

**Written statement of a key decision**  
**Cabinet**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Hereford Towns Fund town investment plan submission</b>
Decision maker	Cabinet 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	21 January 2021
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	In November 2019 Hereford was included by government in their Towns Fund Programme. This report seeks to accept the grant of £162k to support the process, provide endorsement of the submission, by the Hereford Towns Fund Board to government, of a Town Investment Plan for Hereford and for the council to support the bid by agreeing to be the accountable body for the funding.
<b>Decision</b>	<b>That:</b> <b>(a) The council endorses the Hereford Town Investment Plan submission to government which the Hereford Towns Fund Board will prepare, approve and return before 29 January 2021;</b>

	<p><b>(b) The council acts as the accountable body for the Hereford Towns Fund programme and any Town Deal that is agreed with government;</b></p> <p><b>(c) The Hereford Towns Fund Board is included on the council partnerships register as a significant partnership; and</b></p> <p><b>(d) The council accepts, on behalf of the Hereford Towns Fund Board, the grant of £162k capacity funding to support the development of the Town Investment Plan.</b></p>
Reason for the decision	<p>As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at</p> <p><a href="http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50035959">http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50035959</a></p>
Options considered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alternative Option 1 – Not to endorse the Town Investment Plan submission made by the Hereford Towns Fund Board.</li> <li>2. Advantage – there are considered to be no advantages to this approach.</li> <li>3. Disadvantage – within the government guidance there is no specific requirement for the council to endorse the Town Investment Plan submission. However as the council Leader or Chief Executive is required to be a signatory on the Heads of Terms to be agreed with government at the next stage it is considered appropriate that the council would look to endorse the submission. Additionally significant partnership work between the members of the Hereford Towns Fund Board and the council has been invested in the production of the Town Investment Plan and the council not endorsing the submission would significantly weaken the strength of the Hereford proposal. This would increase the potential for the city to miss out on securing up to £25m of government investment to assist in economic regeneration, with associated reputational consequences.</li> <li>4. This option is not recommended because of the risk to the reputation of the council and the impact on the strength of the Town Investment Plan with the increased potential to lose grant income that will deliver projects within the city that help to deliver the council's County Plan.</li> <li>5. Alternative option 2 – To not act as the accountable body for the Towns Fund Programme and any subsequent Town Deal with government.</li> <li>6. Advantage – the council would not be exposed to potential financial risk associated with the delivery of the projects contained within the submission to government. Projects will manage their financial risk at an individual level and at programme level by the Town Investment Plan project board.</li> <li>7. Disadvantage – the government guidance states that town</li> </ol>

	deals will need an accountable body which will be a council through which the funding will flow. Given the unitary status of Herefordshire it is considered that there is no lower level council with the financial capacity to act in an accountable body role or bankroll a programme of the potential size of the Town Deal. Consequently there is no viable alternative to the council acting as the accountable body for the programme.
Declarations of interest (see below)	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	27 January 2021

<p>Councillor: .....</p> <p>Leader of the Council (Councillor David Hitchiner)</p>	<p>Date 21 January 2021</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.