

## Record of Officer Decision

<b>Decision title:</b>	Appointment of Core Tree Ltd, IBD Advice Group Ltd and Mountain Perspective onto the Growth Hub Advisor Framework to deliver 1-2-1 tailored business support to Herefordshire based businesses up to 31 March, 2022
<b>Date of decision:</b>	28 July 2021
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Interim Director Economy and Place
<b>Authority delegated decision:</b>	Chief Executive Scheme of Delegation to Officers Appendix 1 – SA45 - Economy Development
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Consultation:</b>	None – core activity for Economic Development/Marches Growth Hub.
<b>Decision made:</b>	Following the outcome of the council’s ITT process, in accordance with the council’s contract procedure rules, we wish to invite Core Tree Ltd, IBD Advice Group Ltd and Mountain Perspective onto the Growth Hub Advisor Framework to deliver 1-2-1 tailored business support to Herefordshire based businesses up to 31 <sup>st</sup> March, 2022.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>	<p>This commission relates to a package of business support and 1-2-1 tailored business advice to businesses of any size, trading for 6 months plus. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) recognises the importance of 1-2-1 business advice in order to help businesses become more resilient, grow and increase productivity. This may include for example, business planning, accessing finance, innovation and the adoption of management best practice and use of technology.</p> <p>An annual allocation is made to each Growth Hub from BEIS (via the Local Enterprise Partnership) to increase the capacity of Growth Hubs to offer 1-2-1 sessions with businesses. This year’s allocation is £54,000 and three advisors have been appointed via the council’s ProContract Procurement portal - with assistance from the Commercial Services Team.</p> <p>Specialist support can include, but not limited to, support in the following areas: Legal, HR, Finance (including accountancy and accessing the different types of finance), Digital (supporting businesses to get on-line) and Sales and Marketing expertise to help businesses look at new ways to reach new customers/markets, streamline processes, support effectiveness of sales and help diversify offerings.</p> <p>Direct 1-2-1 support is capped at two days (8 hour days) maximum per business. Advisors are then able to claim for up to a further two days admin time to support research, session preparation, report writing etc around the sessions. In total, the business will receive the equivalent of up to four days support.</p> <p>The funding to support this package is to be spent by the end of March 2022. This contract will run from July 2021 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 with the option to extend for a further 3 months - this will be subject to the council securing additional funds but the total value of the contract will not be above £75,000.</p>
<b>Highlight any associated risks / finance / legal / equality</b>	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>The council will receive via the LEP, an allocation of £54,000 to deliver this programme, over and above the normal yearly allocation.</p>

<b>considerations:</b>	<p><b>Procurement</b> Core Tree Ltd, IBD Advice Group Ltd and Mountain Perspective were selected through an ITT procurement process which was issued via the ProContract Portal and in accordance with the council's contract procedure rules.</p> <p><b>Risks</b></p> <p>If this contract isn't entered into, Herefordshire would have to return the allocation to the LEP/BEIS. Currently there isn't sufficient capacity, or industry expertise, in the GH Team to deliver these sessions to businesses. Not supporting local businesses may result in the lack of growth potential, lack of further investment, lack of businesses resilience to pandemic, flooding, changes in legislation, and potential loss of jobs to the local economy.</p>
<b>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</b>	<p>The council does not have to deliver this activity and does not have to receive the allocation given to Herefordshire. Currently, there is no other funding to commission a similar contract and the opportunity would be lost to Herefordshire businesses.</p>
<b>Details of any declarations of interest made:</b>	<p>None</p>

Signed:

Neil Taylor  
Interim Director of Economy & Place

Date: 28 July 2021