

Newton's Place - Business Planning Consultancy brief

Background

In the current location, the Newton Abbot Town Council and Museum face significant challenges which results in a lower use of the facilities; namely, the distance from the town centre, accessibility, signage and the space for the Museum displays and storage. These issues have been raised repeatedly in visitor surveys and community consultations and the need to address this is recognised within the Newton Abbot & District Community Plan (2008), the Teignbridge Local Plan (2014) and the Newton Abbot Neighbourhood Plan (2016).

The former St Leonard's Church premises was purchased by Newton Abbot Town Council in August 2016. It has been disused for the last five years. The site is sufficient to provide an enhanced Museum space, Town Council offices and community space for hire within the current footprint.

The project name is 'Newton's Place'. The vision of Newton's Place is to create an accessible community space that celebrates heritage, town and community and challenges pre-conceived ideas of a museum and Town Council by operating in one welcoming environment.

There is a designated museum space but the two meetings rooms, and communal areas will all be used as the museum, displaying artefacts and telling the stories of the local area. It increases the space for the Museum and it challenges the preconceptions of what a museum is or should be. It encourages everyone in the community to learn about their heritage and it becomes a space to celebrate the town, its heritage and its people.

The capital development cost is currently estimated at £2m excluding the purchase price. At this stage, the main funding is anticipated to come from the Town Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund, assuming the application is successful. Additional funders, such as Garfield Weston, Arts Council and GWR have been identified and the project will also benefit from the sale proceeds of the current building at 9 Devon Square.

A feasibility study and a business case were carried out in Autumn 2016. We submitted a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund in March 2017 which secured £150k development phase grant and a further £800k is targeted for the delivery phase.

This project is not about creating a self-sustaining entity where the income the entity earns must be able to cover all of the running costs. It is owned by the Town Council and will be operated and run by the Town Council. It is important that the Town Council understands the earning potential of the meeting spaces for hire, the temporary exhibitions, the museum shop sales and the small refreshment area. However, please note that the space for the museum shop is very limited as part of the reception area and will have a restricted range of small items to sell. The refreshment area is not a café but is anticipated as a vending machine operation as space is limited. The work is not to create a full business plan but to assess the relatively limited income earning potential and gross earnings.

Work required

- Assess the income generation potential of the spaces designated as café/refreshment area, shop, room hires and temporary exhibition areas. Please note that the area of

temporary exhibition serves a dual purpose in also being space for community groups to hire.

- Assessment of whether to charge for some museum activities that are currently done on a free/donation only basis e.g. tours/talks by volunteers, tours by curator including new store tours, curator talks to groups (currently talks to groups charged at £30).
- Assessing potential income and expenditure for alternative uses of the space e.g. small concerts within the museum exhibition space with displays moved to edge of area.
- To provide guidance on the VAT implications to be considered by the Town Council e.g. opt to tax
- To review on overall operational cost structure in light of the development phase work
- To include a 5 year income and expenditure forecast of these income strands (not the full Town Council budget)
- Include recommendations and learning points from similar venues regarding effective management and developing positive customer experience with limited resources

Deliverables

- A business planning document including executive summary; the minimum content being the work identified within this brief.

Project Management

A multi-stakeholder Project Board has already been formed to oversee the project.

The Project Group has determined the need to engage independent professional advice to support the development of the income generation for Newton's Place. It is not envisaged by the Board that this project is to maximise income generation if this requires sacrificing the values of accessibility to heritage and learning for all or compromising the main exhibition space to the point that commercial ventures overtake the original intentions of bringing artefacts out of stores and to be of benefit to the public.

The Role

To ensure a meaningful report, it is anticipated that the appointed consultant will need to be involved in the following way:

- Working closely with the Community Engagement (Activity Plan) co-ordinator who will be planning activities with the general public, heritage organisations and local businesses to ensure any consultations are managed in line and piggy-back on other activities
- Working with the Project Co-ordinator and the Town Clerk regarding the operational cost structure as this needs to include the assumptions of the Town Council and Museum anticipated costs as well as any incurred through the

- additional strands of café, shop and temporary exhibitions
- Attending an initial meeting with the Working Group and a meeting to present findings.
- Submitting findings and presentation to the Project Board

Whilst not an essential element of the core tasks above, the Project Working Group would also be interested in the consultant making them aware of any potential commercial partnerships / private sector partners / funding opportunities which come to light during this phase of work.

Experience, skills and knowledge:

In order to fulfil this role, the following experience, skills and knowledge are expected.

- Previous experience in writing business plans for community assets
- Track record in working on projects with grant funding
- Knowledge of VAT implications for this type of project
- Research / community consultation to provide evidence for the business plan
- Strong communication and team working skills;

It is important that the consultant has a track record of similar projects and is happy to provide two of these by way of references, at least one of which should ideally be for a similar project.

Timeframe

This work is anticipated to start third week of November and be completed by the end February 2018. If this is not possible, please identify this within your submission.

Budget

There is a budget in the development phase for up to £4,000 for this piece of work (excluding VAT) estimated on 10 days work at £400 / day. If this is insufficient for the work described, please submit the tender with the costs and breakdown to explain the need for an increased budget.

Quotation Requirements

a) Intention to quote

Newton Abbot Town Council has invited selected business planning consultants to quote for this work. In addition, the briefing document is freely available on the Council's website at www.newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk. Consultants / organisations intending to quote should notify the Town Clerk, Phil Rowe, by email to Phil.Rowe@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk before Friday 3rd November, 5pm.

b) Questions and Clarifications

Consultants / organisations may request clarification of any items in the briefing documents by Thursday 9th November, 5pm. All requests must be emailed to Phil Rowe, Town Clerk, at the above address. Any clarification made by the Council in response to a request will be notified to each consultant / organisation that has emailed their intention to quote. Any changes to the briefing documents will also be shared with all potential suppliers.

c) Tender submission

The quotation should be no more than 6 pages of A4 describing how you intend to meet the brief and the costs involved. Please include within your tender:

- Evidence of similar work
- How your tender supports our procurement aims
- Details of two persons or organisations who can comment on your ability to carry out this brief

We would request that no standard marketing material is included with the submission, but please include a CV (a maximum of two pages) of the person(s) involved.

Quotations to be submitted by **5pm on Friday 17th November 2017** to: Phil Rowe, Town Clerk, Newton Abbot Town Council by email: Phil.Rowe@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk.

Please also send a hard copy, in plain envelopes marked "Quotation for Business Planning Consultant" to:

Phil Rowe
Town Clerk
Newton Abbot Town Council
9 Devon Square
Newton Abbot TQ12 2HN

The hard copy must arrive no later than Tuesday 21st November 12pm

All tenders will be opened in the presence of at least three people of whom one shall be the Clerk (or designated officer delegated this task) and two shall be members of the Council.

Tenders will be evaluated against:

- Price 30%
- Track record and relevance of previous work 50%
- How your offer supports the Town Council's procurement aims 20%

c) Shortlisting and interviews

Should interviews take place, they will be informal in nature and after brief introductions, be conducted on a question and answer basis. No preparation other than the request for quote submission will be required.

Timescales

Action	Date
Opportunity advertised (NATC)	Thursday 19th Oct
Email intention to quote (consultant)	Before Friday 10th Nov 5pm
Questions answered (NATC)	Until Thursday 16th Nov 5pm
To be submitted by email (consultant)	Friday 17th Nov 5pm

Hard copy quotations to be submitted (consultant)	Arrive by Tuesday 21st Nov, 12pm
Quotations opened and short list confirmed (NATC)	Tuesday 21st Nov, 12pm
Notify successful candidates for interviews	Wednesday 22nd Nov
Interviews at Newton Abbot	Friday 24 th Nov
Confirmation to successful applicant	Monday 27th Nov
Appointment starts	Immediately

Reference documents:

- 1) Outline Drawings
- 2) Business Case
- 3) Newton Abbot Town Council Procurement Strategy