

Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting: 29 March 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Exemption from Contract Standing Orders – UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) – Towns Feasibility Studies Project – Feasibility Study for Ottery St Mary Station Youth Hub

Report summary:

This relates to the Feasibility Study for the Ottery St Mary (OSM) Station Youth Hub that is being delivered using UKSPF funding.

The UKSPF Investment Plan was approved by Government on 7 December 2022. The total allocation for Ottery St Mary is £25,000, split over 2 funding years.

The programme spend requires that Year 1 funding (£17,500) is spent by 31 March 2023, with the remaining £7,500 being spent in Year 2. Whilst there may be some flexibility with this, the project needed to commence within February 2023 to demonstrate our ability to achieve at least some of the expenditure of the £17,500 allocation for the 2022/23 financial year. There was insufficient time to conduct a procurement exercise given the external funding timeframe.

Given the short timescales for delivery and expenditure, approval for Exemption from Contract Standing Orders was obtained. The project team have undertaken a direct appointment of consultants to secure the various skills required which involve a range of specialisms across more than one firm. The total amount is £24,370.45 which includes some contingency for additional engagement work with the client organisation (Ottery St Mary Town Council) and additional materials illustrating the proposals, if required.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Cabinet note their support for the action taken in accordance with para 2.3.2 of the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

Reason for recommendation:

To enable commencement of spend of the UKSPF allocation for OSM by 31 March 2023.

To avoid having to return the funding allocation due to not delivering any expenditure by the end of this financial year.

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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

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; The Feasibility Study is fully funded by The UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Links to background information: [Exemption from Contract Standing Orders](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

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

Financial implications:

Financial details are included in the report. Although direct appointments are not ideal in relation to procurement practice the scheme deadlines and late announcements by government have placed us in this position.

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