

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	To approve the expenditure of up to £75,000 from the Schools Capital Investment Programme budget for feasibility studies and associated investigative work at Westfield School, Leominster and to award a contract for the feasibility study to Robothams Architects Ltd.
Date of decision:	27 April 2021
Decision maker:	Assistant Director Education Development and Skills
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>The authority for the specified officer to take this decision is set out in the cabinet report approved on 21 January 2021:</p> <p>https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7531</p> <p>The decision that:</p> <p>(a) Feasibility studies, within an approved budget of £475K, are commissioned to inform a programme of school capital investment work;</p> <p>(b) The Assistant Director for Education, Development and Skills be authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to deliver the required schedule of feasibility studies within the approved budget of £475k including fees; and</p> <p>(c) The Assistant Director for Education, Development and Skills be authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to vary the schedule of feasibility studies should any information received require them to do so.</p>
Ward:	Leominster South
Consultation:	<p>The decision to proceed with the expenditure was consulted upon as part of the cabinet decision listed above.</p> <p>Representatives of the council's financial and procurement teams have been consulted over this decision.</p>
Decision made:	<p>1) To award a contract to Robothams Architects Ltd for the completion of a feasibility study to explore options and make recommendations for the improvement of Westfield Special School, Leominster. The appointment to be based on an initial cost of £11,950 plus associated surveys, contingency, statutory and professional fees. A total cost up to the value of £75,000.</p> <p>2) To delegate authority to the senior project manager to authorise spend and manage the budget up to a value of £75,000 for the services described in (1) above.</p>
Reasons for decision:	In order to ensure that any funding allocated for capital improvements to the compliance, suitability and condition of Westfield Special School is properly targeted, it is important that an accurate, thorough and current feasibility study is undertaken. The feasibility study will consider all available options and make recommendations for the option expected to

	<p>achieve best outcomes in terms of function, suitability and value for money. The report will also identify associated risks, benefits and high-level costings.</p> <p>Robothams Architects Ltd have been selected following a competitive procurement exercise in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures. A tender enquiry was issued to four bidders selected for their specific expertise and experience. The contract will be awarded in accordance with council contract procurement rules.</p> <p>In order to provide an accurate assessment there may be a requirement for other specialist advice or support and for technical surveys to be undertaken, which will be done outside of the contract with Robothams Ltd, albeit with their support. Possible requirements include: topographical, geotechnical, measured buildings, drainage, wildlife and environmental surveys. The nature and extent of surveys or other specialist support required will be informed by the findings of the feasibility study as it progresses. An element of funding has been included to cover these costs should the need arise.</p> <p>Any additional appointments required will also be undertaken in accordance with the Council's procurement and contract procedure rules.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>The costs for this work will be funded from the £475K budget authorised by the cabinet decision referred to above. A sum of £75K from that total was provisionally allocated for all aspects of feasibility assessment at Westfield School.</p> <p>Of the four tender enquiries issued, Robothams Architects were the only bidders to return a submission by the tender deadline. Under the Council's procurement procedures this does not preclude them from being appointed if their submission when evaluated for quality and cost is found to be acceptable.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Not to award. This option is not recommended as the feasibility works are required to inform the next steps for delivering badly needed improvements to the Westfield buildings. If feasibility studies are not carried out then the improvement work cannot proceed as there would not be sufficient assurance that any proposed solution would deliver a successful outcome in terms of function, suitability and value for money. The school would continue to operate from unsuitable premises and high maintenance costs would continue to be incurred.</p> <p>To re-tender the works. This option is not recommended. The tender submission from Robothams Architects was obtained via a competitive tendering process in line with the Council's procurement rules and procedures. Their tender submission has been evaluated for quality against pre-defined criteria and found to be satisfactory. The cost submitted is within budget, and has been found to compare favourably with costs for other comparable feasibility contracts awarded by the Council following competitive tendering processes. Re-tendering the work would cause a delay to the prospective delivery of the improvements targeted.</p>

Details of any declarations of interest made:	None
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Signed

Date: 27 April 2021

Ceri Morgan

Assistant director education, development and skills