

Record of operational decision

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| Decision title: | To approve the appointment of MESH Construction Consultancy Ltd to undertake feasibility studies to increase primary and secondary school capacity. |
| Date of decision: | 22 July 2021 |
| Decision maker: | Assistant Director Education, Development and Skills |
| Authority for delegated decision: | The authority for the specified officer to take this decision is set out in the cabinet report approved on 21 January 2021 https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7531 |
| Ward: | All Wards |
| Consultation: | <p>Cabinet debated and approved a report on the Schools Capital Investment Programme on 21 January 2021.</p> <p>Consultation has taken place with head teachers, Chair of governors, the Diocese/Archdiocese and ward councillors who agreed to the proposals.</p> <p>The cabinet member for commissioning, procurement and assets and the cabinet member for children & families have been consulted and are supportive of the proposals.</p> <p>Political groups were consulted on the schools capital investment programme and no objections or comments were received.</p> |
| Decisions made: | <p>To award a contract to MESH Construction Consultancy Ltd (MESH) following a successful tendering exercise to undertake the approved feasibility studies at identified primary schools and secondary schools. The appointment to be based on an initial cost of £115,000 plus associated surveys, contingency, statutory and professional fees. A total cost not exceeding £400k.</p> <p>To delegate authority to the project manager to authorise spend and manage budget up to the value of £400k for the services described above.</p> |
| Reasons for decision: | <p>Ensuring there are sufficient school places to meet parental demand is a statutory duty for the council. The council receive formula based government grant funding in the form of Basic Need to support the provision of these places in both primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>The 2016 – 2021 Schools Capital Investment Strategy is informed by a set of widely consulted principles and is applied to a detailed understanding of each of our schools and other establishments to provide clear options for improvement. This strategy has identified a number of areas that need development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase capacity of the secondary school estate • Increase capacity of the primary school estate |

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| | <p>All projects identified will have a feasibility study undertaken to determine high level costs to obtain a perspective on its viability. The feasibility studies will inform how best to increase the capacity of the council's school estate where it is most needed.</p> <p>MESH have been selected following a competitive tendering exercise in accordance with the council's contract procedure rules.</p> |
| <p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p> | <p>The costs for the feasibilities are included in the Preliminary Works budget that has been approved by Council and in the cabinet decision on 21 January 2021.</p> <p>Timing is an issue, there are already pressures on places in some planning areas.</p> <p>The council has a statutory duty to provide enough school places. Some funding was provided by central government in 2018/19. The council could be criticised if they do not make best use of funding.</p> |
| <p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p> | <p>Not to award. This option is not recommended as the feasibility studies are required to inform the next steps for the provision of additional school places. If feasibility studies are not carried out then the additional places cannot be created as there would be insufficient assurance that any proposed solutions would deliver successful outcomes in terms of function, suitability and value for money.</p> |
| <p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p> | <p>None</p> |

Signed

Date: 22 July 2021

Ceri Morgan
Assistant director education development and skills