

**Written statement of a key decision**  
**Cabinet member economy and corporate services**

<b>Title</b>	<b>EAFRD Bid Submission &amp; FBS 2017 Update</b>
Decision maker	Cabinet member economy and corporate services Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here: <a href="http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251">http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251</a>
Date of decision	12 September 2017
Report exemption class	Open
Reason for being a key decision	<p>This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.</p> <p>This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.</p>
A notice was served in accordance with Part 3 (Key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.	
General exception or special urgency (as defined in the constitution)	No
Purpose	<p>To agree the submission of a bid to the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) for European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) funding and if successful to agree to act as accountable body for the funding; and to seek the endorsement of the 2017 update of the Herefordshire Broadband Strategy.</p> <p>The recommendations will allow funding to enable additional broadband coverage for Herefordshire (and partner areas). This is in addition to already procured coverage to target cluster areas. The clusters have been identified based on the collections of premises that are not currently in plan and which are located</p>

	<p>within 2.5km of a business National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) eligible property).</p> <p>The strategy update does not represent a change in direction or policy shift from that which was agreed by full council in December 2015. However, it is important that the strategy reflects the current status and the approaches which define Stage 4 for the community to determine where our activity fits within the grand scheme.</p>
<p><b>Decision</b></p>	<p><b>That:</b></p> <p><b>(a) the assistant director communities be authorised, following consultation with the chief finance officer, to submit a bid for EAFRD funding based on cluster prioritisation on behalf of Herefordshire Council, Gloucestershire County Council, Shropshire Council and Telford and Wrekin Council;</b></p> <p><b>(b) subject to the bid being successful, Herefordshire Council to be the accountable and procuring body for the project with any resulting contract award(s) being subject to further decision ; and</b></p> <p><b>(c) the Fastershire Broadband Strategy 2017 update (at appendix 1) be approved.</b></p>
<p>Reason for the decision</p>	<p>As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at</p> <p><a href="http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50023069">http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50023069</a></p>
<p>Options considered</p>	<p>That one of the other council partners take the lead on a joint EAFRD bid. This is not recommended because the potential partners in this project do not have the same degree of procurement experience with regard to alternative Broadband procurement approaches. Whilst, the other partners would be capable of taking the reins, doing so risks delays in decision making and upskilling which would have a knock on impact on Herefordshire's ability to draw down funding before the UK exits the EU.</p> <p>That the council goes ahead with an EAFRD bid on behalf of itself and Gloucestershire County Council (in line with the Fastershire partnership agreement between the two parties with Herefordshire Council as the lead partner) but without the involvement of Shropshire and Telford. This is not recommended because the project has evolved to date as a joint initiative between the councils that are partners to the Marches and Gloucestershire local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) in order to secure the funds that were allocated for Broadband from the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) strategies. The RPA have recently announced that the funding will instead be allocated via a national call which in theory reduces the onus to stay true to LEP boundaries, but this would require further work to 'decouple' the relevant elements of the bid developed to date.</p> <p>That the cluster prioritisation approach is rejected in favour of other methodology for instance selecting the largest clusters by premise volume or allowing the market to determine which mixture of clusters to bid for. This is not recommended as such an approach</p>

	<p>would make the value for money evaluation of competing bids difficult to assess fairly and may not lead to the areas with the greatest economic potential being targeted which is the focus of EAFRD funding.</p> <p>Not to adopt the strategy update and retain the version agreed by both councils in 2015. This is not recommended as the original strategy attested that the document would remain live and reflect as far as possible the prevailing position. Now is an opportune time to update the documentation based on the latest position.</p>
<p>Declarations of interest (see ▪ below)</p>	
<p>Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)</p>	<p>19 September 2017</p>

<p>Councillor: .....</p> <p>Cabinet member economy and corporate services (Councillor DG Harlow)</p>	<p>Date 12 September 2017</p>
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- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;
- and
- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted by the relevant local authority's head of paid service.