

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted N/A

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: Place

1. DECISION TAKEN

- 1.1 To appoint Wilmott Dixon to prepare Heat Decarbonisation plans and support for an application to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund.

2. DECISION TAKER

- 2.1 Sarah Kingsley, Service Director - Place

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

2 October 2023

4. REASON FOR DECISION

- 4.1 To ensure the council had specialist support in order to successfully submit a bid for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 To carry out a competition via the Council's E-sourcing system for the services required, however this would not have been possible, due to the timescales of accessing the funding window. Wilmott Dixon also provided additional value by engaging with their construction arm to ensure the proposed schemes were deliverable and costed accurately.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

- 6.1 The Executive Member for Environment and Leisure and the Deputy Executive Member were consulted.

7. FORWARD PLAN

- 7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The latest round of public sector decarbonisation funding (PSDS) opened in November 2022. The Fund offers public sector organisations the opportunity to apply for funding which will help decarbonise their buildings. Therefore applying to the fund allows the council an opportunity to decarbonise part of its estate with a much reduced capital outlay. Detailed applications have to be prepared for the

scheme, including heat decarbonisation plans and further technical, risk and governance assessments.

- 8.2 The council previously submitted an application to the Low Carbon Skills Fund for funding to produce heat decarbonisation plans so that we could prepare for a future round of PSDS, however we were unsuccessful in our bid. However, the Greater South East Net Zero Hub subsequently agreed to provide grant funding to the Council, for activity which would support our readiness to put in an application to the latest round of PSDS.
- 8.3 Wilmott Dixon were subsequently appointed through the SCAPE Framework and in consultation with the Net Zero Hub, to provide heat decarbonisation plans and support through the PSDS process for an application to decarbonise our three leisure centres.
- 8.4 Wilmott Dixon's appointment through the major works element of the SCAPE Framework for the initial plans would also allow us to directly award the contract for delivering the project to them should we be successful.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Under 14.6.4 (a) (ii) of the Council Constitution, Service Directors have a general authorisation for "entering into contracts to carry out works and/or for the supply of goods and services within approved budgets".
- 9.2 The Council is a member of the SCAPE Framework and the procurement framework allows call off by relevant partner organisations. Therefore, under the Contract Procurement Rules (11), the Council is not required to undertake a full tendering procedure and can call off from an approved external Framework Agreement (CPR 11.1, 11.3) and shall follow the call off procedure.
- 9.3 The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (No. 2095) require officers undertaking non-executive decisions to record (amongst other things) an award of a contract that materially affects the Council's position in a written delegated decision. At North Hertfordshire District Council, this is any award of a contract or financial decision, that is or is likely to be above £50,000.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The greater South East Net Zero Hub have agreed to provide £50k of grant funding and the remaining £5,705 will be funded from existing budgets. This will reduce the amount available for future climate schemes, but this was considered a key opportunity towards reducing our fossil fuel usage.
- 10.2. There is capital funding currently allocated to projects for solar PV at the three leisure centres, solar thermal at Royston leisure centre and for replacement of gas boilers at Hitchin and Letchworth. As part of the 2024/25 budget process, it is proposed that this could be reallocated to provide the required match funding.
- 10.3. If successful, there will also be additional capital costs for construction e.g. preliminaries, surveys etc, which cannot be included in the PSDS application. An estimate of these costs is included in the 2024/25 budget process. With the PSDS contribution, the energy savings achieved are expected to at least off-set the Council's cost of capital.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There is a risk that the PSDS bid will still be unsuccessful, or the planned works are not deliverable. However, with the South East Net Zero Hub funding, the financial implications of that are quite low. The work towards submitting the PSDF bid is still helpful in understanding the options available and the financial implications of those options.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.2 As the recommendations in the report relate to a contract below £100,000 the “go local” policy has not been applied because the support required is specialist in nature.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no Environmental implications associated with the appointment of Wilmott Dixon, though the heat decarbonisation plans that they produce will help the council understand how it can decarbonise the leisure centres, thereby reducing impact on the environment. Appointing Wilmott Dixon will also result in an application to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. If we are successful, the scheme will allow us to deliver works highlighted in the heat decarbonisation plans which will further decarbonisation of our leisure facilities. These works would achieve energy and carbon savings. As such, a full Environmental Impact Assessment will be undertaken if the council is successful with its funding application, and at the point at which formal decision is made to move forward with the decarbonisation projects.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 Wilmott Dixon were appointed in recognition that the council does not employ specialist staff who could produce heat decarbonisation plans and also had limited capacity to pull together the application. If successful in receiving the PSDS funding, the resource implications will be considered as part of the project management process.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 *None*

17. APPENDICES

- 17.1 *None*

NOTIFICATION DATE

9 February 2024

Steve Jamis

Signature of Executive Member Consulted ...

Date 09/02/2024



Signature of Decision Taker

Please Note: that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS