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**Open Newtown: Riverside Venue**

Invitation to Tender’s INVITED FROM POTENTIAL partners to help deliver the vision of areas of activity within the building.

This Invitation to Tender (ITT) focuses on the food offerings, but we also warmly welcome proposals from interested parties around other areas of activity that the building could offer.

Tender Submissions Open: 20th January 2022

Tender Submission Closing Date: 23rd February 2022 Midnight

Review / Interviews: Week Commencing Monday 28th February 2022

Intended award date: Monday 7th March 2022

Tenders should be submitted either through the Sell2Wales Post Box facility, or they can be emailed direct to [tender-return@opennewtown.org.uk](mailto:tender-return@opennewtown.org.uk) The subject heading should be marked **Tender Return (Riverside Venue) Confidential.**

**Introduction**:

[**Open Newtown**](http://www.opennewtown.org.uk)is a community owned development trust working to help make Newtown a viable and vibrant place to live, work and visit.

[The Riverside Venue](https://opennewtown.org.uk/the-riverside-venue/) will act as a gateway to Newtown’s green spaces, providing a warm ‘Welsh’ welcome to locals and visitors. It will create a new visitor experience for Newtown by offering tourist information, a small retail area, exhibition spaces, café, fully accessible toilets, and an adult changing space. The first floor will provide a flexible multi-room space, offering opportunities for conferences, flexible meeting space, events, training & workshops and exhibitions.

**Building plans and layout:**

  

It will help facilitate activities attached to the green and blue assets of Newtown. These include, but are not limited to; mountain biking, paddle sports, walking, cycling etc. With our partners, we have invested in facilities to support these activities such as a mountain bike trail, BMX pump track, a cycle hub (with electric bike charging facilities) and river access points.

* The environment and sustainability are at the heart of the development, and we want the internal offerings to reflect our commitment to these as much as possible. Equally Welsh language, culture and our local history is important to us, and this should be reflected throughout the building where possible.
* The current name ‘The Riverside Venue’ is a holding name, we will work with our partners on a branding exercise to cement a name and brand that reflects the buildings vision and scope.
* Through the building we have set ourselves a target of up to 9 new jobs and apprenticeships, and in addition we want the building and its operations to safeguard other roles.
* It injects £1.5m of capital investment into the economy and will increase footfall and spend in Newtown.
* One of the ambitions of the building is to bring together existing community groups to share their reach and activity.
* Open Newtown aim to enhance the circular economy of Newtown and surrounding areas, through support to social enterprises, small businesses, ensuring our youth have access to skills, training, and jobs.
* The Venue will focus on and deliver outcomes that meet the challenging needs of our society.
* It will offer something new and different for Newtown. An aesthetically pleasing, visually iconic building where people can meet, congregate, relax, enjoy their surroundings, eat, share, play and learn. We intend for the Riverside Venue to become a hub for events, both within the building itself and one which supports wider town events.
* The Venue is well situated, being town centre located at the head of the largest town centre car park, close to the bus interchange, and within walking distance of the train station. It will be one of the main entrances to the towns green spaces which stretch for miles beyond. It has river frontage on to the River Severn – the UK’s longest river. It is also next to national cycle route 81, and numerous walking routes.
* We have a desire to create an ambiance unique to the town. The mythical legend of the three rivers that flow from Plynlimon: The Wye, Ystwyth, and Severn, gives each of the three their own distinct characters. The Severn was said to have a relaxed, kind, and calm nature, a lover of people and culture. This is something we wish to embody within the centre.

Funding for the development has been received through the Welsh Government’s Transforming Towns Fund and the National Lottery’s Community Fund in Wales, as well as support from Powys County Council and Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn Town Council.

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**Café / Catering Opportunities**

An opportunity exists for a business relationship to be developed around the catering offering that can help meet our aims, ethos, and vision, whilst offering the operator or franchisee a fruitful business. This relationship could emerge from an existing business, an individual with the required drive and ambition, or for a local organisation.

The current capital investment at the Riverside Venue includes, but not exclusively, the provision of a new cafe operation as part of the visitor experience. Open Newtown and its partners have funded the bulk of the equipment, utensils, crockery and cutlery needed to run a successful operation. We are now seeking those that could help deliver our vision around the food offering provided by the building.

Open Newtown has a strong set of principles around our environment, the climate agenda, biodiversity, wellbeing, Welsh language & culture with an emphasis on our local economy. We will expect these to be reflected on any tenders received.

**What we are looking for:**

We are seeking an operator / franchisee that can deliver a professional catering operation. They must be experienced in the demands of running a busy cafe/restaurant operation. The operator will provide a quality, all year round, attractive, catering operation, with friendly, fast, and efficient customer service.

The operator / franchisee will need to meet the catering expectations and requirements of Open Newtown’s varied visitor groups and to provide a top quality, enjoyable catering experience, which will add to their overall visitor experience at the centre.

They will need to work closely with Open Newtown and other potential users of the venue to ensure the provision of catering meets the needs of the building.

The initial occupational agreement will run for 3 years, with built in review periods and, if the relationship proves successful, there will be opportunities for extensions.

We are looking for an operator / franchisee that would be willing to cater for events as they arise. There is potential to offer ‘off-site’ catering, utilising the buildings facilities to provide an out-of-hours catering service if of interest. The frequency and nature of events will naturally vary and is likely to increase in number over the coming years.

**Fees:**

We wish to explore the best arrangements for how an operator / franchise fee might be determined. We would like your submission to include details on how you would prefer to make the financial arrangements work, and if successful in the first rounds of sifting, we will engage in further dialogue.

Our preferred option would be to agree on a flat rate ‘fee’ payment (per month or per quarter) but we would be happy to consider options such as:

* A percentage rate based on turnover
* A combination of the above.
* Or others that you might wish to detail.

We offer: Equipment, an iconic space to trade from, support and the potential to expand the operation to other nearby venues.

A cost for utilities will be apportioned based on consumption (electricity & water, phone, internet). We are still investigating the rates of the building and we would need further discussions over any licences directly applicable to the café element, as they may come under the remit of the overall building.

The cafe is situated inside the Riverside Venue and cannot operate as a separate entity, it must compliment other uses of the building and its intended hours of operation etc.

**Operational Times:**

The building will be open 7 days a week, almost every day of the year.

There is an aspiration that the cafe trades across a significant number of hours during the day, hopefully reflecting changes in menus and food on offer to appeal to a differing range of customers. There is the opportunity to trade from early morning through to an evening ‘restaurant’. The tender returns should detail the operator’s / franchisee’s ambitions in this respect.

**The Operator**:

Open Newtown views this tender opportunity as a long-term relationship, so it is essential that any applicant is committed to Open Newtown’s aims & objectives. We would expect any operator / franchisee to work with Open Newtown on an ‘open book’ policy.

In submitting your tender return you must answer in full the questions below and add in any additional supporting information that you feel is relevant and should be considered.

1. Demonstrate how you have the appropriate catering, hospitality, business management experience and expertise.
2. Detail your experience of running a fast paced, high quality, customer focused business, catering for many varied visitor groups.
3. Explain your commitment, ability, flexibility, and enthusiasm to working closely with Open Newtown, and its partners to achieve their aims, ambitions, and objectives.
4. Detail your ability to work in partnership with the local community and wider businesses.
5. Provide evidence of consistently achieving the highest standards of customer service and a quality catering offer, all year round. (Testimonials, awards, hygiene ratings etc.)
6. Demonstrate how you will complement our local economy through the food offering at the Riverside Venue.
7. How, as an operator you would gain customer feedback and how you would implement change.
8. Detail how the menus would reflect the ambitions of Open Newtown to deliver a low carbon food offering.
9. How you will recognise opportunities and make the most of the footfall in the area and look to ensure this will complement existing local businesses of Newtown.
10. Demonstrate how you have the necessary drive and determination to succeed and how you could meet the challenges associated with this opportunity.
11. Tell us what fees you would be prepared to pay.
12. Explain how you will commit to the Welsh language and culture.
13. Give an outline of how many jobs / traineeships / apprentice roles you could provide.
14. Please detail 2 business references that could be approached during the application review stage.

**Technical Details:**

The following weighting will be used when scoring tender returns.

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| **Criteria** | **Weighting** |
| Ability to deliver an effective partnership, one that delivers social outcomes, meets the aims and objectives of Open Newtown, and gives confidence in their ability to meet the challenges. | 30% |
| Through the food offering clearly demonstrates an offering that is complimentary to existing town food outlets and one that leads the way on ‘low carbon’ thinking. | 30% |
| An application that creates employment, training, skills development, and equal opportunities for all. | 10% |
| A proven background in food. How your business will meet and retain all food hygiene, food safety, environmental, fire and health & safety compliance. | 10% |
| Details of how Welsh language & culture are considered in your offering. | 10% |
| How you will demonstrate an environmentally friendly business approach. | 10% |

Scoring information

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| --- | --- |
| 0 | Unacceptable. Question not answered or is so limited it gives no confidence to deliver aims & objectives. |
| 1 | Poor: Limited information provided. Major concerns over the ability to deliver on stated outcomes. |
| 2 | Fair: A reasonable response given. Some concerns may remain over the ability to meet the objectives. |
| 3 | Good: A detailed response to the question posed and through the response an assumption could be made that they have the potential and will be able to deliver on the aims and objectives sought. |
| 4 | Very Good: A clear, concise, well thought through reply to the question. Supporting information provided. Were the ability to deliver and meet the objectives is not in question. |
| 5 | Excellent full and detailed response to the question. Offering information over and above what is being asked for, but dose so clearly and concisely. Full supporting information provided. Giving a high level of confidence to deliver on the stated outputs. |

**Key Dates**

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| **Details** | **Date** |
| Issue of Tender Notice | **W/C 24th Jan 2022** |
| Deadline for tender to be received by Open Newtown | **Midnight Wednesday 23rd Feb 2022** |
| Open day / viewing opportunity | **Planned for Friday 4th Feb 2022** |
| Shortlisting | **Monday 28th Feb 2022** |
| Interviews | **Friday 4th March 2022** |