

**TENDER SPECIFICATION**

For

Providing the Secretariat and Technical Coordinator Functions for the  
Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum

Issued by

**GOVERNMENT OFFICE YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER**

**on behalf of**

**THE YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER RURAL AFFAIRS FORUM**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 The Rural Affairs Forum for Yorkshire and The Humber wishes to engage the services of suppliers to deliver outcomes specified in the tender below.**

## **2.0 THE TENDER SPECIFICATION**

### **2.1 Background**

2.1.1 The Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum [YHRAF] is a group made up of the region's rural stakeholders who aim to represent the views and concerns of the rural 'customer', i.e. people affected by policies and services in rural areas. The Forum provides feedback to authorities and organisations responsible for policy and service delivery and acts as a sounding board for new ideas. The Rural Affairs Forum is now established in the Yorkshire and The Humber region as part of the governance structure designed in tandem with the Rural Framework to implement Defra's Rural Strategy 2004 and the modernising rural delivery agenda.

2.1.2 The Rural Affairs Forum secretariat is currently provided by the Government Office for Yorkshire and The Humber.

2.1.3 The Rural Affairs Forum is now entering a new phase with a new Chair and Steering Group and is looking to develop its independent role and increasing level of activity. This will require additional support to complement that which the Government Office for Yorkshire and The Humber provide.

2.1.4 Further information about the Rural Affairs Forum can be found on the website at: [www.yhraf.org.uk](http://www.yhraf.org.uk).

### **2.2 Purpose and Aims**

2.2.1 The overall aim of the secretariat is to support the work of the Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum

### **2.3 Work Specification**

2.3.1 Under the terms of the contract the provider will be expected to deliver two functions; coordinator and technical; and administrative. [This may be covered by one or two officer(s), see management section 2.5.1].

2.3.2 The specific details of each role are described below:

#### **Coordinator and Technical functions (in agreement with the Chair)**

a. Coordinate engagement of rural stakeholders both from the Rural Affairs Forum and elsewhere as appropriate, including developing and servicing Task Groups and Forum Sub-Groups, as agreed with the Chair and Steering Group.

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- b. Make recommendations to the Chair and steering group and implement agreed actions to take forward the aims and objectives of the Rural Affairs Forum, acting as a catalyst as necessary.
- c. Prepare as necessary papers for information or policy issues to the Rural Affairs Forum Steering Group and Rural Affairs Forum and to other regional governance structures (Rural Board, Regional Practitioners' Group, Yorkshire and The Humber Assembly) ensuring a consistent and high quality style.
- d. Develop and manage projects and events to take forward the aims of the Forum and its Sub-groups in liaison with key partners.
- e. Represent if requested Rural Affairs Forum at relevant meetings and committees at regional and national level as appropriate.
- f. Review and implement a Communications Strategy for the Rural Affairs Forum, covering both internal communications and promoting the work of Forum and the regional rural agenda to a wide range of stakeholders.
- g. Supervise and coordinate administrative functions and appropriate quality control as listed above.
- h. Liaise with Government Office Yorkshire and The Humber who will be undertaking the following tasks pending review:
  - (i) Assisting [appointed] coordinator in setting agendas for meetings of the Rural Affairs Forum (three times a year);
  - (ii) Support to Chair and Coordinator (briefing as necessary for meetings, from Defra perspective etc);
  - (iii) Editing, producing and circulating the Rural Affairs Forum newsletter, "Rural Matters" (currently bi-monthly);
  - (iv) Developing the Rural Affairs Forum website and connections to partner organisations, e.g. Rural Observatory, as an up to date source of information and information exchange for Forum members and others;
  - (v) Monitoring agreed Rural Affairs Forum procedures (overseeing role for; terms of reference, expenditure, elections and contract arrangements via accountable body for outsourced functions etc.);
  - (vi) Reporting to and acting as link with Defra, e.g. on budgetary information and quarterly pre-ministerial meeting updates.
- i. Any other activities as directed by the Chair and Steering Group

### **Administrative Functions**

- a. Support the Rural Affairs Forum Chair by acting as first point of contact on administrative and communication matters.
- b. Circulate material, predominantly by e-mail, to Rural Affairs Forum Steering Group and Rural Affairs Forum as required, for example information from Chair and Steering Group members [mainly weekly].

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- c. Produce and circulate meeting agendas as directed, and minute the following meetings: Rural Affairs Forum Steering Group (six times per year); full Rural Affairs Forum meeting (three times per year); and any ad hoc consultation meetings or events as required. Circulate minutes to appropriate membership following Chair's endorsement, within an agreed timescale.
- d. Organise venues, catering, equipment, transport and all practical matters for meetings of the Rural Affairs Forum in consultation with Government Office Yorkshire and The Humber, Rural Affairs Forum Steering Group.
- e. Procure and purchase services at the direction of the Chair in accordance with agreed financial procedures.
- f. Maintain accounts for all income and expenditure by the Rural Affairs Forum and provide reports as necessary.
- g. Routine, non-development website updates (adding links, minutes of meetings etc.) through liaison with the web administrator, Fenweb.

2.3.3 Both coordinator and administrator functions can be carried out by one person if desired.

2.3.4 It is expected that the work above (both the coordinator and administrative functions) will equate to **2 days a week each** (i.e. 4 days in total). More time may be needed and so some flexibility will be sought to allow for input to be increased on a call-off basis on an agreed hourly rate as the Chair and Steering Group feel necessary.

## 2.4 Skills Required

2.4.1 Whoever carries out the **coordinator** role should possess the following skills and qualities:

- Understanding of role, function and operation of regional and local government.
- Knowledge and understanding of economic, social and environmental issues affecting rural areas.
- Excellent demonstrable communication, networking and reporting skills.
- Able to take the initiative and to get things done.
- Willingness and ability to be a challenger and maintain an independent position whilst still working effectively as a team player.
- Fully computer literate and experience of using Windows based I.T. systems (including Word, Excel and PowerPoint).
- Able to work flexibly around the needs of the post and Forum partners.
- Access and use of own reliable transport.
- Drive, enthusiasm and the ability to be self motivated.

2.4.2 For the **administrative role** the necessary competencies and qualities required in delivering these functions should be self-evident, but reliability, a well-organised approach and good computer literacy are important.

## **2.5 Management**

- 2.5.1 The officer(s) carrying out the functions will work to a programme agreed with the Steering Group and communicate as necessary with the Chair on day to day matters. Whoever delivers the technical functions should also be responsible for coordinating the administrative functions if not carried out by the same person.

## **2.6 Contract Commencement**

- 2.6.1 Contracts to start from September 2007.

## **2.7 Contract Period**

- 2.7.1 The initial contract will be for a fixed term of two years, subject to satisfactory progress and with appropriate clauses for review and renewal.

## **2.8 Location**

- 2.8.1 The location from which the above secretariat functions will operate is flexible; it can, but does not have to be rural, but as the Rural Affairs Forum wishes to operate in accordance with sustainability principles, the chosen location should be accessible by public transport wherever possible to the Government Office for Yorkshire and The Humber in Leeds (see address below).

## **2.9 Your Proposal**

- 2.9.1 Your proposal should demonstrate that you are able to meet the above criteria and detail the full costs of the work as described in paragraph 3.1.1 below

## **3.0 CONTENT OF TENDER**

### **3.1 Tender details**

- 3.1.1 The tender should be no longer than 10 sides of A4 sized paper in total including appendices in no less than 10 point font size and should include the following information:

- How the above criteria will be met.
- Demonstration of appropriate skills for both functions.
- Number of officers required and their time allocation. Include details of qualifications and experience, resources, premises and equipment available.
- A suggested location for the work.
- Full cost of work per annum based on **4 days work per week** (see 2.3.4)
- Breakdown of the costs by officer including hourly rate for any additional time required (as per 2.3.4).
- Details of past performance in the delivery of similar functions, including any references.

### **3.2 Tender assessment criteria**

3.2.1 The tender will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- The extent to which the tender meets the specification requirements (weighting 20)
- Capacity to deliver including premises, resources and staff (weighting 20)
- Value for money (weighting 20)
- Previous experience/track record (weighting 15)
- Knowledge and experience of working on rural issues [coordinator only] (weighting 15)
- The quality of services and quality management arrangements including continuous improvement (weighting 10)

### **3.3 Additional Information**

3.3.1 Any queries regarding the tender specification and its content can be made by contacting Anna Knight on 0113 341 2755 or Mike Feist on 0113 341 2699 by email to [yhraf@goyh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:yhraf@goyh.gsi.gov.uk), or in writing to:

Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum  
c/o Anna Knight

Government Office for Yorkshire and The Humber  
Lateral  
8 City Walk  
Leeds  
LS11 9AT

No charge will be made for the supply of any such information.

3.3.2 Any such requests should be made no later than 17<sup>th</sup> August.

3.3.3 If, in the Rural Affairs Forum's judgement, any question and its answer affect the quality of information provided to all tenderers, questions and answers will be disseminated to all tenderers for information via the Rural Affairs Forum website, but the source of the questions will not be revealed.

### **4.0 SUBMISSION OF TENDER**

4.1 Sign, date and submit the tender by 12:00 on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2007 to the postal address in paragraph 3.3.1.

4.2 Provide 2 copies of your tender proposal in one sealed envelope (one copy loose leaf, 1 copies bound or stapled). Please mark the envelope clearly with the words 'SEALED TENDER DO NOT OPEN – FAO Anna Knight'.

4.3 The tender is to remain open for acceptance by us for a period of 2 months from the date specified in paragraph 4.1.

**5.0 ACCEPTANCE OF TENDER**

- 5.1 Tenders not complying with this specification in any way may be rejected by the Rural Affairs Forum whose decision in this matter shall be final.
- 5.2 The Rural Affairs Forum is not bound to accept any, or the lowest price, tender.
- 5.3 The Rural Affairs Forum reserves the right to carry out financial due diligence on any tenderers.
- 5.4 The Rural Affairs Forum may invite tenderers for interview before coming to a final decision. Any interviews will be held in September.
- 5.5 The Rural Affairs Forum will publish the outcome of the tendering on the Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum website [www.yhraf.org.uk](http://www.yhraf.org.uk).

**6.0 QUALITY COMMITMENT**

- 6.1 The contractor must co-operate with the Rural Affairs Forum Contract Manager in all aspects of contract management and adhere to the quality requirements that will be agreed and specified in the contract.