

# **Title: To approve spend for the Safer Streets 5 Project**

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

**Decision date:**

**Report by:** Safer Streets 5 Senior Project Manager

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

Non-key

## **Wards affected**

Leominster:

- East
- South

Ross-on-Wye:

- East
- West

## **Purpose**

To approve spend of up to £149,979 on the Safer Streets 5 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 5 Project grant of £149,979 be accepted from the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner and the Council's Section 151 Officer amends the capital programme to reflect this grant;**

**b) Expenditure of up to £149,979 be approved to implement the improvements set out in this report; and**

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**c) The Service Director for Economy and Growth is authorised, in consultation with the Corporate Director - Economy & Environment and the Council's Section 151 Officer to take all operational decisions necessary to implement the above recommendations.**

## **Alternative options**

The 'do nothing' option (not recommended):

Reject 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 5 Project by 31 March 2025. 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**

1. 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 Leominster and Ross-on-Wye. The key objective is to make public places safer for all.
2. These improvements were identified as a result of West Mercia Police consultation. It focuses on routes taken home by females when out in the Night Time Economy (NTE) in Leominster and Ross-on-Wye. Four geographic areas of concern were identified (Leominster East and South, and Ross-on-Wye East and West) through crime statistics, public surveys and wider consultation. In response, the Safer Streets 5 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 –
  - a) Awareness will promote knowledge of safe spaces to go to in times of crisis for help and support.
  - b) 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.
  - c) Lighting – enhanced street lighting for all areas to provide increased illumination and feelings of personal safety.
  - d) Landscaping – at identified locations to manage tree / shrub overgrowth and increase natural surveillance. The improvements that require delivery from the council are as follows:
    - I. Additional CCTV cameras
    - II. Enhanced street lighting
    - III. Landscaping of trees / shrubs to increase natural surveillance
3. 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 will be procured in line with the Council's contract procedure rules.
4. In terms of impact, increased street lighting and Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) have been shown to reduce crime by an average of 21%.

5. 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.
6. Although it is noted that whilst the Safer Streets 5 grant funding will improve feelings of safety 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**

7. This project supports the delivery of the County Plan 2020 – 2024 CO0 – strengthen communities to ensure everyone lives well and safely together. Women and girls will feel safer and more secure walking alone at night.

### **Environmental Impact**

8. The project will carry out landscaping to provide natural surveillance in areas where there are hiding places.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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**

12. It is intended that this initiative will provide an increased level of safety to the residents in the wards of Leominster and Ross-on-Wye 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

13. PCCWM have been awarded a grant to the sum of £344,785 from the Home Office and have requested that the council delivers elements of the Safer Streets 5 project. These elements have been allocated a sum of £149,979.00 for delivery and are detailed in the table below.

Capital cost of the project			2024/25	Future Years	Total
			£	£	£
CCTV			85,911		85,911
Upgrade Street Lighting			53,568		53,568
Vegetation			10,500		10,500
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>149,979</b>		<b>149,979</b>

Funding streams (indicate whether base budget / external / grant / capital borrowing)	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Future Years	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Safer Streets Grant (West Mercia Police)		149,979			149,979
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>149,979</b>			<b>149,979</b>

14. The ongoing revenue costs for street lighting electricity and vegetation maintenance will be absorbed within existing revenue 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.

15. Herefordshire Council as part of its commitment to the scheme agrees to fund staff and project management delivery costs from the team's service revenue budget.

16. Due to the additional cameras and observation 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 PCCWM and other partners to explore ways of ensuring the monitoring of the service can be enhanced in line with the improved infrastructure.

## Legal implication

17. The Council has powers under Sections 1-4 of the Localism Act 2011 to accept grant funding from the PCCWM to deliver the outputs detailed within this report.

18. The Council will enter into a grant agreement with PCCWM to secure payment of the grant to the Council to reimburse the Council in delivering the project.

19. Legal Services will review the grant agreement and will support the negotiation and completion of this agreement.

20. All works required to deliver the project will be procured in accordance with the Council's contract procedure rules.

## Risk management

21. The risks associated with the recommended action are:

I. The council have been identified as a key partner in being able to deliver the Safer Streets 5 Project and not doing so would impact PCCWM's achievement of this. The council is the only statutory body that can undertake these works.

II. The grant offers an opportunity to provide increased safety to the residents in the wards of Leominster and Ross-on-Wye 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.

III. 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.

IV. The grant funding would have to be returned to the Home Office if the works do not proceed.

V. Under the terms of the grant agreement between PCCWM and the council the works are required to be completed by 31 March 2025. The council has agreed with PCCWM that a detailed programme plan is to be provided confirming the schedule.

VI. The council will need to increase the staffing needed to adequately man up to the additional screens once the Safer Streets 5 project is complete.

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Works are not completed by the 31 March 2025 as per grant criteria	Confirmation has been received from the Home Office and West Mercia Police that works can complete post 31 March 2025 as long as a detailed completion programme plan is provided as evidence.
Contractor availability to install additional cameras by 31 March 2025	Early engagement with contractor.
Supply issues for new cameras / lighting	Early sourcing, placement of orders and increased inflation.
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.
No additional revenue budget identified to	Provision of historical footage for any

<p>fund live monitoring of the additional CCTV coverage to the full extent.</p>	<p>incidents records and the use of motion detection and analytical information can be used on the cameras to alert the monitoring officers to incidents.</p> <p>Discussions will be taking place with partners regarding ongoing and additional contributions towards the service.</p>
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22. 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

23. Consultation will take place with the lead Cabinet Member.

24. Consultation will take place with Ward Members for Wards impacted by the project

### Appendices

None

### Background papers

None identified