

Title of report: To approve spend for Safer Streets 3 Project

Decision maker: Corporate Director – Economy & Environment

Decision date: 24 March 2022

Report by: Senior Project Manager

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

Aylestone Hill; Central; College; Dinedor Hill; Greyfriars; Hinton & Hunderton; Newton Farm; Redhill; Whitecross and Widemarsh

Purpose

To approve spend of up to **£283,908** on the Safer Streets 3 Project, which is being delivered in conjunction with The Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia, who have been awarded a grant from the Home Office to deliver this project.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **The Safer Streets 3 Project grant of £249,253 be accepted from the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner;**
- b) **The match funding of £6,511 be accepted from the stronger towns fund as per the agreement between the council and the Wyeside River Project;**
- c) **Expenditure of up to £283,908 be approved for the improvements set out in paragraph 3 of this report;**
- d) **The Interim Service Director for Economy and Regulatory Services is authorised, in consultation with the Corporate Director - Economy & Environment and the council's Section 151 officer to take all operational decisions relating to the above recommendations.**

Alternative options

1. The alternative option is not to accept the grant. The grant has been awarded to The Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia from the Home Office, for which they are required to deliver the Safer Streets 3 Project by 31 March 2022. These elements of the project for which approval is being sought are only able to be facilitated by the council, which was supported by the Chief Executive of the council as part of the consultation process in preparation of the bid by The Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia.

Key considerations

2. Following a grant bid to the Home Office, The Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia (PCCWM) have been successful in their bid for a grant to facilitate Safer Streets in Hereford. The key objective is to make public places safer for all.
3. These improvements were identified as a result of West Mercia Police consultation. It focusses on routes taken home by females when out in the Night Time Economy (NTE) in Hereford. Three geographic areas of concern were identified (Aylestone, Whitecross Road and Bishops Meadow and Canary Bridge) through crime statistics, public surveys and wider consultation. In response, the Hereford Safer Streets Project will specifically target Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) offences of street harassment and violence, stalking, sexual assault, rape and domestic abuse perpetrated in public. The grant will deliver the following improvements –
 - Guardianship Expansion – expanding the ‘Lean on me’ programme outside the city centre.
 - Education Programme to Partners – educating key partners in the NTE through increasing understanding of behaviours which are sexually harmful resulting in a zero tolerance approach of perpetrators.
 - Awareness will promote knowledge of safe spaces to go to in times of crisis for help and support.
 - Education Programme to Schools / Colleges.
 - Campaign – through VAWG engagement, develop a campaign and materials that focus on a non-victim blaming approach by appealing to bystanders to report unacceptable behaviour to guardians, raising awareness for women and girls to report concerns and detailing support services available, developing an accreditation for establishments to support zero tolerance approaches and highlighting they employ trained staff and sponsored art project amongst students to design appropriate signage for the Safer Routes.
 - CCTV – cameras to be installed for each of the identified geographical areas to provide suitable coverage and linked in to the existing county wide network.
 - Lighting – enhanced street lighting for all areas to provide increased illumination and feelings of personal safety.
 - Landscaping – at identified locations to manage tree / shrub overgrowth and increase natural surveillance.

The improvements that require delivery from the council are as follows:

- Additional CCTV cameras
 - Enhanced street lighting
 - Landscaping of trees / shrubs to increase natural surveillance
4. Following award of the grant to PCCWM, it has been agreed that the above improvements are required to be delivered by the council. Granting approval will enable the work orders to be placed. Works to the public realm will be undertaken utilising the BBLP Public Realm Contract. The additional CCTV cameras will be procured and supplied through a mini competition via the ESPO Framework Agreement No. 628_19 (Lot 1), procured in line with the council's contract procedure rules.
 5. In terms of impact, increased street lighting and CCTV have been shown to reduce crime by an average of 21%. The established guardianship in the city centre helped to reduce crime / ASB by approximately 20% in 2019.
 6. It's believed that these measures combined with a robust education programme and high profile campaigning will help to reduce VAWG offences in the city by 50% over a 12 month period and will significantly increase feelings of safety.
 7. In terms of secondary benefits, it's anticipated that these measures will help to reduce other crime types and have a knock on effect of reducing demands on emergency / public services. It will also benefit the local communities, increasing feelings of safety, leading to increased footfall and helping to contribute to a richer business economy.

Community impact

8. This project supports the delivery of the County Plan 2020 – 2024 CO0 – strengthen communities to ensure everyone lives well and safely together.

Environmental Impact

9. The project will take back vegetation and shrubs, particularly along Great Western Way, leaving native hawthorns and re-introducing shrubs and plants for bees and butterflies, which have been specifically chosen for this purpose. These will be maintained through the BBLP Public Realm Contract.
10. The environmental impact of this proposal has been considered through the service specification and includes appropriate requirements on the contractor/delivery partner to minimise waste, reduce energy and carbon emissions and to consider opportunities to enhance biodiversity. This will be managed and reported through the ongoing contract management. The CCTV Contract includes providing a CCTV system to deliver the council's objectives to deter, detect and reduce the fear of crime, to improve public protection, to apprehend and prosecute offenders and enhance the environment and the Contractor must strip out and dispose of all redundant IT and CCTV equipment no longer required in a suitable environmentally friendly way.

11. Whilst this is a decision on back office functions and will have minimal environmental impacts, consideration has been made to minimise waste and resource use in line with the council's Environmental Policy.
12. The council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.

Equality duty

13. It is intended that this initiative will provide an increased level of safety to the residents in the wards of Hereford where these works will be delivered, inclusive of all protected characteristics.

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Resource implications

14. PCCWM have been awarded a grant to the sum of £515,935 and have requested that the council delivers elements of the Safer Streets 3 project. These elements have been allocated a sum of **£283,908** for delivery and are detailed in the table below.

| Capital cost of project | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | Future Years | Total |
|--------------------------|---------|-----------------|---------|--------------|-------|
| CCTV | | £173,169 | | | |
| CCTV Contingency | | £6,071 | | | |
| CCTV Signage | | £8,000 | | | |
| CCTV Signage Contingency | | £400 | | | |
| Lighting | | £65,000 | | | |
| Lighting Contingency | | £1,865 | | | |
| Vegetation | | £26,606 | | | |
| Vegetation Contingency | | £500 | | | |
| BT Disconnect | | £2,297 | | | |
| TOTAL | | £283,908 | | | |

| Funding streams (indicate whether base budget / external / grant / capital borrowing) | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | Future Years | Total |
|---|---------|-----------------|---------|--------------|-------|
| <i>Safer Streets Grant (West Mercia Police)</i> | | £249,253 | | | |
| <i>Match Funding, Stronger Towns Programme (through Wyeside Project)</i> | | £6,511 | | | |
| <i>CCTV S106 Grant</i> | | £28,144 | | | |
| TOTAL | | £283,908 | | | |

The match funding element of the budget from the Stronger Towns Fund will be claimed through the stronger towns claims process as outlined in the funding agreement between the council and the Wyeside River Project. Invoice evidence will be provided to West Mercia Police to claim the match element.

The CCTV S106 grant governance is in place.

The revenue costs for lighting and vegetation will be picked up as part of the BBLP Public Realm contract. This was considered as part of the bid to the Home Office, the Chief Executive of the council was included in the consultation process.

An additional £20,000 has been allocated to the revenue budget for running the CCTV service, this was approved by Council when the budget was approved on 11 February 2022.

Project Management costs were not included as part of the bid, approval to proceed on this basis has been given by the PMO Delivery Director, costs will be absorbed within the teams revenue budget.

Legal implications

- The council has powers under sections 1-4 of the Localism Act 2011 to accept grant funding from The Police and Crime Commission for West Mercia to deliver the following outputs on behalf of The Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia: installation of Safer Routes Signage; the purchase and installation of CCTV cameras in hotspot areas; enhanced street lighting in hotspot areas and landscaping/removal of shrub overgrowth.

16. It is proposed that the council enters into a grant agreement with West Mercia Police Commission to secure payment of the grant to the council to under the required works. Legal Services have drafted a suitable form of agreement and will support the negotiation and completion of this agreement.
17. All works required to deliver the required outputs will be procured in accordance with the council's contract procedure rules which is required under the terms of the agreement between Police and Crime Commission for West Mercia and Home Office and the Police and Crime Commission and the council.

Risk management

18. The risks associated with the recommended action are:
19. The council have been identified as a key partner in being able to deliver the Safer Street 3 Project and not doing so would impact PCCWM's achievement of this. The council is the only statutory body that can undertake these works.
20. The grant offers an opportunity to provide increased safety to the residents in the wards of Hereford where this work is taking place and not implementing the additional CCTV, completion of the street lighting and vegetation could pose an increased safety risk.
21. Not undertaking the works would therefore not meet a Government manifesto commitment of improving public safety of which the Safer Streets grant is allocated as part of the measures to cut crime and ensure communities are safe and secure. Accepting the grants and delivering the works would therefore achieves the grant objectives.
22. The grant funding would have to be returned to the Home Office if the works do not proceed.
23. Under the terms of the grant agreement between PCCWM and the council the works are required to be completed by 31 March 2022. The council has agreed with PCCWM that a detailed programme plan is to be provided confirming the schedule.

| Risk / opportunity | Mitigation |
|---|--|
| Works are not completed by the 31 March 2022 as per grant criteria | Confirmation has been received from the Home Office and West Mercia Police that works can complete post 31 March 2022 as a detailed completion programme plan is provided as evidence. |
| Contractor availability to install additional cameras by 31 March 2022 | Early engagement with contractor. |
| Supply issues for new cameras / lighting | Early sourcing and placement of orders. |
| Highways Agency approval for camera locations and artwork | Early engagement with Highways England |
| Revenue funding for ongoing CCTV monitoring | Revenue funding has been earmarked for the 22/23 financial year. Discussions ongoing with WMP OPCC regarding contributions. |
| Impact to working relationship with the Police should approval not be granted | Approval to deliver the project. |
| Communities not welcoming changes | West Mercia Police have consulted with the public which confirmed the scope for this project. |

24. The risks are managed as part of the Safer Streets Project Board, which reports into the Economic Development Delivery Board. Regular project meetings are also scheduled with West Mercia Police.

Consultees

25. Consultation has taken place with the lead Cabinet Member who was supportive of the recommendation.
26. Consultation has also taken place with Ward Members for Wards impacted by the project. Ward Members are supportive of the project.
27. The key theme of queries raised were in relation to locations identified outside of the scope of the project. Each query was responded to and if required forwarded to the relevant colleagues within the council or West Mercia Police.

Appendices

None.

Background papers

None identified.

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published

| | | |
|----------------|--|-----------------|
| Governance | Sarah Buffrey, Democratic Services Officer | Date 22/02/2022 |
| Finance | Karen Morris | Date 16/02/2022 |
| Legal | Alice McAlpine | Date 09/02/2022 |
| Communications | Luenne Featherstone | Date 02/02/2022 |
| Equality Duty | Carol Trachonitis | Date 07/02/2022 |
| Procurement | Mark Cage | Date 07/03/2022 |
| Risk | Kevin Lloyd | Date 02/02/2022 |

Approved by Ross Cook Date 16/03/2022