**Leicester City Council**

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**SOFT MARKET TESTING QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Leicester City Council**

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| PROJECT |
| Design and Build an Affordable Housing Independent Living Scheme for People with Mental Ill Health and “Move On” Accommodation for Other Vulnerable Groups, including People with Mental Ill Health, for Ownership and Management by a Registered Provider. |

**This document should be completed and returned in accordance with the Guidance for Providers**

**This completed questionnaire must be returned electronically by email**

**before or no later than 14:00 hours on 21/06/2023 to**

[**procurement-asc@leicester.gov.uk**](mailto:procurement-asc@leicester.gov.uk)

**with the subject heading: ‘Completed SMT Q – AH’**

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| Officer involved:  Jasmin Dhonsi, Service Manager (Procurement, Adult Social Care & Public Health)  Leicester City Council |

**02/06/2023**

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**THIS IS NOT A CALL FOR COMPETITION**

**Design and Build an Affordable Housing Independent Living Scheme for People with Mental Ill Health and “Move On” Accommodation for Other Vulnerable Groups, including People with Mental Ill Health, for Ownership and Management by a Registered Provider.**

1. **Introduction**

Leicester City Council (the ‘Authority’) is considering seeking to secure a provider to design and build an Affordable Housing Independent Living Scheme with “Move On” Accommodation on an Authority owned site at Sturdee Road, Leicester, to be owned and managed by a Registered Housing Provider (RP). A site map is attached as Appendix A. The Authority is considering proposing to sell the freehold to the site to the successful Registered Provider and receive 100% nomination rights in perpetuity for all dwellings within the scheme. The successful RP must be able to demonstrate sufficient experience in the design, build and comprehensive tenancy management of such supported schemes.

It is anticipated, dependent upon this soft market testing exercise, that Tenders for this requirement would be sought in 2023 allowing for an approx. 8-week Tender period (to be confirmed), to enable selection of the provider during 2023. The Authority is keen to see the construction of this proposed new scheme start on site and practically complete as soon as is reasonably possible, so that these proposed new homes can start meeting our priority housing needs at the earliest date achievable.

As part of the commissioning process, the Authority is undertaking a soft market test. This gives potential Registered Housing Providers (RPs) or Consortia arrangements (“Providers”) and other stakeholders the opportunity to express their interests and feed in their views about the proposed project brief. The Commissioners will use any/all information from the soft market test to appraise its proposal and, if appropriate, to further develop its brief.

This soft market test process does not constitute a formal tender or other competitive bidding process and will not result in a Contract. The Authority is using this process solely to test the market to gather information and ascertain the level of interest in this particular opportunity. There are therefore no formal criteria which we will use to judge your responses and it is not our intention to provide any feedback.

1. **Project Overview**

The Authority is currently proposing that the Exchange site will be sold and developed to provide an Independent Living Scheme containing 27 x 1-bedroom flats, to provide transitional accommodation for people with mental health needs being discharged from hospital or who are at risk of hospitalisation, who have Care and Support needs. The Authority intends to block fund the provision of Care and Support at this scheme via a third-party provider, procured separately to this potential procurement opportunity, to enable it to have the appropriate level of Care and Support staff on site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (24/7). It is envisaged that the tenants at this scheme are likely to live here for between 12 to 15 months, where they will be supported to develop or recover skills to aid their recovery journey.

If the site is viable for the development of any dwellings in addition to the 27-unit Independent Living Scheme, such additional dwellings should be in the form of further 1-bedroom units. These units will be allocated as “Move on” accommodation for residents moving out of the Independent Living Scheme or other schemes. These units will be for tenants who require low-level support, and they will have the option to stay at that unit on a permanent basis. The move on accommodation should share no amenity space with the Independent Living Scheme and should have a separate entrance/exit. Any such move on accommodation will also need to be owned and managed by the RP.

* 1. **The Role of the Selected Provider/RP**

The selected provider/RP should design and develop the Independent Living Scheme and any “Move on” accommodation, and the RP should own and manage the Independent Living Scheme and any “Move on” accommodation, providing a complete landlord role both to all residents and to the Authority’s appointed Care and Support Provider. The Authority has appointed a Care and Support Provider to provide block-funded packages of care at this scheme, via a separate procurement opportunity.

The selected RP will be expected to agree a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Care and Support Provider for the Independent Living Scheme in terms of use of the building. The SLA should clearly set out the roles and responsibilities with regards to the delivery of the intensive housing management function.

* 1. **Vision of Care and Support Service to the Proposed Independent Living Scheme’s Tenants**

The vision, in terms of the Care and Support service delivery, is for a Recovery service that is a strength based, outcomes focussed Service that promotes self-management, prevents crisis and focuses on harnessing and strengthening skills and resilience that ultimately help people supported to progress on their recovery journey (providing a 24/7 Care and Support staff presence on site). The aim of this Service is for people to feel supported to effectively manage their mental health condition and achieve permanent settled accommodation post their placement.

The appointed Care and Support provider will provide post placement transition support for up to eight weeks to ensure there is a smooth transition for people leaving the service to enable the person supported to continue their recovery journey.

* 1. **The Build Form of the Independent Living Scheme**

It is currently proposed that a two-storey development is sought which must fully address this brief.

An Independent Living Scheme, comprising of 27 dwellings, all of which to be 1 bedroom/2 person units, one of which to be built to the [National Accessible Wheelchair Standard M4(3)(2)(b)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m) and located on the ground floor and the remainder to be built to the [National Accessible and Adaptable Standard M4(2).](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m) All units/dwellings must be built to [Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS).](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard) The Scheme must also provide:

* An office for the Care and Support provider’s staff, in the footprint of a 1 bedroom/2 person flat built to M4(2) standard and located adjacent to the main entrance of the Scheme, with a window providing easy natural surveillance of the main entrance. The office is to have two separate entry/exit pointsand must include an office area to accommodate desks, lockers and filing cabinets (all of which will be provided by the Care and Support provider), a kitchen area and a staff toilet.
* A rest room for the Care and Support provider’s staff 24/7, to be located near to the office, sufficient to accommodate a 2-seater sofa and low table and to provide a shower room and w/c.
* A communal door entry system with a fob and intercom and electronic door openers.
* A communal lounge area sufficient for 15 people to be comfortably seated on sofas and/or armchairs, to be located on the ground floor. This lounge area should have a TV connection point and a door providing access through to the communal garden.
* A separate communal activities room which can also act as a meeting room, to comfortably accommodate 8 to 10 people.
* A communal kitchen area, sufficient for making beverages and/or hosting occasional group cooking activities for 5 people.
* Two communal toilets, one of which to be wheelchair accessible, to be located near the communal rooms/areas.
* A communal, low maintenance garden space which will be large enough to provide a welcoming, relaxing space with benches provided and areas which are suitable for activities such as gentle exercising, barbeques, etc. It is envisaged this will include a patio area and some planting. The garden should include lockable storage sufficient, for example, to house any required gardening equipment. The garden is to be enclosed by a 6-foot close-boarded fence or similar treatment, to ensure privacy.
* Capacity to enable the use of assistive technology and/or digitally enabled equipment.
* A wheelchair accessible lift.
* Communal storage for up to two scooters and/or wheelchairs and two charging point(s) for these.
* Storage place for the Landlord’s cleaning materials, to include space for a vacuum cleaner.
* Wi-Fi access throughout the entire scheme, including dwellings, communal and staff areas.
* 15 car parking spaces (1 of which to be Wheelchair Standard as per Building Regulations) for tenants, staff and visitors.

All the communal/staff areas should be located on the ground floor and designed to enable conversion into further 1 bedroom/2 person M4(2) dwellings if required at any point in the future.

The built form should be sympathetic to the surrounding area and not be obviously institutional. Basic anti-ligature design (e.g., no pendant lighting; under-floor heating, toughened glass, window limiters) must be incorporated throughout the entire scheme and:

1. There must be more than one entry/exit.
2. All communal areas and hallways to be accessible for wheelchair users.
3. Design should be in line with good practice in relation to dementia.
4. The scheme is to comply with the Equality Act 2010.
5. Designed to ‘Secure by Design’ Principles.
6. Take into account ‘[Housing our Ageing Population, Plan for Implementation 2 (HAPPI2)](https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/Housing-our-Ageing-Population-Plan-for-Implementation-HAPPI2-Report-2012/)’ principles.
7. Corridors to be designed to ensure that front doors are not directly facing each other.
8. Site to provide different view/vista options, reducing the number of windows and doors facing into courtyard/brick walls.
9. Parking provision should be made for a tail lift vehicle.
10. A refuse area for clinical waste should be provided.
11. TV/Landline point to be provided in all flats and communal areas as appropriate.
12. Hardwiring throughout to include Category 6 (Cat 6) cabling for Assistive Technology and capable of being linked to an existing main control centre.
13. Extra sockets for equipment in all flats and communal areas.
14. Non-slip vinyl flooring to be provided throughout.
15. Flush fittings throughout.
16. Recessed lights accessible to enable bulb changing (no pendant lighting).
17. Laminated glass/shatter proof throughout. Options on how windows will be treated in an anti-ligature manner to be discussed and agreed with the Authority post-award.
18. Window and door handles throughout the scheme need to be capable of being ligature free.
19. Underfloor heating.
20. Robust acoustics throughout, to ensure noise transference is minimal.
21. A communal TV aerial system with amplifier to be installed in all flats.
22. All internal doors should be hinged so they open both ways for safety.
23. Fire alarm and carbon monoxide detectors throughout.

Additionally individual units, as well as the above, should also meet the following:

1. An individual entrance door, post box, doorbell and number for each flat.
2. Doors should not be capable of slamming shut and front doors to have door closers to reduce potential for slamming.
3. A wet room with level access shower.
4. Storage for wheelchair within the wheelchair accessible flat.
5. Storage for vacuum cleaner, ironing board, etc. This storage should be separate to clothes storage.
6. A kitchen that is capable of having a washing machine, a dryer, fridge freezer, and a cooker; to be provided by the RP landlord.
7. Individual utility meters.
8. Curtain battens throughout.
9. Provision of a furniture pack to include fridge, freezer, cooker/hob, washing machine, sofa, table and chairs, single bed, wardrobe, chest of drawers.
   1. **The Build Form of the “Move on” Accommodation**

If the site is viable for further 1-bedroom units, “Move on” accommodation will be sought. This accommodation should be provided within a separate block, with an independent entrance/exit from the Independent Living Scheme. One of the units should be a 1 bedroom/2 person flat built to National Wheelchair Standard M4(3)(2)(b) and located on the ground floor with any remaining units being 1 bedroom/2 persons flats built to National Accessible and Adaptable Standard M4(2). All units/dwellings must be built to NDSS standards. No communal areas will be sought within the “Move On” block. The Scheme must also provide the following:

1. Hardwiring throughout to include Cat 6 cabling for Assistive Technology and capable of being linked to an existing main control centre.
2. Non-slip vinyl flooring to be provided throughout.
3. Underfloor heating.
4. Robust acoustics throughout, to ensure noise transference is minimal.
5. An entrance door, post box, doorbell and number for each flat.
6. A wet room with level access shower within each flat.
7. Storage for wheelchair within the wheelchair accessible flat.
8. Storage for vacuum cleaner, ironing board, etc. within each flat. This storage should be separate to clothes storage.
9. Each flat to have a kitchen that is capable of having a washing machine, a dryer, fridge freezer, and a cooker; such appliances all to be provided by the RP landlord.
10. Options on how windows will be covered in an anti-ligature manner to be discussed and agreed with the Authority post-award.
11. TV/Landline point to be provided within each flat.
12. A TV aerial system with amplifier for use within each flat.
13. Curtain battens throughout.
14. Individual utility meters for each flat.
15. Recessed lights accessible to enable bulb changing (no pendant lighting).
16. Laminated glass/shatter proof throughout.
17. Window and door handles throughout the scheme need to be capable of being ligature free.
18. Fire alarm and carbon monoxide detectors throughout.

The number of “Move on” accommodation units should be matched by the same number of parking spaces, separate from the Independent Living Scheme’s parking spaces, and include one wheelchair accessible parking space. The units should also be provided with their own communal garden amenity space separate from the Independent Living Scheme. A bin store must also be provided for the tenants of the “Move on” accommodation.

* 1. **Addressing Climate Change**

In line with Leicester City’s Climate Emergency Strategy (2019), the Authority is looking to ensure that all its new developments are built to be very low-carbon and adapted to a changing climate. We would like the Provider to have the scheme achieve an ultra-low level of operational energy use and carbon emissions, a high degree of water efficiency and low embodied carbon in the materials and fittings used in construction and throughout its life. It should avoid any fossil fuelled equipment and should utilise heat pumps instead of gas boilers. The scheme must comply with Policy CS2 of the Adopted Leicester Core Strategy attached as Appendix B.

* 1. **Funding**

The Authority would support a bid for Home England’s grant funding for this scheme.

Potential RPs/providers will need to confirm they will pay full market value for the land for this proposed scheme.

Should potential RPs/providers have any viability concerns about the development costs for this project, the Authority is considering offering the RP additional grant funding of up to £500,000 if required. Please note that the amount of any such additional grant funding sought may be considered as part of a Tender price evaluation process at Tender stage.

* 1. **Tenure of Dwellings Sought for the Independent Living Scheme and “Move on” Accommodation**

100% of the dwellings within this Independent Living Scheme and any “Move on” accommodation should be for Social Rent or Affordable Rent. The tenure for the Independent Living Scheme must be Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs). The tenure for any Move on accommodation can be ASTs or Assured Tenancies (ATs).

* 1. **Nominations Rights for the Independent Living Scheme and “Move on” Accommodation**

The Authority is to have 100% nomination rights to all dwellings on first lets and on all relets in perpetuity.

* 1. **Nominations Agreement and Allocations Procedure**

The partner RP will be required to sign up to a Nominations Agreement and Allocations Procedure.

# Guidance for RPs and Providers

Keep a copy of your completed questionnaire. You will need this if we need to clarify or discuss your answers with you.

This completed questionnaire must be returned electronically by email before or no later than **14:00 hours on 21/06/2023** to [procurement-asc@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:procurement-asc@leicester.gov.uk) with the subject heading: ‘Completed SMT Q – AH’.

# Confidentiality and Freedom of Information

Please be aware that we are subject to the disclosure requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and that potentially any information we hold is liable to disclosure under that Act. For this reason, we would strongly advise that any information you consider to be confidential is labelled as such.

The Authority is committed to open governance and to meeting its legal responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Accordingly, all information submitted to a public authority may need to be disclosed by the public authority in response to a request under the Act. The Authority may also decide to include certain information in the publication scheme which the Authority maintain under the Act. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA"), members of the public or any interested party may make a request for information to the Authority.

The Authority will consider the disclosure of any information, including prices, contained in the SMT document, subject to the exemptions the FOIA.

# Soft Market Testing Questionnaire

**General Information:**

# Full name, address and website

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Trading name of the organisation |  |
| Address |  |
| Town/ City |  |
| Postcode |  |
| Country |  |
| Website URL |  |

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# Full name, lead contact person, address and website of the RP that would own and manage the completed Independent Living Scheme and any Move On accommodation if known at this stage and if different to the above-mentioned organisation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Trading name of the organisation |  |
| Lead contact person |  |
| Address |  |
| Town/ City |  |
| Postcode |  |
| Country |  |
| Website URL |  |

# Main Contact for correspondence about this questionnaire

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Position |  |
| Telephone number |  |
| Mobile phone number |  |
| Email address |  |

# Trading Status

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Trading status of organisation: | a limited company  a public limited company  a limited liability partnership  other partnership  a sole trader  a third sector  other (please specify) |
| Date of registration in country of origin |  |
| Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| Charity registration number (if applicable) |  |

# Organisation Classification

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Relevant classifications (state whether you fall within one of these, and if so which one) | Voluntary Community Social Enterprise (VCSE)  Sheltered Workshop  Public service mutual  Not applicable |

# Size of Organisation

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| --- | --- |
| Is your organisation a Large, Medium, Small or Micro Enterprise (SME)? | Micro (9 employees or fewer)  Small (10-49 employees)  Medium (50-249 employees)  Large (over 250 employees) |

# Organisation Details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Please describe your organisation. | Registered Housing Provider (RP)  Developer/Construction  Consortium (please describe below)  Other (please describe below) |

**Questions for the Market**

Interested parties are asked to provide responses to the following questions.

Please note that although there is no word limit, we do not expect huge amounts of detail in response to each question.

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| Question 1 |
| Would your organisation be interested in developing this proposal in line with the brief set out in Section 2 - Project Overview above? |
| Response: |

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| Question 2 |
| Would your organisation be able to deliver the proposed brief/specification? Do you foresee any issues, if so, what? |
| Response: |

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| Question 3 |
| Is there any part of the proposed brief (as set out in Section 2 – Project Overview above) that would deter you from being interested in this opportunity or make this opportunity unviable? If yes, please explain why? |
| Response: |

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| Question 4 |
| What potential risks and issues do you foresee for the proposed design and build stages of this proposed opportunity? |
| Response: |

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| Question 5 |
| What potential risks and issues do you foresee in the Landlord and Tenancy Management stage of this proposed scheme? |
| Response: |

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| Question 6 |
| How much time would you need in preparing a tender for this opportunity, to fully complete the initial design proposal, securing an RP on board, plan for operations and costings? |
| Response: |

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| Question 7 |
| If your organisation is not a Registered Housing Provider (RP) itself, how would you propose to ensure that you have a formal agreement/partnership in place with an RP to commit to the proposed scheme during a potential tender and to own and manage the Independent Living Scheme and any Move On units? |
| Response: |

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| Question 8 |
| The Authority would expect a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to be in place between the RP Landlord and the Care and Support provider for the scheme. Please indicate if this is within your standard procedures and, if you have this in place elsewhere, can you briefly describe how this operates? |
| Response: |

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| Question 9 |
| The Authority will require 100% nomination rights in perpetuity to the scheme. Please make us aware of any comments you may have regarding how this will operate? |
| Response: |

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| Question 10 |
| From an industry perspective, what do you think are the main opportunities and challenges in developing this site and how would you respond to those? (For example, issues such as labour availability, building finances or supply of materials to the extent that it may impact delivery on the site)? |
| Response: |

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| --- |
| Question 11 |
| Is there anything else you wish to comment on in relation to this potential proposed opportunity, and do you have any thoughts or ideas for things we may not have considered with respect to this scheme? |
| Response: |

# Undertaking by the RP/Provider

I/We certify that the information supplied is accurate to the best of my/our knowledge and that I/We accept the conditions and undertakings requested in the questionnaire and also fully understand that this is not a call for competition.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signed\* |  |
| Name (please print) |  |
| Position |  |
| On behalf of (name of organization) |  |
| Date |  |

**\****Please note the term ‘Provider’ refers to sole proprietor, partnership, incorporated company, and cooperative as appropriate. The undertaking should be signed by a partner or authorised representative in her/his own name and on behalf of the RP/Provider*