipate is attendance and promotion of the services which will be offered by this Business Support project by the successful bidder, and not set up, arrangement or funding of such networking? and will this be 12 sessions in year one or 6 in years 1 and 2 (assuming the project closes in 2 years, that there will be little point in networking to promote the service in the last 6 months of year 2?)

The subjects of networking will be agreed with the Head of Economy and Arts in advance but are not intended just to promote the service itself. The commission fee includes provision of networking and training courses which includes funding set up costs such as room hire, catering and the costs of trainers and speakers and organising the events. The specification indicates that the commissioned organisation will provide at least 10 training sessions and at least 12 networking sessions at locations across the District. This is 10 and 12 sessions per annum rather than over the life of the contract. This means that the commissioned organisation will need to deliver a total of 20 training courses and 24 networking sessions over two years.

6) How will businesses be referred to the service and are there existing referral systems in place?

The commissioned organisation will need to encourage referrals through effective marketing (Winchester City Council can assist with distribution of marketing material) as well as setting a referral process with key local business groups, for example Winchester Business Improvement District and the Denmead Business Forum.

7) Does the one to one business support have to be face to face?

Our commissioning approach allows for individuals and organisations, who are experts in their field, to come up with what they consider to be the most effective way of delivering business support in the Winchester District. Bidders should however provide evidence which indicates why their recommended approach is the best option for businesses.

8) When does the service start?

Winchester City Council is looking for a service to support businesses over a two year period from 1 June 2017.

9) What is your target market for end users of the service?

The target market for the new business support service is small to medium sized businesses (SMEs). The service would be able to help larger enterprises as well but marketing will be specially focused at SMEs.

Pre-start up businesses would be eligible for business support. We are looking for the bidder to indicate how they will prioritise one to one business support.

Winchester's economy is built on five main sectors as set out in the [Winchester District Economic Strategy 2010 to 2020](http://www.winchester.gov.uk/business/economic-development) (www.winchester.gov.uk/business/economic-development).

These sectors are:

- public administration and business services
- land based industries
- tourism and recreation
- knowledge and creative industries
- retail

10) What is the wider aim of the commission?

The commission should fulfil the aims of the Winchester District Economic Strategy, mentioned in question 9.

The strategy's vision is:

“Our vision for a prosperous economy is of a dynamic and creative Winchester, in which traditional assets and qualities underpin innovation and entrepreneurship for the long term benefit of everyone who lives, works and visits here.”

11) Can you tell us about the existing provision for business support including number of training courses and networking events held?

Winchester City Council is currently working with Southern Entrepreneurs, who are part of Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC), to provide networking, training and one to

one business support. The team are also working with Creative Eastleigh, also part of EBC, to provide an arts advisory service for creative businesses. The latter involves advice surgery sessions which take place in Winchester City Centre and pre booked one to one business advice.

The business support service being commissioned looks to replace this current support and add additional support. By recommissioning the Council can ensure that it is getting value for money. The Council is encouraging potential bidders to look beyond what is currently and consider how they can add value and come up with innovative ideas and solutions to providing business support in the Winchester District. The new specification is for a higher value so the council will be looking for additional services.

The current service level agreement (for 2016 to 2017 financial year) with Southern Entrepreneurs requires the provision of 11 training courses per annum with an average of 14 businesses from the Winchester District attending training events. There is also provision for 11 networking events over the year with an average of 20 businesses attending.

The arts advisory service were requested to provide up to 30 one to one advisory sessions and 10 surgery sessions in this financial year (2016/2017).