



Consultants Brief for Feasibility Study Joint Landscape Maintenance and Close Cleaning Services

**Brief for Consultancy Services
January 2026**



an alliance involving:



1. About StrathFor

- 1.1 The StrathFor Housing Alliance is a well-known and respected name in the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Council areas. The Alliance has been formed by Forth, Ochil View and Rural Stirling Housing Associations to allow the three organisations to build on their historic collaboration, with each other and with other agencies, working to provide high quality affordable housing.
- 1.2 We combine our expertise, our local knowledge, and our resources to deliver economies of scale and to work in partnership with others, including the local authorities, for the benefit of local communities.
- 1.3 We seek to procure goods and services on a collaborative basis, and we will adopt a joint approach to service delivery, wherever this will benefit our customers. We believe that well run locally controlled housing associations provide the best way of providing homes and services that meet the needs of our unique communities. We also recognise that there are economies and efficiencies to be gained by working together in a larger collaboration.
- 1.4 The Associations which have formed the StrathFor Housing Alliance are all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). As RSLs the StrathFor Alliance partner organisations are required to work within the SHR regulatory framework for Scottish Housing Associations and comply with guidance relating to Group Structures and Constitutional Partnerships. More details can be found on their website www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk
- 1.5 The Governing Body of each of the organisations is controlled by volunteers drawn from people committed to the provision of quality homes and services in and around their communities. Small teams of staff are employed by each Association. Each Association has a history that stretches back over 30 years and during this time they have all developed into well respected organisations known for the quality of their work. However, each Association has its own particular strengths and focus and retains full independence.
- 1.6 Forth has a stock of just over 1,000 homes throughout the eastern part of Stirling Council's area and a very healthy development programme. The stock is in a variety of locations and range from small developments in the Eastern Villages to larger scale

building within Stirling's urban communities. Forth has a long history of collaborating with the local authority, local communities, and other agencies to provide both homes and services. In recent years a major focus has been its contribution to the regeneration of Raploch, where it is working with the Urban Regeneration Company and residents, to develop a 21st century community.

- 1.7 Ochil View owns over 1,475 homes throughout the various communities of Clackmannanshire and West Fife and in addition to being committed to developing new housing with the support of the Scottish Government, invests substantial amounts annually in maintaining its existing properties. Ochil View's success to date has been down to its ability to work with its tenants, local communities, and a range of external agencies in delivering high quality services, concentrating on things which matter most to its tenants namely, the provision of a comfortable affordable home supported by locally based and reliable housing management, maintenance, and repair services.
- 1.8 Rural Stirling has a stock of some 700 homes and operates throughout the rural north and west Stirling Council area. Much of this area of over 750 square miles lies within Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. Rural Stirling has a successful track record of working with partner agencies to provide high quality homes and services aimed at meeting needs and building vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive communities. The Association has an active development programme and plan to build more much needed housing across rural Stirlingshire. Even very small housing developments can have a major impact and require close and sensitive working with local communities and tenants. As a locally based and community-controlled body Rural Stirling has shown its commitment and expertise in this regard over many years.

2. Background to this Brief

- 2.1 The StrathFor Partner Associations currently procure and manage landscape maintenance and close cleaning services independently. The services typically provided include landscaping, estate maintenance and close cleaning. **Table 1** below summarises the current procurement arrangements, individual and potential combined contract value.

Table 1

RSL	No Homes	Value of Landscape Maintenance and Close Cleaning Contracts (per annum, excluding VAT)	Per Unit	Procurement Term	Contract Extension
Forth HA	1,000	£128,000	£128	2024 - 2026	12 months

Ochil View HA	1,476	£154,516	£105	2024 - 2027	No
RSHA	700	£76,122	£109	2022 - 2026	No
Total	3,176	£358,638	£113		

2.2 All three organisations have experienced problems in delivering landscape maintenance services including variations in cost of the service, contractor performance, quality of service, customer satisfaction and value for money.

2.3 This feasibility study aims to explore the potential for StrathFor members to preserve their constitutional independence, while maximising the benefits of partnership working by delivering a joint landscaping service.

3. Brief for Consultancy Services

3.1 The purpose of this Brief is to provide;

- A description of the project requirements and scope of service.
- Details of the Selection and Award Criteria.
- Project timeline and expectations.

4. Feasibility Study Objectives

4.1 The objectives of the Feasibility Study include:

- Assessment of costs and benefits of delivering joint landscaping and close cleaning services.
- Recommended governance framework for a shared service, legal, financial and regulatory implications.
- Evaluation and Options Appraisal of various models of potential delivery vehicles (e.g., arms-length company, subsidiary).
- Service Structure, labour (recruitment, terms and conditions, operational models for seasonal workforce and workforce management etc.), fleet, and branding.
- Development of equitable charging arrangements that reflect variation in size of partner organisations and rural geography.
- Resourcing delivery and implementation of preferred model.

4.2 The Feasibility Study should deliver the following outputs:

- Stakeholder engagement to gather insights and expectations.
- Benchmarking against similar joint landscaping services.

- Financial modelling to assess cost implications.
- Risk assessment to identify potential challenges and mitigation strategies.
- Comprehensive feasibility report with recommendations.
- Presentation of findings to partner associations.

5. Outline Programme

5.1 The feasibility study is expected to be completed within 12 weeks, with key milestones as follows:

- Week 1-2: Initial consultations and data collection.
- Week 3-6: Financial analysis and governance review.
- Week 7-9: Development of delivery and charging models.
- Week 10-12: Draft report, stakeholder feedback, and final presentation.

6 Expectations of the Commission

6.1 StrathFor does not wish to be prescriptive in how the commission is undertaken but would expect that the consultant(s) will work closely with the StrathFor Alliance Partners and respective governing bodies.

6.2 The appointed consultant(s) will be expected to report on progress to the StrathFor partners and present interim/final reports on findings and recommendations as required.

6.3 StrathFor seeks to appoint suitably qualified consultant(s) able to demonstrate the level of skills and experience and commitment required to assist with the specific aspects of the commission.

7. Procurement, Selection and Award Criteria

7.1 Consultant(s) services will be procured in line with StrathFor partner organisations procurement policy. A Tender Board will be established to review and evaluate submissions in accordance with the criteria outlined below.

7.2 This opportunity will be advertised and StrathFor may also approach consultants directly with the relevant skills and expertise to undertake this commission. Quick Quotes will be invited through Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) website and an advert placed in the Latest Tenders Section of SFHA Housing Scotland Today. Tenders for this project are being administered electronically and should be submitted using the secure electronic post box on PCS. Please visit <https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/> Tenders can also be returned by email to the address detailed at section 7.6 below.

7.3 Interested parties should submit details of their relevant experience, resources, understanding, methodology and approach to the commission in addition to a fee proposal for undertaking the work. The Tender Board will review these submissions for best value on the basis of a quality price ratio of 60:40 and in accordance with the Selection Criteria, Weightings and scoring methodology (sample attached). Whilst the

intention is that the award of the commission will be made to the firm of consultants whose submission represents overall best value, StrathFor partners reserve the right not to accept any of the tenders. The Tender Board may or may not decide to hold interviews prior to the award being made. Where interviews are held the Tender Board may adjust their quality scores in the light of the performance of each practice, if applicable.

- 7.4 The fee submitted should be considered as the maximum fee to fulfil the requirements of the Brief and be detailed on the Fee Proposal Form attached. The fee will be deemed to be inclusive of all expenses. Please indicate whether the fee is inclusive or exclusive of VAT. The Fee Proposal should be returned together with the additional supporting information/documentation, as detailed in Section 9, that demonstrates your skills and experience and track record, your methodology, timescales, and costs, breaking these down as appropriate over the various aspects of the commission as outlined in Section 4. It is essential that you are able to undertake this commission in accordance with the outline programme identified in Section 5.
- 7.5 StrathFor will give consideration to joint submissions from firms of consultants where all expertise is not available within a single practice. Details of how the commission will be undertaken in this circumstance should be clearly detailed in your submission indicating which firm will take the lead with responsibilities broken down across the various elements of the commission.
- 7.6 Your submission should be uploaded to the electronic post box on PCS not later than ***close of business on Friday 20 February 2026***. Emailed submissions will only be accepted from suppliers who have no access to PCS. Submissions can be emailed to donna@rsha.org.uk The subject heading for emailed submissions and fee proposals should be ***“Consultancy Services Submission and Fee Proposal”***. StrathFor reserves the right to refuse late, incomplete or abnormally low submissions.
- 7.7 Anyone wishing more detail can contact any of the alliance members as detailed below.

- **Rural Stirling Housing Association**
Stirling Road, Doune, Perthshire
Tel: 01786 841101
Email: enquiries@rsha.org.uk
Web: www.rsha.org.uk
- **Ochil View Housing Association Ltd**
Ochil House
Marshall, Alloa FK10 1AB
Tel: 01259 722899
Email: customerservices@ochilviewha.co.uk
Web: www.ochilviewha.co.uk

- **Forth Housing Association Ltd**
Kildean Business & Enterprise Hub,
146 Drip Road, Stirling, FK8 1RW
Tel: 01786 446066
Email: info@forthha.org.uk
Web: www.forthha.org.uk

7.8 Any aspect of the contents of this Brief requiring clarification should be directed in the first instance to: Donna Birrell CEO, Tel: 01786 841101 Email: donna@rsha.org.uk

8. Data Protection & GDPR

8.1 Consultants submitting proposals with respect to this commission are required to be fully compliant with all aspects of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and all applicable laws and regulations relating to processing of personal data and privacy, including where applicable the guidance and codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner. The successful consultant(s) awarded the commission will be required to promptly notify StrathFor of any breach of the security measures required to be in place by the GDPR. Non-compliance will be regarded as a material default entitling termination of the Contract agreement with immediate effect.

8.2 Transparency Statement: How StrathFor Uses Personal Information

By submitting a proposal in response to this commission, consultant(s) explicitly agree that StrathFor may use any personal information (including sensitive personal information) that the consultant(s) provide as part of the proposal to evaluate, score and decide on the consultant's proposal.

8.3 If the consultant(s) have provided personal information (including sensitive personal information) relating to other individuals, including the consultant's Directors, Partners, Associates, Secretary, Managers, staff, shareholders, their relatives or referees, the consultant(s) confirm that those individuals have been provided with a copy of this statement and have given their explicit consent to StrathFor handling and using such personal information relating to them for the above purposes.

8.4 If the consultant(s) do not provide the personal information requested in this commission, StrathFor may be unable to properly evaluate, score and decide on the consultant's proposal and it may be disregarded on the basis that it is incomplete.

8.5 StrathFor partners may share this personal information with solicitors, professional advisers, auditors, and service providers to comply with legal and regulatory requirements and to seek their advice on its position.

8.6 If the consultant's proposal is successful, StrathFor will keep the consultant's proposal, including any associated evaluation and scoring information, for 6 years after termination of the contract between StrathFor and the consultant(s). If the

consultant(s) are not successful, then this information will be kept for 2 years after the consultant(s) have been notified of the decision on the consultant's proposal. Further information on data retention practices is available from StrathFor partner organisations.

- 8.7 Data protection laws give individuals rights in relation to the personal information that is held about them. Please contact StrathFor for more information on rights or to report concerns about how StrathFor has handled or used personal information. Complaints can also be made to Information Commissioner's Office at: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/> or 0303 123 1113.

9. Additional Supporting Documentation

- a) Sample Evaluation Criteria, Weightings and Guidance
- b) Selection Criteria
- c) Award Criteria
- d) Fee Proposal Form
- e) Resource schedule including names of those who would be engaged with the project and their credentials

a) Sample Evaluation Criteria, Weightings and Guidance

The quality price ratio that will be used to determine overall best value will be 60:40

QUALITY								
Practice	Minimum Selection Criteria			Award Criteria				
	Previous relevant experience	Professional Indemnity	Equality Policy	Resources, skills, expertise, and track record of similar contracts.	Understanding of the requirements, context, and challenges.	Methodology and approach proposed (including sample Board report)	Delivery outputs & timescales	References
Score	Criteria must be met	Criteria must be met	Criteria must be met	20	20	20	20	20
Weighting				40%	10%	30%	10%	10%
A								

B								
C								

StrathFor Best Value Selection Quality Price Evaluation				
Project Quality Weighting: 60% Project Price Weighting: 40%			Project: Assessor:	
Quality	Weighting 60%	Practice A	Practice B	Practice C
		Marks Awarded	Marks Awarded	Marks Awarded
Minimum Selection Criteria	Criteria Met	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Award Criteria				
Interview adjusted score				
Quality score				

Fee				
Price	Weighting 40%	Practice A	Practice B	Practice C
Price Score				
Overall Score Quality weighting 60% x quality score Price weighting 40% x price score				
Signed:			Date:	

The Tender Board will score responses and weight the results according to the percentage indicated.

If interviews are held members of the Tender Board may adjust their quality scores in the light of the performance of each practice, if applicable.

The lowest price will be given a score of 100. One point is then deducted from the other tenders for each one-percentage point that it exceeds the lowest.

The final quality and price scores are weighted in accordance with the ratio indicated as applicable to this project and the practice with the highest combined score will be offered the commission.

This methodology complies with the selection of consultants through a best value quality/price evaluation.

Guidance on the scoring methodology to be used in the evaluation process.

0 - Unacceptable - Nil or inadequate response. Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement. An Organisation which scores '0 – Unacceptable' against any question will be disqualified.

1-5 - Poor - Response is partially relevant and poor. The response addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient/limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled. If a response to an individual question is assessed as 'Poor' this may lead to rejection of a tender.

6-10 - Acceptable - Response is relevant and acceptable. The response addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details on how the requirement will be fulfilled in certain areas.

11-15 - Good - Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled.

16-20 - Excellent - Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full.

b) Selection Criteria

Quality Weighting 60%

For this appointment StrathFor has set minimum selection criteria. Consultants must demonstrate that they are able to meet all of the three minimum selection criteria outlined below. StrathFor will not consider submissions from consultants where any of the three minimum selection criteria have not been met.

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Previous relevant experience

**Criteria Met
Yes/No**

Please detail your relevant experience to undertake this commission. Please provide details of clients for whom you have carried out similar commissions in the last five years.

Professional Indemnity Insurance

**Criteria Met
Yes/No**

StrathFor requires that consultants have in place Professional Indemnity Insurance cover at a level of **£2,000,000** minimum.

Please return details with your submission.

Equality Policy

Criteria Met Yes/No

StrathFor requires consultants to have in place an Equality Policy. By selecting **Yes** above you are certifying that you have a current Equality Policy in place and that this is subject to regular review and update.



an alliance involving:



c) Award Criteria

In this section you are asked to describe your resources, understanding, methodology and approach in relation to the requirements of the commission and how you will deliver services to meet the requirements of the project. If invited for interview you will be given the opportunity to present proposals in more detail. Include a description of any 'added value' services you will provide; describe their relevance to the project; and identify the experience and skills of individuals qualified to apply them.

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Resources, skills, expertise & track record

Score 20

Weighting 40%

Understanding of the brief, context & challenges

Score 20

Weighting 10%

Methodology and approach proposed

Score 20

Weighting 30%

Delivery Timescales

Score 20

Weighting 10%

References**Score 20****Weighting 10%**

StrathFor will take up references on these projects and would therefore suggest that you advise the referees that we will be contacting them in due course.

1.	Name of client/ referee: Designation: Organisation: Address: Tel No: Email address: Details of services undertaken:
2.	Name of client/ referee: Designation: Organisation: Address: Tel No: Email address: Details of services undertaken:

d) Fee Proposal Form

Price Weighting 40%

Please submit details of the price for undertaking this commission by completing and returning the enclosed fee proposal and resource schedule with your submission.

Fee Proposal
Consultancy Services

FAO: Donna Birrell CEO

**Rural Stirling Housing Association,
Stirling Road,
Doune,
Perthshire,
FK16 6AA.**

Having examined the Brief and all other documents contained or referred to we offer to provide services to comply with the Brief and all other such documents for a fixed fee of £.....(including/excluding VAT) state amount in words..... in accordance with the attached Resource Schedule breakdown.

If our Fee is accepted, we will be insured by a policy or policies covering all professional services provided, guidance, advice, and documentation prepared.

The services as outlined in the Brief and supporting documentation will be delivered within the fixed price.

We understand that the successful consultant will be required to enter into a formal agreement with StrathFor and that that this fee will form part of a binding agreement between us.

We confirm that our fee has not been agreed or arranged with any prospective competitor or trade association and will not be communicated to any third party

Yours faithfully,

Consultant Name:

Duly Authorised to sign on behalf of the above

Name: Signature:

Date: Designation:

e) Resource Schedule

Schedule of Services and Fee Proposed for Consultancy Services.

Schedule of services/Work Packages	Total Hours	Senior Consultant/ Partner (£ /Hour)	Consultant (£ /Hour)	Consultant's Assistant (£ /Hour)	Total
Stakeholder engagement to gather insights and expectations.					
Benchmarking against similar joint landscaping services.					
Financial modelling to assess cost implications.					
Risk assessment to identify potential challenges and mitigation strategies.					
Comprehensive feasibility report with recommendations.					
Presentation of findings to partner associations.					
TOTAL					

Please detail staff engaged on the project referenced above and their credentials.