

Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting 8 June 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Commissioning of landscape assessment work to inform site choices for new town development

Report summary:

For Cabinet to note that an Exemptions to Contract Standing Orders has been granted in respect of commissioning landscape assessment work. This work will inform site selection for a new town that it is proposed should feature in and be allocated for development in the new emerging local plan. The working draft local plan (November 2021) recommends inclusion of policy for a new town.

The final cost of this commission is not yet known but on the basis that it may be slightly higher than the threshold at which we need to report to Cabinet we draw it to Cabinets attention.

We do not have sufficient resources to undertake the landscape assessment work 'in-house' but specialist assessment work is required to justify site selection. The work needs to be of a high quality in order to ensure we are able to select the most appropriate site/areas for development, and for non-development and provision of green space, when taken alongside other considerations. It should be noted that we can expect the work to be carefully scrutinised and challenged so it will need to be technically robust.

We have appointed Fiona Fyfe Associates to undertake the work. This is a company that we have employed before, most notably and recently in respect of assessment work for the Clyst Valley Regional Park that was completed earlier this year. They will therefore be able to build on an extensive body of existing knowledge and they have the skills and abilities to produce high quality work in a timely manner.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Cabinet notes that the attached Exemption to Standing Orders have been approved in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders Rule 3.2 in respect of the appointment of Fiona Fyfe Associates.

Reason for recommendation:

To notify Cabinet that the Exemptions to Contract Standing Orders have been granted.

Officer: Matthew Dickins, Planning Policy Manager – mdickins@eastdevon.gov.uk – 01395 571540

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Low Impact

None identified.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: High Risk; the absence of, or inappropriate work, could result poor choices being made over site selection and potentially it could result in the local plan failing at Examination and not being adopted.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

Financial implications:

The costs are to be met from existing approved budgets.

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.