

# To approve spend for Safer Streets 4 Project

**Decision maker: Corporate Director – Economy and Environment**

**Decision date: 14 October 2022**

**Report by: CCTV Compliance Manager**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

Non-key

## **Wards affected**

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

## **Purpose**

To approve spend of up to £149,734 on the Safer Streets 4 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 4 Project grant of £149,734 be accepted from the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner and the S151 amends the capital programme to reflect this grant;**
- b) **Expenditure of up to £149,734 be approved for the improvements set out in paragraph 3 of this report; and**
- c) **The Director for Economy 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 4 Project by 31 March 2023. 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 highlight specially 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. This decision will enable the work orders to be placed. Works to the public realm 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.
8. Although it is noted that whilst the Safer Streets grant funding will improve education and the provision of equipment, the level of monitoring services remains the same. There will be significant increased coverage of CCTV infrastructure, without the proportionate increase in staffing to monitor reducing the impact/ outcomes that can be achieved. Over recent years financial contributions to monitoring other than by the council have been withdrawn. In accepting the grant and implementing the additional infrastructure Herefordshire Council will continue to work with the PCCWM and partners to explore ways to also enhance the monitoring capacity.

### **Community impact**

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

### **Environmental Impact**

10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. 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

14. 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 –
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## Resource implications

15. PCCWM have been awarded a grant to the sum of £344,785 and have requested that the council delivers elements of the Safer Streets 4 project. These elements have been allocated a sum of £149,734 for delivery and are detailed in the table below.

Capital cost of project			2022/23	Future Years	Total
			£	£	£
CCTV			101,734		101,734
CCTV Signage			8,000		8,000
Street Lighting			36,000		36,000
Vegetation			4,000		4,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>149,734</b>		<b>149,734</b>

Funding streams (indicate whether base budget / external / grant / capital borrowing)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Future Years	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Safer Streets Grant (West Mercia Police)	149,734				149,734
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>149,734</b>				<b>149,734</b>

Revenue budget implications	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Future Years	Total
N/A					
<b>TOTAL</b>					

16. The revenue costs for street lighting electricity and vegetation maintenance will be absorbed within existing budgets. This was considered as part of the bid to the Home Office, the Chief Executive of the council was included in the consultation process.
17. Herefordshire Council project management and officer costs have been included as part of PCCWM bid, approval to proceed on this basis has been given by the PMO Delivery Director, costs will be absorbed within the team's revenue budget.
18. Due to the additional cameras and observation screens (increased to 170 screens) additional staffing to monitor screens will be required in future years as noted above. Currently only one operative in position, due to reduction in third party revenue funding in recent years. In accepting the grant, the council will work with the PCC WM and other partners to explore ways of ensuring the monitoring of the service can be enhanced in line with the improved infrastructure.

### **Legal implications**

19. 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.
20. The council will enter into a grant agreement with The Police and Crime Commission for West Mercia to secure payment of the grant to the council to reimburse the council to the deliver the project.
21. Legal Services have reviewed the grant agreement and will support the negotiation and completion of this agreement.
22. 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 grant agreement

### **Risk management**

23. The risks associated with the recommended action are:
24. The council have been identified as a key partner in being able to deliver the Safer Street 4 Project and not doing so would impact PCCWM's achievement of this. The council is the only statutory body that can undertake these works.
25. 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.
26. 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.
27. The grant funding would have to be returned to the Home Office if the works do not proceed.
28. Under the terms of the grant agreement between PCCWM and the council the works are required to be completed by 31 March 2023. The council has agreed with PCCWM that a detailed programme plan is to be provided confirming the schedule.
29. The council will need to increase the staffing needed to adequately man up to 170 screens once the Safer Streets project is complete.

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Works are not completed by the 31 March 2023 as per grant criteria	Confirmation has been received from the Home Office and West Mercia Police that works can complete post 31 March 2023 as long as a detailed completion programme plan is provided as evidence.
Contractor availability to install additional cameras by 31 March 2023	Early engagement with contractor.
Supply issues for new cameras / lighting	Early sourcing, placement of orders and increased inflation.
Highways Agency approval for camera locations and artwork	Early engagement with Highways England
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.
Vegetation works not maintained to the desired standard	The works involved in this project are based on a one off redesign of the vegetation in the key areas and these will now have regular works programmed in to keep the vegetation to the standard required
Requirement for extra staffing resource	Provision of historical footage for any incidents records and the use of motion detection and analytical information can be used on the cameras to alert the monitoring officers to incidents.  Discussions will be taking place with partners regarding ongoing and additional contributions towards the service
Additional Street Lighting costs	The additional street lighting costs will be calculated

30. 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

31. Consultation has taken place with the lead Cabinet Member who was supportive of the recommendation.

32. Consultation has also taken place with Ward Members for Wards impacted by the project. Ward Members are supportive of the project.
33. 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:

Governance	Sarah Buffrey	Date 23/09/2022
Finance	Karen Morris/ Louise Devlin	Date 04/10/2022
Legal	Alice McAlpine	Date 21/09/2022
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 22/09/2022
Equality Duty	Carol Trachonitis	Date 23/09/2022
Procurement	Mark Cage	Date 28/09/2022
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 28/09/2022

Approved by	Ross Cook	Date 12/10/2022
-------------	-----------	-----------------