**HDC202512 – RFQ - Clarifications received up until 12 noon, 13th October 2025**

1. We are looking at the above tender, and we are in receipt of the following documents:

* Request for Quote: HDC202512 - Arboricultural Services Planning Advice
* Draft Contract

Are there any other documents that are part of the tender, or is the whole of the application comprised in the Request for Quote document?  
  
**Response**:  
There are no other documents necessary for the completion of the request to quote, besides these requests for clarification.

1. Do you have an SLA template or guidance you wish us to follow, and what do you expect detailed in the SLA?   
     
   **Response**:  
   There is no predetermined SLA, we are seeking proposals from suppliers. The following would be necessary in order for the Council to be satisfied it can in turn fulfil its obligations:
   1. All applications allocated to the contractor are dealt with within a timeframe that allows the Council to meet its statutory timescales, unless exceptional circumstances apply.
   2. Exempt works are assessed and responded to in a timeframe that ensures the Council can respond within 5 working days.
   3. All communications are undertaken in a timely fashion; for example, acknowledgements within two working days and full response in most cases within one working week.
   4. Progress reporting to the Council on a weekly basis for caseload management and performance targets on speed of decision-making.
   5. Capability and capacity to draft emergency TPOs promptly in response to an identified threat.
2. Please could you clarify whether this is expected to be 3- or 4-days service for the duration of the contract as this may affect the overall pricing of the contract and expected budget.   
     
   **Response**:  
   Our estimate is that 4 days service a week is probably necessary for the foreseeable future, but this may depend on the solutions provided by suppliers. The pricing element of the tender will be scored on the daily rate provided only, in order to ensure bids are evaluated on an equivalent basis.
3. Do you require a breakdown of costs or is this optional?   
     
   **Response**:  
   The breakdown of costs is optional, however if there are ancillary costs beside the quoted day rate, that may be chargeable for particular tasks for example, these should be included in order to be provided for in the contract.
4. Are you happy for quality method approaches a, b and c to be provided as one response document?   
     
   **Response**:  
   One document is acceptable provided all sections are clearly covered.
5. The portal notice details the value at £200K including VAT which would be £166,667 excluding VAT. The tender document details up to £200,00K but with no mention of whether this includes VAT or not. Pricing to be provided excluding VAT. Can you confirm whether the budget is £200,000 inclusive or exclusive of VAT please?   
     
   **Response**:  
   Ths budget estimate is **inclusive** of VAT as per the portal notice and is provided to give an estimate of the overall contract cost.   
     
   The pricing element of the tender will be scored on the daily rate provided only, in order to ensure bids are evaluated on an equivalent basis.

This day rate needs to be provided exclusive of VAT, as will any breakdowns of optional costs.

1. I note that the suggested potential value for the services is estimated at £200,000. Is this for the first two years, or does this include an extended 1-year period as well?  
     
   **Response**:  
   The estimate was made based on the initial 2 year period and did not include the optional extension period.

The pricing element of the tender will be scored on the daily rate provided only, in order to ensure bids are evaluated on an equivalent basis.

1. approximately how many TPO and conservation area applications does the planning department receive each year (if possible, could these please be separated as time frames for determination/responses differs between the two)  
     
   **Response**:  
   circa 290 TPO applications, circa 270 CA Notifications, circa 00 Exempt works.
2. How many TPOs does the authority have?  
     
   **Response**:  
   1116 TPOs
3. How many enforcements matters around trees has the authority experienced in previous years which have required arboricultural input?  
     
   **Response**:  
   Approxitmately one case per annum.
4. In regard to the access to work, how would the authority envisage this to be provided to the winning bidder? I.e. would the authority look to provide a computer or access login to idox/uniform as a direct case officer on required applications and write the formal delegated reports or would the work be referred through separate means (maybe just via an email request) with them just providing formal feedback to a case officer to then produce the delegated report inhouse?  
     
   **Response**:  
   The Council is open to proposals from Suppliers on this point with final agreement to be made with any successful bidder. Access to Uniform through a laptop supplied by HDC can be provided. Alternative solutions must be able to demonstrate compliance with GDPR and be compatible with the Council’s IT Security Policies.
5. Is there expectation on the winning bidder to be required to attend planning committees? Mainly in the instance of confirming objected TPOs or disputed applications whether for planning or tree works.  
     
   **Response**:  
   It would be beneficial if the supplier could facilitate attending Planning Committees, but optional. Such instances a required very rarely, maybe once or twice a year.