

Record of Officer Decision

Decision title:	Procurement of professional services to undertake the revised outline urban design, consultation and detailed urban design for the Cathedral and River Wye Quarter as part of the Hereford City Centre Improvements (HCCI).
Date of decision:	March 2023
Decision maker:	Director for Economy and Place (Historic)
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>On 3 December 2020 the Cabinet Member Infrastructure and Transport took a decision to authorise the following works to be progressed:</p> <p>(b) The Hereford City Centre Improvements project is progressed to develop and deliver the following initial elements within a budget of £1.65m (as detailed in paragraph 49 of the report):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A package of streetscape and green infrastructure elements, including improvement to market and event facilities for the Hereford City Centre Improvements (HCCI) area are identified and delivered as outlined in paragraph 19. (ii) A review of the design for the public realm improvements in the remaining High Town area be undertaken; (iii) The design for the Cathedral and River Wye quarter areas is undertaken, to include stakeholder engagement and public consultation of the proposals; (iv) Further materials for the High Town area be procured in the event that expenditure on items (i) to (iv) above is forecast to be insufficient to meet the spend criteria of the LEP grant. <p>The decision delegated authority to progress these works as follows:</p> <p>(c) The Director for Economy and Place be authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to procure and deliver the elements (i) to (v) above and that a further report be prepared once items iii and iv have been completed to determine the remaining delivery programme for the completion of the overall HCCI project.</p> <p>This decision can be viewed using the following link: http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=50036070</p>
Ward:	Central.
Consultation:	Consultation of this decision has taken place with the council's communications, procurement and legal services teams.

<p>Decision made:</p>	<p>To make a direct award via the SEWTAPS framework, to The Urbanists for professional services, within the available budget of £87,980 to undertake the remaining outline urban re-design, consultation and the detailed urban design for the Cathedral and River Wye Quarter as part of the HCCI and outlined in the 3 December 2020 Cabinet Member decision report. This can be viewed using the following link: http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50036070</p>
<p>Reasons for decision:</p>	<p>Originally, a feasibility business case was developed and approved in 2019 to continue the development of the HCCI project. This requested funding to broaden the extents of the HCCI project to include an area to the south west of High Town which includes Broad Street, King Street, Bridge Street and other smaller streets in the vicinity referred to as the Cathedral and River Wye Quarter (CRWQ).</p> <p>The vision being for the streets and spaces in CRWQ to be vibrant and active places where people want to spend time and businesses want to be based. The streets and spaces to be designed to amplify Hereford’s unique character, sense of place and its rich medieval history as capital of the Marches. The streets and spaces will be downgraded for vehicle use, but upgraded for all other activities; becoming a place where pedestrians and cyclists feel comfortable and where movement for them is effortless, enjoyable and safe. On a daily basis the Cathedral and River Wye Quarter would support businesses by providing the space and an appropriate environment for them to engage with the street, especially food and drink businesses with outdoor seating.</p> <p>Procurement of professional services was required to develop the outline design for improvements to the CRWQ and Burroughs (working in partnership with The Urbanists) were appointed via an open competitive tender. This would draw on the approach to the High Town area but reflect the distinct character and function of this area. That outline design was almost completed by the time the emerging Masterplan was revealed. Despite the Masterplan team being integral and fully consulted in the design of CRWQ, some significant changes are now required to the current CRWQ outline design.</p> <p>The outline design process was suspended until the draft Masterplan was finalised and whilst The Urbanists assessed the extent of the revisions required to the current outline design.</p> <p>The cost associated with the revision of the design exceeds the permitted 50% uplift permitted in CPR’s for variation of the Contract Price. Accordingly alternative routes to appointment have been investigated. There is an additional pressure to complete the detailed construction drawings for this scheme by March 2024 to satisfy funding conditions. This must be achieved to ensure that £3m Marches LEP funding is retained.</p> <p>Discussions with the HC procurement team resulted in a decision to investigate the cost benefit of The Urbanists being appointed to complete the revised outline urban design and to progress the detailed design phase. This considered to be the least risk to losing LEP funding, also maintaining consistent design standards and principles.</p>

<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p><i>Financial Risk</i> The required spend profile outlined by the LEP requires the £3m grant to be spent by March 2023 and for the match funding to be committed by March 2024. If this cannot be met then it may result in a loss of grant funding and the return to a fully HC funded scheme.</p> <p><i>Programme Risk</i> As part of the consultation for the outline design key stakeholders, businesses and organisations have been consulted. The risk that consensus could not be reached in a timely manner has been incurred. This has seriously impacted on the outline design programme adding more than 8 months to the timeline. Retaining the same designer to complete the outline and detailed design, mitigates the risk of delaying the programme further by appointing alternative consultants for the remaining design and consultation. It also provides an assured route to procurement and despite the outline design exceeding more than 50% of the original cost, the detailed design will now also be completed within the original combined budget for the outline and detailed design.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Not to progress with the project. This is not recommended as this will reduce investment in Hereford city centre which is not consistent with the council's corporate policy to support the local economy and growth. This would also carry the potential high risk of not retaining the Marches LEP funding.</p> <p>Not to progress with the same design consultant is likely add considerable time to the programme and duplicate cost. This again will carry the potential high risk of not retaining the Marches LEP funding and actually increasing the cost to the Council</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	

Signed: Ross Cook- Corporate director, economy & Environments Date: 31/03/2023