

## Record of operational decision

<b>Decision title:</b>	Decision to approve grant aid totalling £264,550.56 to improve shop frontages in Hereford City Centre
<b>Date of decision:</b>	26 February 2024
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Corporate Director, Economy and Environment
<b>Authority for delegated decision:</b>	Cabinet decision authorising the spend for business grants and to delegate authority to the Director of Economy and Place in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer to progress and deliver the project elements within the outlined budget 7 October 2021 <a href="#">Decision - Hereford City Centre Improvements (HCCI) - Herefordshire Council</a>
<b>Ward:</b>	Central
<b>Consultation:</b>	Service Director Environment and Highways Capital Finance Manager Head of Law-Corporate
<b>Decision made:</b>	Decision to offer multiple businesses within Hereford City Centre a grant with a maximum intervention rate of 80% to make improvements to their shop frontages. The grant amount approved in total is £264,550.56. This is within the agreed budget of £500,000 for the shop front scheme as agreed with the LEP.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>	The 7 October 2021 Cabinet Member decision identified the shop front grants as an important project. This is within the agreed budget of £500,000 for the shop front scheme as agreed with the LEP. This project is funded as part of the Hereford City Centre Improvements The HCCI decision of 07 October 2021 identified that the grants should be delivered within the overall programme budget. Hereford City Centre Improvements are designed to support the local economy and enhance the retail environment. The refurbishment scheme is contributing to the delivery of the Herefordshire Streetscape Strategy to create an attractive, vibrant city centre to help support existing businesses and create new opportunities to encourage more visitors and retailers
<b>Equality Considerations</b>	Grant programme was advertised and made available to any eligible business within the HCCI zone. All applications were considered by an independent appraisal panel 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. When redesigning the public realm in our city and town centres we are committed to working with user groups to ensure the design improves access for all. Through careful design of layouts and materials we can help make it easier to move around and access shops and services.

	Changes in the public realm in this key city centre area which is accessed by large numbers of visitors, shoppers and workers has the potential to have a high impact including the potential for negative impacts on those with protected characteristics. It will be essential that the needs of users are reflected in the development process as schemes progress.	
<b>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</b>		
	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
	Time Frame- There is a risk that projects will not be completed by the end date (30 June 2024)	Ensure applicants provide schedule of works and maintain regular coms with project team at each stage of practical works
<b>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not to progress with the project. This is not recommended as this will either reduce investment in Hereford city centre which is not consistent with the council's corporate policy to support the local economy and growth or place additional pressures on the Council's capital programme.</li> <li>• To payback the Marches LEP grant funding and continue the scheme with Council capital only. This is not recommended as it will reduce the overall budget to £3m for investment within Hereford city centre reducing the programme scope and impact.</li> </ul>	
<b>Details of any declarations of interest made:</b>	None	

Signed..... Date: