

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	To approve the expenditure of up to £30,450 for the pre-acquisition survey at The Downs, Colwall.
Date of decision:	08.10.2026
Decision maker:	Service Director, Education, Skills and Learning - Children and Young People
Authority for delegated decision:	The authority for the specified officer to take this decision as set out in the Cabinet report, High Needs Provision Capital Grant spend. The Service Director for Education, Learning and Skills all operational decisions necessary to deliver a Programme of works including varying such Programme. Decision - High Needs Provision Capital Grant spend - Herefordshire Council
Ward:	Hope End
Consultation:	A political group consultation was conducted on 29 January 2026, in which 8 Councillors attended.
Decision made:	To add the pre-acquisition survey of The Downs, Colwall to the Pick Everard Condition Survey contract. To approve the expenditure of up to £30,450 for pre-acquisition survey. The revised total value of the contract with Pick Everard will be up to £107,28.
Reasons for decision:	The Council is currently exploring opportunities to acquire suitable sites for the development of new Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) school facilities. There is a significant shortage of SEND provision within the county, resulting in an increasing reliance on out-of-county specialist placements. These placements are often costly and place considerable financial pressure on the Council. Securing an appropriate site for a specialist SEND setting would increase local capacity, enabling more children and young people to access education closer to home while helping to reduce the ongoing financial burden associated with external placements.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	Pick Everard is currently undertaking Condition Surveys across the Council's maintained school estate. Extending the scope of the existing contract to include this commission will ensure a seamless mobilisation process and enable the survey to be completed within the required timescales.

	The cost of the pre-acquisition survey is consistent with previous quotations received for comparable work and represents good value for money. Proceeding with the acquisition of an asset without undertaking a pre-acquisition survey would expose the Council to a significant level of risk, as potential defects, liabilities, or unforeseen costs may not be identified prior to purchase.
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	Run a competitive procurement process. This option is not recommended as the pre-acquisition survey is time-critical and must be completed during the October half-term period. Undertaking a competitive tender exercise would be unlikely to align with the required programme and could jeopardise delivery within the necessary timescales. Take no action. This option is not recommended as proceeding with the acquisition of an asset without the required surveys being undertaken would expose the Council to significant financial and operational risk. Any defects, liabilities, or unforeseen costs identified after completion could result in substantial additional expenditure for the Local Authority.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None.

Signed: L Farr

Date: 08-10-2026