

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

MARKETING MAIDSTONE AS A BUSINESS DESTINATION

Maidstone: Business Capital of Kent

March 2018

Marketing Maidstone as a business destination

1. Introduction
   1. The Council is seeking to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced company to provide marketing and PR services to promote Maidstone as the Business Capital of Kent and drive inward investment.
   2. You are requested to submit a quotation on a fixed fee in three parts based on the brief set out in this document.
   3. You are also required to provide a Qualitative Delivery Proposal setting out elements of your approach to the commission, details of your proposed team and their qualifications and relevant experience relating to the brief.
   4. If successful, you will be required to enter into a contract for professional services.
2. Context

Maidstone Borough is the Business Capital of Kent. With over 7,000 business and c. 90,000 people employed (according to NOMIS); strategically located in central Kent and ideal for reaching local, regional, UK, European and world markets. There are a large number of sectors of strategic importance to the Maidstone economy and we have recently seen a significant increase in business start-up and survival rates. With a highly skilled workforce, Maidstone delivers the second highest GVA per head in Kent second only to Medway. Maidstone has much to offer those who live here with the town straddling the River Medway and the beauty of the downland countryside and charming villages.

Maidstone has suffered in the past from negative perceptions as a business location due to planning decisions, congestion and lack of suitable employment space. However with w newly adopted Local Plan and the economy continuing to grow and we are now moving into a period where many exciting projects are coming to fruition.

It is therefore the right time to dispel some of the negative perceptions and myths, promote what the Borough has to offer and demonstrate that Maidstone is truly ‘open for business’.

1. Scope and nature of services required

There are three areas of work required:

3.1 A positive PR campaign to raise the profile of Maidstone as a great place to invest, work, live and visit.

You will be expected to support the Council to achieve its aim to change the perception of the Borough as a business location and promote it as the County Town and the ‘Business Capital of Kent’. This work will see a proactive 12 month media relations programme targeting local and regional media with audiences to include residents, local businesses, stakeholders across Kent and the business community across the wider South East.

Objectives:

* To carry out desk based research to identify and understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Maidstone as a business destination.
* To start telling the wider story of Maidstone, its attributes as a location for business, the Council's involvement in regeneration and economic development and the support provided to businesses looking to start, grow or move to the Borough.
* To use the 2017 Locate in Kent perception survey results to address some of the negative perceptions about Maidstone as a business location and to accentuate the positives.
* To secure a steady flow of positive media coverage regarding Maidstone as a business location via local and regional press, existing social media outlets i.e. @bizinmaidstone, industry magazines and stakeholders such as the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.
* To consistently use positive key messages to promote Maidstone as a business location.
* To promote Maidstone as the County Town of Kent and the Business Capital of Kent.
* Drive traffic to [www.BusinessinMaidstone.co.uk](http://www.BusinessinMaidstone.co.uk)
* To utilise and promote key members of the Maidstone Economic Business Partnerships (MEBP), One Maidstone and the Town Centre Strategic Advisory Board as spokespeople for the Borough.

Timescale: Start date: 1 April 2018 for 12 months (option to extend for further 12 months)

* 1. Marketing Collateral for Maidstone

This will build on the existing business website [www.businessinmaidstone.co.uk](http://www.businessinmaidstone.co.uk) and will complement and link with the work being undertaken by the Town Centre Delivery Group, with a focus on a number identified, master planned sites, communicating the type of investment that the Council wishes to come forward for those sites. Audiences to include local businesses, investors, stakeholders, commercial agents and the business community across the UK.

Objectives:

To develop a suite of marketing collateral, including:

* Production of a web based interactive town centre map that demonstrates graphically the investment in the town centre since the Fremlins Walk development to date and looking forward to what's being planned for the next 10 years. The Map will be a key tool for communicating the ambitious plans for Maidstone Town Centre and act as a promotional tool for attracting inward investment into the town.
* Support in identifying audiences, key messages and themes to use when talking about Maidstone.
* Develop brand guidelines and key messages to ensure that all organisations and stakeholders marketing Maidstone are using clear, complementary messages about the County Town and the Business Capital of Kent.
* Produce a microsite to promote inward investment into the borough, providing a clear set of messages promoting the attributes of Maidstone, a vision of the future and signposts to find out more and to get advice. To include video content.
* Develop a series of at least four one minute videos with testimonials from businesses/developers in the Borough which can be used on the website and across social media.
* Create an image library for use across all applications including new photography where necessary.
* Design and production of marketing collateral to tell the story, promote Maidstone as The Business Capital of Kent, attract inward investment to include brochure and exhibition stands.

Timescale: Start date: 1 April 2018 6 month programme of work

* 1. Inward Investment Marketing Campaign

Development and delivery of an inward investment marketing campaign for Maidstone, promoting Maidstone as the County Town and the Business Capital of Kent. A multi-channel campaign to attract new inward investment into the Borough to businesses, start-ups, investors, agents and organisations looking to relocate.

Objectives:

* To produce and deliver a high level, creative and successful marketing strategy and campaign.
* To develop a compelling narrative on why businesses should choose Maidstone.
* To raise the profile and awareness of Maidstone as an ideal business location.
* To develop compelling case studies and testimonials from existing Maidstone businesses.
* To develop and run social media channels.
* To organise and facilitate 2 high profile events aimed at investors and developers.

Timescale: Start date: September 2018 for 12 months (option to extend for further 12 months)

1. Range of expertise required
2. PR
3. Marketing
4. Web design
5. Graphics and design
6. Outcomes
   1. A planned and agreed 12 month PR campaign.
   2. Evidence of PR activity undertaken across all media and channels.
   3. An interactive web based digital map of the town centre showing key developments to date and future developments and opportunity areas.
   4. A marketing toolkit which will be available to all stakeholders to include images and video.
   5. An inward investment micro site on the back of [www.businessinmaidstone.co.uk](http://www.businessinmaidstone.co.uk)
   6. A planned and agreed inward investment strategy and marketing campaign across all media channels.
   7. Evidence to demonstrate the raising of Maidstone’s profile as a business location.
   8. A successful, evidenced social media campaign.
7. Programme

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| --- | --- |
| Date | Activity |
| 16 March 2018 | Deadline for submission of quotations |
| 3 April 2018, 3:00pm | Inception meeting |
|  | Proposals for the three areas of work |
| 12 months to 31 March 2019 | Delivery of phase 1 |
| 30 September 2018 | Delivery of phase 2 |
| 12 months to 31 August 2019 | Delivery of phase 3 |

1. Process
   1. The evaluation of quotations will be based on 70% cost and 30% quality.
   2. Your quotation must remain open for acceptance for 90 calendar days from the closing date for submissions.
   3. You must confirm you have current Professional Indemnity Insurance with a minimum of £2,000,000 liability and that it will be maintained as required by the terms and conditions of appointment.
   4. You must submit with your quotation a Qualitative Delivery Proposal, addressing the questions in the following table, which sets out how you will meet the qualitative requirements of the Council.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Question | Weighting | Marks  1-5 |
| 1 | Provide detail of how you would approach the project | 45% |  |
| 2 | Provide details of your experience delivering similar projects | 25% |  |
| 3 | Provide CVs for the key individuals in your proposal | 15% |  |
| 4 | Provide details of your resource allocation and team structure, including a breakdown of man hours allocated to each area detailed section 4. | 15% |  |

Your quotations and any queries regarding the quotation process, the proposed contract, or the specification should be e-mailed to:

Dawn Hudd

Head of Regeneration & Economic Development

Telephone: 01622 602334

E-mail: [dawnhudd@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:dawnhudd@maidstone.gov.uk)

Your quotation should be submitted so as to arrive no later than 10.00 am on 16th March 2018.

1. Offer
2. Having examined the scope of services, we offer to carry out the service in accordance with these documents over a period to be determined between us.
3. The offer made within this quote will remain valid for a period of 60 days.
4. We understand you are not bound to accept the lowest or any quote you may receive and you will not pay any expenses incurred by us in connection with the preparation and submission of this quote.

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| Project: | Marketing Maidstone as a business location |
| Fee proposed: | Phase 1: £  Phase 2: £  Phase 3: £ |
| Quotation submitted for and on behalf of: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Postcode: |  |
| Telephone: |  |
| Email: |  |
| Contact Name: |  |
| Signature: |  |
| Date: |  |