

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Decision to spend the grant funding of £50,000 by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government for the National Model Design Code testing pilot.
Date of decision:	14 July 2021
Decision maker:	Marc Willimont, Assistant Director Regulatory, Environment and Waste
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>Herefordshire Council's Constitution Scheme of Delegation, Part 3: Section 7 – Officer Functions, 3.7.5 Operations decisions. Part 4: Section 7: Financial procedure rules</p> <p>Economy and Place Scheme of Delegation as amended on 8 July 2021 Line 86 'To provide written comments/ bids to organisations such as MHCLG for requisition of grants'.</p>
Ward:	<p>The testing pilot involves parishes from the following wards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backbury • Golden Valley South • Hagley • Weobley
Consultation:	<p>Consultation is being undertaken with the pilot parish councils testing the design code.</p> <p>The relevant ward members have been consulted about the inclusion of each parish council within the pilot testing programme.</p> <p>Additional target engagement will take place within the parishes as part of the ongoing refinement of the testing and results reported to MHCLG</p> <p>The Cabinet Member will continued to be provided updates on the progress of the pilot within service briefing</p>
Decision made:	To progress the design pilot testing with authorisation to be given to spend from the approved grant budget of not more than £50,000.
Reasons for decision:	<p>As part of the National Model Design Code testing programme, Herefordshire Council has been awarded £50,000 to test the ability of design coding to be integrated into the neighbourhood planning process.</p> <p>The testing programme expected outcomes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand how the relationship between design codes and neighbourhoods plans work in practice, • To understand how the online community engagement techniques can facilitate local design codes, • To establish an intended hierarchy of design codes across the county • To translate the National Model Design Code into locally rural based templates and guidance notes to assist communities to produce their own design codes <p>To undertake this testing four pilot areas have been selected and the following parish councils will be working with officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bartestree • Eywas Harold • Fownhope • Weobley

	<p>To undertake the testing programme the grant funding will be utilised as follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officer time spent on the testing programme • Upgrade to design and illustration ICT software to assist production of design guidance material • Online consultation package to test consultation methods with pilot parish councils • Materials and costs associated with parish consultation events such as village hall hire and display printing • Locally based artist to produce locally distinctive illustrations for inclusion within the Herefordshire design guidance material
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<p>Financial risks – Limited financial risk. The grant has been awarded and there was no requirement to match fund. It is anticipated that the pilot testing expenditure will not exceed the grant awarded.</p> <p>Legal – unlikely to have any legal implications</p> <p>Equality considerations – the testing programme is to understand the practicality of implementing design codes across the county. The programme is testing the ability of all to be involved with the government's plan to move to a more online planning system</p> <p>Health and safety – there are unlikely to be any implications</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<p>There are no other alternatives. The grant funding has been awarded and the pilot required spend to test alternative consultation methods and produce testing outcomes. This will influence national policy setting in relation to the Planning for the Future Bill in the autumn.</p>
Details of any declarations of interest made:	<p>No declarations of interest.</p>

Signed..... Date: 14 July 2021