**Shepway District Council Business Support Service 2017/18**

**Invitation to quote.**

**Introduction.**

Shepway District Council is seeking quotations for the provision of a business support service within the district for the period between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018.

The service will be aimed primarily at supporting people proposing to start businesses, but it will also be offered to recently started and established small businesses in Shepway district with sessions being held at Folkestone and possibly at New Romney.

The service will take the form of:

* 1:1 business advice sessions
* Workshops for pre-starts.

The advice sessions will be held twice monthly (24 days in total).

Workshops will be held on one day every quarter (4 workshops in total).

**1:1 Business Advice Sessions:**

We would expect these sessions to include:

* Initial telephone contact, to discuss concerns and arrange a mutually convenient appointment ideally during one of the pre-arranged days across the district.  Where more appropriate, site visits will be carried out for established businesses subject to availability and budget constraints
* Pre-meeting preparation, travel and a face-to-face meeting of up to 60 minutes
* Post meeting follow-up email to include factsheets and templates as appropriate
* Completion of a Client Information Form to collect contact details (copy attached), which will also include an option to opt into receiving the [www.folkestone.works](http://www.folkestone.works) newsletter and the opportunity to become a case study for marketing purposes
* Collation of information that supports client activities over the period.  A copy of this will be provided to Shepway District Council on a monthly basis

**Pre-Start Workshops**:

We would expect the workshops to include:

* A one hour workshop aimed at helping new entrants to start businesses
* Workshop material, preparation, travel and delivery plus some time for 1:1 support afterwards as appropriate
* Collation of information that supports client attendance

**Shepway District Council will provide:**

* Marketing/promotion of the 1:1 sessions and workshops although we will support this with emails, networking and use of social media to further promote the sessions
* Use of a meeting room at Shepway District Council – subject to availability or other venue free of charge
* Confirmation of branding preference (Shepway District Council or Folkestone Works) including copies of any logos etc.
* Purchase order number

**Budget, payment arrangements and consultancy agreement.**

We anticipate having a budget of approximately £7,500 available for the provision of this service.

Our standard payment arrangement is monthly arrears within 30 days of receipt of invoice.

The successful bidder will be required to enter into a consultancy agreement with the council (copy attached).

**Selection criteria and submission of quotations.**

Selection of the service provider will be based on suitability and price, and completed quotations should include:

* price breakdowns (excluding VAT, which will be paid or charged at the prevailing rate)for the one to one sessions and separately for the workshops
* the level and nature of the service proposed
* a statement to describe your suitability of your practice for the provision of the service including details of experience in providing similar services for local authorities
* the relevance of the experience and qualifications of your individual practitioners allocated to this service
* an indication of your practice’s ability to provide the service during the period including your proposed start date
* a demonstration of your understanding of the economic context in Shepway and wider east Kent
* contact details of two suitable organisations willing to provide references
* evidence of adequate professional indemnity insurance (minimum £250,000)