

Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting 12 May 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Exemption from Contract Standing Orders – One Public Estate, Stage One study, Thriving Towns - East Devon Mini Programme

Report summary:

The Council has the opportunity to access central government funding in order to progress the One Public Estate (OPE) initiative for East Devon.

The Thriving Towns East Devon Study will represent a 'pilot' project under a Devon & Torbay OPE Partnership theme of "promoting economic growth in a post –Covid-19 environment" and "regeneration of market and coastal towns across the County" which is an emerging theme in the OPE Partnership's Programme Refresh.

East Devon District Council has appointed Avison Young to undertake the Stage One study. Senior Officers have made the decision to grant Exemption from Standing Orders for this contract.

Cabinet are asked to note the exemption as the contract exceeds £20,000.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Cabinet notes the exemption from Contract Standing Orders in accordance with para 3.2 of the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

Reason for recommendation:

In order to take this initiative forward in a timely manner, and with the appropriate expertise, it was considered beneficial to make a direct appointment of Avison Young for this first stage of work.

As a project funded by One Public Estate (Cabinet Office) monies (that are already secured), it is essential that the external advisors understand One Public Estate and the core objectives; have experience of working across the public sector (health, blue light, central government, local government and education); understand the individual challenges faced by different organisations (and factors influencing collaboration) and experience of public estate focussed studies and projects.

Avison Young are property consultants working with public and private sector clients across the UK. They are recognised as a leading OPE advisor from their work with many local authority led partnerships across the country. In January 2019, they were appointed as overall Programme Managers (PMO) for the Devon & Torbay OPE Partnership and have been working with the various public sector partners, including East Devon District Council ever since.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergencies
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; The OPE Thriving Towns Mini study, to which this contract relates, is fully funded by One Public Estate (Cabinet Office).

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

Financial implications:

The financial details are contained in the exemption.

Legal implications:

The contract value falls below the threshold set out in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and therefore the EU procurement procedure (which is still currently relevant) does not apply and an exemption can be validly relied upon pursuant to the Council's Contract Standing Orders Rule 3.2. The reason for using the exemption in this case appears justified.