



LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

2 FEB 2017

# Ledbury Town Council

## Invitation to Quote



### SERVICE REVIEW OF LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL'S ADMINISTRATION

(Including Management, Administration,  
Services & Accommodation Needs)

#### Introduction

Ledbury Town Council was established in 1974, in its present format, following the amalgamation of Ledbury Urban and Rural District Councils.

The Town Council is responsible for the following:

- Closed Churchyard
- Cemetery  
Including Chapel; Mortuary; Workshop
- Centenary Field, Ledbury Recreation Ground (Local Contract)  
Including: Play Areas; Skatepark; Parking Area; CCTV
- Charter Market
- Christmas Lights and Floral displays
- Market House
- Council Offices
- Woodland, Dog Hill
- Community Open Space at Deer Park Estate.
- War Memorial
- Street Furniture

The Town Council has a contract with a Lengthsman to undertake minor highways work "C" and "U" roads i.e. gullying and other remedial work. He also maintains and repairs footpaths under a joint scheme (P3) with Herefordshire County Council (HCC)

The Town Council administers, on behalf of HCC, Cultivation Licences for traffic roundabouts, and flower beds throughout the Town.

Currently the Town has:

- Population of 10,000
  - Electorate of 7,300
  - 3 Wards, 6 members per ward, approximately 2,400 electorate per ward.
  - 18 Town Councillors
  - Asset Portfolio valued at £1,057,649, including:
    - Cemetery
    - Dog Hill Wood
    - 1 Recreation Ground, 1 Play Area
    - 3 areas of Open Space (Deer Park)
    - Market House
    - Town Council Offices
  - 14 Members of staff on the payroll
  - Budget of £345,424 (2016/17)
  - Precept of £308,647 (2016/17)
  - Band D Rate of £90.71
- } (to be updated following FC 02.02.2017)

The Town Council has registered for the Foundation Award – NALC Local Council Award Scheme.

### **Current Climate**

The Town Council is beginning to see the effects on local government funding cuts. Herefordshire County Council, like all other local authorities has to initiate further cuts over the next three years and has already issued warning bells that those public realm services may be subject to at best further cuts or at worst withdrawal. The Town Council must therefore be in a position to hold adult conversations with Herefordshire Council regarding the future of local public sector service delivery in Ledbury.

### **Objectives**

- Skatepark and recreation ground – part of an on-going review to upgrade equipment and facilities
- Future accommodation (office and meeting room)
- Promoting and expanding tourism through Town Plan initiatives,

- Improving facilities and activities for children and young people
- Economic development
- New website - marketing and PR.
- Traffic Management.
- Woodland Management – Increase Community access to Dog Hill Wood.
- Management of Cemetery – perimeter walls, trees, etc.

### **Need for a Review**

The Council seeks a thorough review of the Council's established structure, reviewing staff workloads against job descriptions to understand whether there are any inefficiencies, driving down running costs and eradicating unnecessary administrative burden and barriers to change.

Council members do not wish this to be purely a desktop exercise; more an on-the-ground two way process involving all staff who work and manage the various service areas. Staff should be encouraged to express their views on how the organisation is managed.

Members are also keen to establish that they too are fit for purpose in managing a modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Council that can rise to the challenge of reduced budgets, increased expectation and demands and the willingness to do what is in the interests of the greater good of the town and the residents they serve.

This review should look at a number of key areas:

#### **(i) Structure and Organisation of the Council.**

The Town Council operates the following Committee structure:-

**Economic Development & Planning.** (13 members, limited delegated powers).

Committee Functions:- Planning Matters (delegated power)

Emergency Planning;

Charter Market;

Traffic Management; Public transport, Internal Town transport,  
Car Parking.

Town Plan;

Street names & Town signs;

Tourism, Publicity & Public relations;

Delegated Functions: To examine and comment on planning applications

**Environment & Leisure.** (14 members, no delegated powers)

Committee Functions:- Cemetery;

Closed Churchyard;

Recreation Ground & other Amenity areas, Deer Park, Dog Hill wood, Town Trail, Walled Garden – flower beds.

Christmas Lights;

Events;

Commemoration; War Memorial.

Location of Recreational Land & Facilities;

Town Furnishings; bins, seats, floral displays.

Footway Lighting;

Tree planting;

Notice Boards;

Public Rights of Way; Definitive Footpaths;

Allotments;

The Arts;

Sports;

**Finance & General Purposes.** (11 members, limited delegated powers)

Committee Functions:- Accommodation; Town Council Offices, Market House. (Listed Buildings)

ICT;

Awards;

Town Mayor/Crier regalia;

Town Clock;

County Association matters;

Financial matters:- Estimates, Grants, Investments, Insurance,

Collection of revenue.

Delegated Functions: To examine & approve payments on behalf of the Council

**Standing.** ( 5 Members - Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Committee Chairmen)

Committee Functions:- Staff matters; Pay & Conditions; New Employees.

Any matter considered to be an emergency by the Town Mayor, or ALL Chairmen of three other main committees

Any matter referred by Ledbury Town Council

**Full Council. (18 members)**

Responsible for:- Decision making;

Budget setting;

Neighbourhood Plan;

Members are given a free choice as to which Committee's they serve on, they are expected to choose two but can serve on all three. Their membership of Committee is confirmed by Full Council.

See Administration section, for staff structure.

***MATTERS FOR REVIEW***

1. Is the Committee Structure and allocation of functions appropriate for the organisation given its services, potential development and likely challenges?
2. Should Committees have greater delegated powers. Should Committee numbers be restricted? Do we need to increase/decrease number of Committees to even out the workload?
3. Given the particular circumstances and constraints of a local government authority, how does Ledbury Town Council compare with other Councils, relevant public sector bodies and commercial organisations of comparable size and service delivery?
4. Do the Members have an appropriate range of skills, experience and knowledge?
5. Do members of the Council have appropriate levels of administrative support, technology and other resources, including opportunities for training and development?
6. How understanding is the Council of the current issues and future challenges and how amenable are Members to change?

**(ii) Staffing Arrangements of the Organisation**

The Town Council employs a number of staff to perform various functions.

All administrative staff are based at the Town Council Offices.

Administrative Posts include:

- Clerk/ Responsible Financial Officer, (37hr/week full-time) – providing full clerking functions to Full Council and all committees (approx. 40 meetings a year). All account management.
- Deputy Clerk (P/T, 27hr/week) Currently vacant following resignation.
- Clerical Officer (10 hr/wk) and Junior Clerical Officer (16hr/wk)

- Receptionist (20hrs/week)
- Tour Guides (5 part-time March –October variable hrs/week) – Provides visitor's tours of 16<sup>th</sup> Century Painted Room.
- Grounds Officer, (37.5hrs/week) – Cemetery maintenance and other general handyman needs.
- Town Cleaner (14 hrs/week)
- Wedding Co-ordinator (variable hrs)
- Town Crier (variable hrs)

## **MATTERS FOR REVIEW**

1. Is the Structure and allocation of responsibilities appropriate for the organisation given its services, potential development and likely challenges?
2. Given the particular circumstances and constraints of a local government authority, how does LTC compare with other Councils, relevant public sector bodies and commercial organisations of comparable size and service delivery?
3. Could the administration be better managed?
4. Are the posts graded at the appropriate level?
5. Do the administrative team have an appropriate range of skills, expertise and knowledge?
6. Are staff adequately supported by technology and other resources, including opportunities for training and development?
7. Do we need a protocol for relationships between Councillors and staff?

### **(iii) Accommodation**

The Town Council needs to review its accommodation.

Currently the Town Council Offices, 15th & 16th Century listed buildings accommodate the following staff:

- Town Clerk/RFO.
- Deputy Clerk.
- Clerical Officer.
- Junior Clerical Officer.
- Receptionist.
- Tour Guides.

The building was previously three separate cottages, now reconfigured as one but still retaining its heritage features, small rooms, steep narrow staircases. Access is difficult, storage is limited. Alterations are subject to listed building consent. No car parking available. The building also contains a licensed Ceremony Room.

Council meetings are held in The Market House, Town Council Offices and at various meetings rooms within the town.

The Grounds Officer is located in buildings within the Cemetery.

### ***MATTERS FOR REVIEW***

1. The extent to which this might interfere with currently effective working practices and be counter-productive
2. Whether re-location of Admin staff might improve the overall effectiveness of communications and working practices.
3. Is provision for meeting space suitable?

### **Invitation to Quote**

A lump-sum fee quote is required for a Specialist Consultant to carry out the specified services:

- A review of the key areas as listed above
- Provide a comparison with other comparable Town Councils operational functions
- Provide any options for service review, staffing restructuring and salary evaluation

### **In providing the quotation:**

1. How many Consultancy days will this fee provide?
2. Provide a breakdown of cost and time for each work element
3. Provide hourly and daily rates for any additional work which may be required
4. Provide details of the delivery methodology
5. Provide details as to the reporting back on progress and delivery of the final report
6. Please include a draft timetable identifying key milestones including the delivery of a final plan
7. Please provide previous work undertaken of a similar nature and references

To assist in providing the above, the following is enclosed:

- Appendix 1 - Staffing Structures
- Appendix 2 - Open Space Maps of the town under Town Council responsibility
- Appendix 3 - Budget for 2017/18 with comparison to previous years
- Appendix 4 - 2015/16 Accounts
- Appendix 5 - Town Plan

**Deadline for submission is**