

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	To appoint Metro Dynamics to support the council to develop the Big Economic Plan and UK Share Prosperity Investment Plan.
Date of decision:	25 May 2022
Decision maker:	Corporate Director Economy and Environment
Authority for delegated decision:	The authority is for the specified officer to take this decision is established under the chief executive's scheme of delegation SA45. http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayclassic.aspx?NAME=SOD01
Ward:	All Wards
Consultation:	Cabinet consulted in terms of approach to the development of the Big Economic Plan and UK Shared Prosperity Investment Plan. Herefordshire Council Commercial Services, Finance and Legal Team.
Decision made:	<p>a) To enter into a direct award with Metro Dynamics to lead the development of the Big Economic Plan and the UK Shared Prosperity Investment Plan including the Multiply Investment Plan, totaling £128,263.</p> <p>As there was insufficient time for a mini completion to be run in accordance with framework rules and therefore a waiver from the council's contract procedure rules has been sought to allow a direct award to Metro Dynamics. The appointment will be funded from revenue budget C07499 - Economic Plan.</p>
Reasons for decision:	<p>Government has allocated Herefordshire £7.545m of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) to be spent between 2022/23 and 2024/25 (including circa £800K to be spent in this financial year). However, in order to access these funds the council has to submit a multiply (adult numeracy) investment plan by the 30 June 2022 and a UKSPF Investment Plan by the 1 August 2022.</p> <p>The UKSPF Investment Plan is a significant element of work requiring in depth evidence base and analysis of local issues and needs, review of the impact of previous programmes, as well as engagement with businesses, voluntary sector, communities, HE/ FE, and a broad range of public partners. The funding allocation also represents circa 33% of the funds available through the previous EU programmes, as such the development of the UKSPF Investment Plan will need to carefully consider prioritisation of future activities.</p> <p>The council is also committed to developing a new Big Economic Plan, the UKSPF Investment Plan and the Big Economic Plan need to aligned, based on the same core evidence base and priorities. Metro Dynamics have significant experience of working in Herefordshire, having led the development of the Marches Strategic Economic Plan and Local Industrial Strategy on behalf of The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership. Given the urgent timescales required to meet the government deadlines, and due to their existing experience and knowledge, Metro Dynamics have been appointed by way of a direct award to lead this work.</p>

	Value for money has been assured, as the tender is based on the same day rates set in the Homes England Research Framework.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	Without access to the capacity and expertise required, the council will not be able to meet the deadline for the UKSPF Investment Plan, potentially losing £7.545m of critical funding support to the county.
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	The council could go out to open procurement rather than directly appointing Metro Dynamics. However, the national deadlines set for submission of the UKSPF Investment Plan and the Multiply (adult Numeracy) Investment Plan do not allow time for this process to be completed.

Details of any declarations of interest made:	None

I am an officer delegated to make the decision

Signed:

Print Name: Ross Cook

Job Title: Corporate Director Economy and Environment