



Invitation to Tender (ITT)

External Audit Services

1. Introduction

Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce (“the Chamber”) invites suitably qualified and regulated audit firms to tender for the provision of statutory external audit services.

The appointment will be made following a formal and competitive tender process overseen by the Audit & Governance Committee, with recommendation to the Board.

2. Background

The Chamber is a membership organisation supporting businesses across Staffordshire.

The Chamber:

- Operates as a company limited by guarantee
- Has multiple income streams including membership, commercial services and publicly funded programmes
- Delivers projects funded by local authorities, police and other grant-making bodies
- Is governed by a Board of Directors supported by an Audit & Governance Committee

Further financial information will be provided upon request or within the tender clarification period.

3. Scope of Services

The successful firm will be required to:

- Conduct the statutory audit of the Chamber’s annual financial statements
- Report to the Board and Audit & Governance Committee
- Attend the Audit & Governance Committee meeting at which the audit is presented
- Provide a management letter outlining key findings and recommendations
- Confirm independence and compliance with applicable ethical and professional standards

The financial year end is: 31st March

The AGM is held in: November (end of)



4. Term of Appointment

The initial appointment will be for:

- One audit year, with an intention to extend annually subject to performance
- The total anticipated term is up to 3 years

Appointment is subject to AGM ratification.

5. Tender Timetable

Stage	Date
ITT issued	23rd March 2026
Clarification questions deadline	10 th April 2026
Submission deadline	1st May 2026
Shortlisting	8 th May 2026
Interviews (if required)	w/commencing 11 th May 2026
Board approval	10 th June 2026
AGM ratification	25 th November 2026

The Chamber reserves the right to amend this timetable if necessary.

6. Instructions to Bidders

Clarification Questions:

- Questions received via email will be answered and published on the website

Responses should:

- Follow the section numbering in this ITT
- Be concise and proportionate
- Be submitted electronically in PDF or Word format
- Include a separate fee schedule

Submissions and Questions should be sent to: Dawn Styles -
dawn.styles@staffordshirechambers.co.uk

Deadline: 24th April 2026

Late submissions may not be considered.



7. Required Information

7.1 Firm Overview & Sector Experience

Please provide:

- Overview of your firm, structure and relevant office location(s)
- Experience auditing Chambers of Commerce, membership bodies, charities or similar organisations
- Experience auditing organisations with publicly funded or grant-funded projects

7.2 Independence & Ethics

Please confirm:

- Whether your firm (or related entities) are Chamber members
- Any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest
- Safeguards in place to ensure independence

Any conflicts arising during the term of appointment must be disclosed promptly.

7.3 Audit Approach & Methodology

Please describe:

- Your audit approach
- Risk assessment methodology
- Use of materiality
- Use of technology and data analytics
- How you minimise disruption to the finance team

7.4 Understanding of Key Risks

Based on the information provided, what do you consider to be the key audit risks for the Chamber?

7.5 Audit Team

Please provide details of:

- Engagement Partner
- Audit Manager
- Day-to-day contact

Include relevant experience and qualifications.

Please outline how continuity of service will be ensured.



7.6 Transition Arrangements

If appointed, please outline:

- Approach to professional clearance
- Transition from the outgoing auditor – including timing of sample requests and fieldwork, to minimise disruption and ensure timely reporting.
- Protection of audit timetable

7.7 Governance & Communication

Please outline how you:

- Work with Finance teams to:
 - Minimise disruption
 - Provide clarity on information requests
 - Avoid last-minute surprises
- Support non-executive directors
- Add value beyond statutory audit requirements

7.8 Quality & Regulation

Please confirm:

- Your regulatory body
- Date and outcome of your most recent inspection
- Internal quality review processes

7.9 Fees

Please provide:

- Proposed annual audit fee
- Assumptions underpinning the fee
- Hourly rates (if applicable)
- Approach to annual fee increases

Fees should be fixed for the audit year, subject only to agreed scope changes.

7.10 References

Please provide up to two references from comparable organisations.



7.11 Additional services

Please outline any additional assurance services your firm offers which may be relevant to the Chamber. These are not required as part of the statutory audit and would be commissioned separately, subject to independence requirements.

7.12 Emerging reporting

Please outline your experience supporting organisations with:

- ESG reporting
- Voluntary carbon reporting
- Emerging regulatory expectations

7.13 Declaration

Please confirm acceptance of:

- Tender timetable
- Evaluation process
- Governance and independence requirements

8. Evaluation Criteria

Tenders will be evaluated based on:

- Audit approach and risk understanding
- Sector experience
- Team & continuity
- Governance & communication
- Fees & value for money
- Independence & ethics

The Chamber does not undertake to accept the lowest fee submission.

9. Confidentiality

All information provided by the Chamber is confidential and must not be disclosed to third parties without prior consent.

10. Reservation of Rights

The Chamber reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all tenders
- Seek clarification from bidders
- Not appoint following the tender process