

To: Policy and Resources Committee

1. Purpose of the Report

To inform the Committee of two quotations received from local solicitors' firms for legal work associated with the proposed transfer of the lease for Oare Gunpowder Works site to Faversham Town Council, and to seek approval for the preferred appointment.

2. Background

Faversham Town Council is progressing with the proposed transfer of the Oare Gunpowder Works site, which includes land, heritage structures, and associated visitor facilities.

Legal advice and due diligence are required to ensure that all leasehold and title matters, environmental and heritage obligations, and any existing licences or consents are properly reviewed and recorded.

The Council requested quotations from two firms experienced in conveyancing and commercial property work. For confidentiality, they are referred to in this report as **Company A** and **Company B**.

3. Summary of Quotations

Item	Company A	Company B
Fee structure	Fixed fee between £6,495 and £7,495 + VAT, plus disbursements	Estimated 7 hours at £270 per hour + VAT, plus disbursements
Estimated total (excluding disbursements)	£6,495–£7,495	Approximately £1,890 + VAT, subject to complexity and additional time required
Scope of work included	• Assignment of lease and registration at HM Land Registry • Full due diligence including review of land, millponds, wildlife, and visitor centre • Collating documentation and verifying permits/licences • Reporting on findings and relevant searches	• Assignment of lease and registration • Due diligence on lease terms and relevant title documentation • Confirmation of disbursements (Land Registry, notice fees, search fees) following receipt of Heads of Terms
Basis of quotation	Fixed fee covering all work within defined scope	Hourly rate – may increase depending on work required

Item	Company A	Company B
Additional notes	Additional fee may apply for work outside the defined scope	May be able to offer a fixed fee once Heads of Terms are available

Both firms are local and familiar with the Faversham area, which is beneficial for site-specific and community-sensitive matters.

Funding for this legal work would be met from the Council's Environment budget.

4. Recommendation

That the Committee:

1. Notes the two quotations received from Company A and Company B.
2. Authorises the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of Environment Committee to:
 - Confirm the final scope of work once Heads of Terms are available; and
 - Appoint either Company A or Company B on the basis of best value and appropriate expertise for the Council's interests.
3. Seeks approval from Full Council for the allocation of up to £7,500 + VAT and disbursements for the legal work associated with the transfer of Oare Gunpowder Works.

Louise Bareham
Town Clerk