

Marches LEP Growth Hub Website and Brand Toolkit: Invitation to Quote

Details of Lead Body: The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

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Quotes Deadline 12pm, 28 November 2014

How to respond: Send proposals that address the requirements outlined in this document in a single PDF file to: gavin.stephens@herefordshire.gov.uk with the subject line “Marches Growth Hub Creative Proposal”

1. Introduction

The Marches LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership covering Shropshire, Herefordshire and Telford & Wrekin) is seeking to commission the development and maintenance of a business support website and a branding toolkit for the Marches LEP Growth Hub. The website will provide business support product information and act as the virtual business entry point for public and private sector business support in the Marches. The brand toolkit (including a name, taglines, logos, typefaces, colours and imagery) will provide the hub branding that Marches businesses will identify as the primary access point for business support in the Marches.

2. Marches Growth Hub Background

As part of a national agenda, Government wishes LEPs to streamline business support activity through the development of growth hubs. The growth hub will be the leading business support brand in the Marches and it will integrate national support (as delivered through the ‘Business is GREAT’ campaign) with strong, locally tailored activity both public and private sector business support options. To facilitate business starts and business growth across the Marches, it is vital that support is rationalised and simplified so that businesses benefit from seamless services that meet their changing needs and demands.

In addition to the development of a virtual hub physical growth hubs will also be created, allowing businesses to drop in to see an account manager who will be able to help them access the support that they need.

3. Marches Growth Hub Website Requirements

The Growth Hub website will be the primary online point of entry for business support activities in the Marches area and as such, it will communicate the availability of support, funding, events and other activity targeted at start-ups and businesses with the potential to grow. For businesses and start-ups who wish to self-serve, it will provide an overview of products and services but it will also

encourage start-ups and established businesses to contact the growth hub through a hotline for support from an account manager.

Overview of Website Requirements:

- **Website aims:**
 - Support the development of the growth hub brand: developing the Marches Growth Hub as the key brand for business support in the Marches
 - Ensure that the Growth Hub complements the Marches LEP website/brand
 - Create an awareness of the public and private business support that is available across the Marches and drive uptake of the associated business support products
 - Generate support requests/enquiries from eligible businesses and start-ups to access the support products available.
- **Website purpose:** The growth hub website will bring together the full range of local, national and private sector business support products within the Marches.
- **Devices:** We would anticipate that businesses and start-ups will access the website via a wide range of devices including desktop/laptop PCs, tablets and phones; therefore it is essential that the website works well on all of these devices and users are able to access all content and services independently of the device used.
- **Other similar sites:** Examples of growth hub websites from other regions of the UK are:
 - [Solent Growth Hub](#)
 - [Wiltshire Business Hub](#)
 - [Cumbria Business Growth Hub](#)
 - [Northamptonshire Growth Hub](#)
 - [Manchester Growth Hub](#)
- **Target Audience:** The main users of the website will be SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises with up to 250 employees and a turnover of < £40m) and business start-ups based within the Marches. A smaller number of larger businesses will also use the website, along with business intermediary organisations. The website must appeal to business owners/managers and entrepreneurs of all ages and demographics. The site should be professional but it must also be approachable, accessible and contemporary. Website accessibility is also important and the website should be developed to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 and other relevant accessibility standards.
- The website will be the primary online resource; however it will be supported by the use of a Twitter profile and LinkedIn group that will engage businesses. The website, hotline and social media profiles will also be promoted by a number of offline channels including PR/adverts/leaflets/events. It will be important that these channels are incorporated within the website.

3.1 Look & Feel

The website should have an imaginative, modern design but appear professional and retain synergy with the Herefordshire Council business pages, 'Invest in Shropshire' and 'Invest in Telford' websites, despite these sites being diverse in their style. The website will be developed in conjunction with the brand toolkit and it will need to encompass the branding guidelines including the logos, taglines, typefaces, colours and imagery.

Start-up and established businesses must be able to gain an understanding of the products and services available from the growth hub from visiting the website. The function of the website will be to convey and explain the range of support available and make this content easy to access from the home page and subsequent pages. It will be critical that the content is accessible and provided in a flat format, with a minimal number of clicks required to access information. Where possible, information on a topic should be presented on one page.

At least two design profiles outlining different options for the home, product and other key pages need to be produced before a final option is selected.

3.2 Content Overview

Work has begun to map and develop the content areas that the website needs to cover. The key pages/sections will be the:

- **Home page:** This needs to reflect the brand, attract businesses to click through to the funding and support information on the next pages.
- **Finance & Funding:** This needs to list the major grant schemes, loans and other financial schemes that businesses can access. The schemes need to be updatable via a CMS and businesses must have the ability to filter them based on criteria (for example: loans vs grants, funding amounts and so forth). It also needs to link to the governments grant funder tool for businesses who are seeking additional information.
- **Business Support:** List the major business advice/support schemes/training schemes that are available. Like above, schemes need to be updatable by officers via a CMS and businesses will need to have the ability to filter them based on criteria (for example: advice vs mentoring, eligible business sectors).
- **Networks:** This needs to provide details of networks and groups that are available to businesses and start-ups. Similar to the above, this needs to be populated by a CMS module and visitors to the website will need to filter the results based on criteria (such as by area e.g. Herefordshire/Shropshire/Telford and by business sectors)
- **Starting a business:** Provide an overview of training, i.e. Marches Business Support, start up finance, mentoring, hot-desking/space available to start-up businesses. Case studies also need to be included.
- **Events:** An events calendar which includes details of events and allows online booking/sign-ups
- **Blog/news/case studies:** Case study, news and information content could be presented in a blog format but could be linked from other content/images throughout the site.
- **Entrepreneurship in Schools and Colleges:** links to mentors, competitions, on-line courses, case studies.

Further mapping of content is available on request (in a PowerPoint file format). Officers of the three counties will provide the required content for the site to meet the timescales required.

3.3 Technical Details

- **Domain name registration/hosting:** A domain name for the growth hub needs to be registered (along with the registration of other appropriate names for protection) when the

branding and name for the growth hub has been agreed. Hosting for 2 years should also be included within the commission and the website/data centre should be located within the UK (no data is to be exported beyond the EU).

- **Traffic Estimate:** The website's technology must provide capacity for up to 5000 unique visits per week without any performance derogation.
- **CMS:** The website will need to include a fully featured content management system which allows multiple users and features an approval system. Key features (such as hero sections/sliders, META data) should be editable through the use of the CMS and the CMS should be tailored so that the 'business support products'/'funding schemes' can be easily updated and remain in a similar style.
- **Analytics:** The website will need to be supplied with a fully featured analytics system such as Google Analytics.
- **Data/Lead capture web form:** A web-form that allows businesses to place electronic enquiries from the website, linked to the Evolutive Customer Relationship System (CRM), needs to be developed. The Evolutive CRM system has an API for this but the implementation will require liaison with Alciium Software Ltd, the Evolutive developers. This is a key function of the website and it needs to be easy to use and effective in capturing leads.
- **Training & support:** Training on the CMS and analytics will need to be provided for up to eight officers from Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin in one or two sessions. Documentation and email/telephone support for the operation of the site is also a requirement.
- **Blog:** News and case studies could be delivered via a blog format that could be easily syndicated to social networks and other content feeds/other elements of the website. Comments could be enabled but it is critical that they are able to be moderated before they go live.
- **Video & rich media:** It is essential that the website effectively communicates the products and services that are available using video, high quality imagery and interactive content. The ability to imbed video from YouTube at a future date is required (ideally the CRM should allow this).
- **Local business support/funding finder:** Local business support and funding products (and key national products) need to be searchable/filterable based on set criteria. The CMS should allow the creation of products and the website should allow visitors to filter these.
- **Integration of business finance/support tool:** In addition to the business support 'products' listed on the site via the CMS, other national business support products need to be accessible through the integration of the Government's business support finder tool. An API is available and further details can be found here:
<https://insidegovuk.blog.gov.uk/2014/02/12/business-finance-support-opening-up-gov-uk-data/>
- **Events calendar & booking system:** An events system which includes the ability to add events via a CMS along with online booking by customers and management of attendees/events via a back office system is required.
- **Telephone Hotline:** There is a requirement for the enquiries generated through visits to the growth hub to be directed to business support officers across all three local authorities. As

resource across the LEP area is limited we are looking for a creative solution which is not only cost effective but provides high quality customer service – we require a solution put forward by those bidding for this contract.

- **Digital marketing:** This will be undertaken by the Growth Hub team to promote the website via on and offline media. As part of this commission, it is essential that the website/CMS is optimised so that search engines can effectively crawl and index pages/content, specific optimisation of the content or other digital marketing will not be required. Integration with social media, namely LinkedIn and Twitter is a requirement and this could include buttons and/or feeds on the website.
- **Library & search:** The site should feature a download and an image library and a site wide search function could provide as an option to assist with site navigation.

Input at quotation stage from developers regarding the website technology and the capabilities that they can provide would be welcomed.

4. Branding Requirements

The purpose of a Marches Growth Hub brand is to communicate the business support opportunities available and for the brand to be known by businesses and the people of the Marches as a primary point of contact to access business support. There is a need to create a concept which can be used as part of the website (as outlined above), social media profiles, paperwork, promotional materials (including display stands), signage and other on/offline media. The output of the commission will be a full brand toolkit including brand guidelines, colour palette, typography and image guidance.

The concept will resonate with the business audience, stand out from other brands and identify the geographic areas the growth hub will cover. The concept will be strong, relevant, and easy to understand. There is a need for engagement with a wider stakeholder group made-up of Marches LEP members (business and local authority representatives from Shropshire, Herefordshire and Telford & Wrekin). A smaller sub-group will lead on the commission.

4.1 Current Branding Situation and Aspirations

There is no local business support service or brand within the Marches that integrates national support (as delivered through the Business is GREAT campaign) with strong, locally tailored provision and private sector activity across this geography. There are national and local brands for different business support products/services such as UK Trade and Investment, Growth Accelerator, Business Innovation Programme and Business Enterprise Fund but no one single point of entry to receive advice on the most appropriate support for their current needs.

An opportunity now exists for the Marches LEP to develop a brand and service that is responsive to the needs of local businesses and inspires growth through business development and new enterprise starts. The new brand should encompass the following values:

- Open for business
- Accessible to all
- Enterprising and entrepreneurship
- Professional and business led
- Growth focused

4.2. Branding Objectives

1. Better awareness of business support
2. Wide brand recognition with businesses and others in the Marches
3. Inspire business starts and business growth

The new service and brand is an opportunity for businesses and start-ups to access the support they need to grow and create jobs. The growth hub has the opportunity to develop a new culture of localised business support that is flexible to the needs of businesses, challenge previous perceptions and deliver a high quality service. The message therefore needs to be clear and the image something businesses can trust. The brand must stand the test of time with a minimum of 5 year life.

The target audience is:

- Businesses with potential to grow in the Marches
- Those looking to start a business in the Marches
- Business professionals and intermediary organisations

5. Budget

- The Marches LEP is seeking competitive quotes for the design and development of the website (including CMS/blog) and development of the growth hub brand toolkit based upon the specification outlined in this document. It is expected that 30% of the resource is dedicated to branding and 70% to the website.
- There is a budget for ongoing support and maintenance of the website but the growth hub will aim to minimise these costs by commissioning a website with an effective CRM system that will allow the majority of the website to be updated by officers. An hourly fee valid for post sign-off work should be outlined and this should be valid for a period of two years (commencing the day after sign-off).

6. Payment Schedule

Payment will be released on in stages:

- One quarter of the commission will be paid up front
- One quarter will be realised after sign-off the brand concept and on receipt of acceptable website design proofs.
- The third quarter will be released when the website and brand toolkit is signed off by the Marches LEP and goes live.
- The final payment (one quarter) will be released after the website/toolkit has been used successfully for a period of 2 months.

9. Timescales

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|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Invitation to apply | 17 November 2014 |
| Deadline for receipt of tenders | 12pm, 28 November 2014 |
| Interviews (if required) | 11 or 12 December 2014 |
| Successful applicant informed | 15 December 2014 |

Completion of Commission

Stages to be agreed but final completion no later than end March 2015

10 Submitting a Quote

The deadline for receipt of quotes by email is 12pm, 28 November 2014.

Your proposal/quote should also contain the following information:

- A methodology (maximum 2 sides of A4, no smaller than 11 point font) on your approach to the commission.
- A full cost sheet with a breakdown of work on all deliverables and appropriate hourly/day rates.
- A project team structure outlining the proposed roles within this the commission and short CVs that outline project personnel's previous experience and skills along with a brief history of your business.
- Samples of previous similar and relevant work (no more than 4 or no less than 2 examples) which have been produced by the developer/designers who will be working on this project (in the last two years).
- References from two organisations that you have undertaken similar work for, from the last two years.
- Details of the technology to be provided, including the CMS, hosting and other provision.
- Confirmation of your availability to undertake the work within the timeframes detailed above.
- A competitive fixed rate for changes/additions to the website for a period of two years post sign-off.
- A statement on the intellectual property for the branding website and any systems supplied (e.g. CMS). There is an expectation that all work produced by the supply during the commission will be owned by the Marches LEP and any systems will be supplied with a licensed for the Marches LEP use for a period of at least 5 years .

Quotations/tenders from providers partnering with or sub contracting with another provider will also be considered. The project team structure statement needs to outline the relationships and details. The lead partner (whom Herefordshire Council will contract with) needs to be clearly stated.

The commission will be awarded to the supplier who provides a competitive quote but is also able to demonstrate best value from a design and capability perspective. The selection process will be undertaken on the week beginning 5th December 2014 by representative officers from the Marches LEP.

If your tender is short-listed it is expected that you will attend for interview on 11-12 December 2014.

Your completed quote should be submitted by email, in a single PDF file to Gavin Stephens, Economic Development Officer, Herefordshire Council, Plough, PO Box 4, Hereford, HR4 0XH Email gavin.stephens@herefordshire.gov.uk Telephone 01432 260177

Gavin Stephens can be contacted in advance of the deadline for questions or queries (for email queries please use the subject “tender for Growth Hub”).

When producing your methodology and budget please consider that:

- You will be required to attend at least one briefing with the Steering Group, one meeting with a wider group and up to two progress meeting (with any required travelling to Hereford, Shrewsbury and Telford).