**Part B**

**General Information and Specification**

**Somerset County Council Apprenticeship Services Provision**

**Commercial and Procurement Team**

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**Contents**

[**1** **Introduction and Background Information** 3](#_Toc5701068)

[1.1 Procurement Procedure 3](#_Toc5701069)

[1.2 Lots [delete as appropriate] 3](#_Toc5701070)

[1.3 Contract Period 3](#_Toc5701071)

[1.4 Eligible Users of the Contract 3](#_Toc5701072)

[1.5 Procurement Timetable 3](#_Toc5701073)

[1.6 Authority Representatives 3](#_Toc5701074)

[1.7 Demonstrations/Presentations [delete as appropriate] 3](#_Toc5701075)

[1.8 Transfer of Undertaking of Employment (TUPE) [delete as appropriate] 3](#_Toc5701076)

[1.9 Buildings and Assets [delete as appropriate] 3](#_Toc5701077)

[**2** **Specification** 3](#_Toc5701078)

[2.1 Introduction 3](#_Toc5701079)

[2.2 Scope 3](#_Toc5701080)

[2.3 Background to the requirement 3](#_Toc5701081)

[2.4 The requirement 3](#_Toc5701082)

[2.5 Functional requirements 3](#_Toc5701083)

[2.6 Performance requirements 3](#_Toc5701084)

[2.7 Other requirements 3](#_Toc5701085)

[2.8 Constraints 3](#_Toc5701086)

[2.9 Implementation requirements 3](#_Toc5701087)

[2.10 Contract/service management requirements 3](#_Toc5701088)

[2.11 Procurement and contractual requirements 3](#_Toc5701089)

[2.12 Appendices 3](#_Toc5701090)

1. **Introduction and Background Information**

## 

## Procurement Procedure

The Authority is conducting this procurement process in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.  This tender opportunity falls within Schedule 3 of the Regulations (Social and Other Specific Services) and is therefore being run under the Light Touch Regime. Whilst this means that this Tender is exempt from EU procurement rules, it will be run in accordance with the EU Treaty principles of transparency, non-discrimination, equal treatment, mutual recognition and proportionality.

This tender opportunity, for the provision of Apprenticeship Services in Somerset is being offered in 8 Lots as set out below. Applicants will be able to bid for one or more Lot and you are required to state which Lot(s) you will be bidding for, whether you are bidding for more than one Lot and confirm whether you would accept the award of fewer Lots than the total for which you have bid in Part C – Selection and Award, Section 8.7 of the tender documents.

At the conclusion of this Award stage, the intention is to award the Contract/a place on the Framework Agreement to the sevenhighest scoringApplicant/s. Where there is more than one (1) Applicant in **seventh** place, then all such Applicants will be awarded a place on the Framework Agreement. However, in the event that the ranked list of **seven** Applicants includes two (2) or more Applicants with joint scores, the number of Applicants to whom a Contract/a place on the Framework Agreement will be awarded will not be increased to include any Applicants beyond **eighth** place.

The Authority also reserves the right to award to more applicants than stated above where not all the required apprenticeship standards are covered by the highest scoring applicants.

To further illustrate this point please see refer to the following examples. In both examples the intention is to award the Contract/a place on the Framework Agreement to seven (7) Applicants on each of the eight lots.

Example 1

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Supplier** | **Score** | **Status** |
| One | 84% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Two | 83% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Three | 81% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Four | 72% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Five | 70% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Six | 68% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Seven | 65% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Eight | 65% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Nine | 60% | Unsuccessful |

Example 2

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Supplier** | **Score** | **Status** |
| One | 84% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Two | 83% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Three | 83% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Four | 72% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Five | 71% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Six | 65% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Seven | 60% | Awarded a Contract/place on the Framework Agreement |
| Eight | 52% | Unsuccessful |
| Nine | 50% | Unsuccessful |

## Lots

This procurement opportunity is divided into 8 lots as specified below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Lot Number** | **Title** |
| 1 | Legal finance and accounting |
| 2 | Sales, marketing and procurement |
| 3 | Business and administration |
| 4 | Catering, hospitality and facilities management |
| 5 | Childcare and education |
| 6 | Construction, Engineering, Manufacturing, Transport & Logistics |
| \*7 | Digital, Creative and Design |
| 8 | Health, Social Care and Science |

## Contract Period

The Contract being offered is due to commence:

October 2020 to 30th June 2023

For avoidance of doubt, the maximum duration of this contract, including permitted extensions will be until 30th June 2023.

## Eligible Users of the Contract

This Framework Agreement will be used by SCC.

The Agreement may also be used by facilitating agencies or sub users acting with or on behalf of SCC.

The Authority does not warrant that any or all of the Eligible Users to whom this Framework Agreement is open will utilise it for the purposes outlined within these Procurement Documents for any or all of its related requirements.

## Procurement Timetable

The key dates for this procurement process are currently anticipated to be as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Procurement Stage** | **Applicable to** | **Dates** |
| Publication of advertisement | C&P | 31st July |
| Procurement documents distributed to Applicants | C&P | 5th August |
| Clarification questions deadline | C&P | 1st September |
| Clarification responses to be issued by | All | 4th September |
| Bid Deadline (35 days from distribution of documents) | C&P | 10th September |
| Evaluation | All | 10th September– 17th September |
| Approval to award | Cabinet | Cabinet date 23rd September |
| Intention to award | C&P | 25th September |
| Standstill period (10 days) | All EU | 25th – 8th October |
| Contract start | Contract lead | 12th October |

Please note that the above timescales are indicative; the Authority reserves the right to change the above timetable at any time, taking in to account the complexity of the Contract and the time for drawing up Procurement Documents, subject always to the minimum timescales in the Regulations. In particular the Authority may in its absolute discretion extend the deadline for the receipt of Bids and in such circumstances the Authority will notify all Applicants of any change.

## Authority Representatives

No person in the Authority’s employ or other agent, except as so authorised by the Authority Authorised Officer or Procurement Representative, has any authority to make any representation or explanation to Applicants as to the meaning of the Contract or any other document or as to anything to be done or not to be done by Applicants or the successful Applicant or as to these instructions or as to any other matter or thing so as to bind the Authority.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contact Details** | |
| **Authority Authorised**  **Representative** | Name: Natalie Wainwright  Address: Somerset County Council, County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY  e-mail: |
| **Procurement Representative** | Name: Gary Coleman  Address: Somerset County Council  County Hall  Taunton  TA1 4DY  e-mail: [GColeman@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:GColeman@somerset.gov.uk) |
| **Contract Manager** | Name: Clive Mallon  Address: Somerset County Council, County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY  e-mail: |

## Demonstrations/Presentations

## Not applicable

1. **Specification**

## Introduction

The purpose of this procurement is to contract with multiple providers to deliver an Apprenticeship Service to eligible people.

Somerset County Council (SCC) requires a service provider, or providers, to manage the administration and delivery of its Apprenticeship programme. The Apprenticeships, to be provided via this procurement exercise, are funded via the Council’s Apprenticeship Levy, a proportion of which has been used as match-funding in a wider bid to the European Social Fund (ESF) Programme, to deliver the Somerset Skills for Growth Project.

The Service provider will have to demonstrate experience, capability and capacity to deliver the required service through this procurement process. We want to use your skills to achieve the best learning and development results for our apprentices. SCC has an apprenticeship programme designed to meet the needs of those we support and its needs, which cover a broad range of skills and a wide range of courses. We require service providers to be able to react quickly and be able to provide services across the County to meet the needs of Apprentices, whilst maximising uptake.

You will be working with our Organisation Development Service Manager to optimise the benefit from Somerset County Council levy funding and enhance the SCC strategy. We expect the new service to be funded from levy funding for our apprenticeships. The new contract needs to free up SCC from administration and enable more time to be spent with apprentices.

We need a dedicated point of contact and team to manage our requirement and expect access to systems that provide us with good quality management information.

SCC data must be kept safe. We will need our supplier to be fully compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

## Scope

General requirement:

• A training provider with a high success rate in delivering apprenticeships, motivating and retaining apprentices.

• Ensure health and safety and safeguarding standards are maintained.

• Deliver a managed service

• When procuring a training delivery subcontractor or End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO), contact SCC with the top 3 recommended providers/EPAOs and allow SCC to make the final decision.

• Quarterly operational meetings with SCC to provide updates on our apprentices’ progress and discuss any issues arising to discuss strategic matters, e.g. supporting SCC’s future plans for apprenticeships and notifying SCC of any new provision or opportunities being made available by the provider or their subcontractors.

• Carry out data, monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities as specified by SCC, including diversity data.

• Notifying SCC when other funded opportunities arise, e.g. fully funded short courses for our wider workforce.

• Support management of apprentices on the SCC Apprenticeship Service account, including vacancy listings.

• Taking on training providers as subcontractors in the situation where apprentices transfer their programmes across from their previous employer to SCC.

## Background to the requirement

This contract will focus on improving awareness of and uptake of apprenticeships in Somerset. The contract supports the aims of supporting employment and enhancing skills and learning. The contract will strengthen SCC’s apprenticeship offer and broaden this out offer to the wider community within Somerset.

## The requirement

Mandatory

You must be able to access Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) levy funding for apprentices and listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers throughout this contract.

Quick response times are essential as requests for apprenticeships can come forward at any time during the year. The proposed ways of working must be easy to use and generate no additional burden on Human resources and Organisational Development Team.

The questions within document C set out further detail of our requirements.

## Functional requirements

Delivery of apprenticeships and support services in the following areas:

1. Legal finance and accounting
2. Sales, marketing and procurement
3. Business and administration
4. Catering, hospitality and facilities management
5. Childcare and education
6. Construction, Engineering, Manufacturing, Transport & Logistics
7. Digital, Creative and Design
8. Health, Social Care and Science

Due to the need to support communities across Somerset the detailed requirement is subject to change as an individual could request any of the Government approved apprenticeships available.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have the capacity to:

* Deliver required support to eligible participants, referred to them via SCC and its partner organisations.
* Respond to referrals within 2 working days of a referral and deliver support within 5 days of a referral, the target for enrolment is seven days.

## Other requirements

The list below details the recent apprenticeships approved by the Authority, which we would need to continue to be able to provide.

The list of apprenticeship standards below maps across to the 8 lots and those identified on the Institute for Apprenticeships website.

**Appendix 1 Apprenticeship Courses – This list will change during the life of the contract as standards are changed removed and added.**

Please see spreadsheet Appendix 1. This needs to be populated as part of your tender return.

## Constraints

In addition to annual recruitments, SCC will require the service provider to help us support those in our Communities who wish to enter an apprenticeship. This can happen at short notice and at any time of the year. Service providers must be able to accommodate this requirement and be able to respond quickly and flexibly to changing needs.

Providers should be aware of the following additional requirements if participants of the apprenticeship programme(s) are identified as eligible for additional support from the ESF-funded Somerset Skills for Growth Programme. Where this applies, SCC will provide guidance and advice as to how the requirements are to be implemented in practise, but providers must be prepared to:

* Comply with ESF Data Evidence Guidance;
* Use a project-specific Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, provided by Somerset County Council, to record and report on participant recruitment, outputs and outcomes achieved throughout an individual and/or providers’ involvement;
* Comply with ESF Communications and Publicity Guidelines;
* Comply with Equalities and Sustainable Development Policies and Implementation Plans;
* Retain documentation relating to a participant’s involvement with ESF-funded activity for the purpose of claims and audit.