

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 7 FEBRUARY 2017

REPORT BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

FUNDING RELEASE REQUEST FOR HERTFORD URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL HERTFORD

Purpose/Summary of Report

- Hertford Urban Design Strategy was adopted by East Herts Council in May 2016 and a member steering group comprising councillors from Hertfordshire County Council, East Herts Council and Hertford Town Council was established to implement or support the implementation of the recommendations.
- In September 2016 the Executive committed funding to the first deliverable scheme from the strategy (The Wash, Maidenhead Street and Bull Plain improvements), *subject to other funding partners coming on board*. Hertford Town council has committed funding to the project and a request to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has been submitted and is currently going through the LEP funding approval process.
- Even if the LEP application is unsuccessful, enough funding has been committed by Hertford Town Council and East Herts Council to deliver two of the three sections of the public realm improvements (see below).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE: That:

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| (A) | East Herts Council releases its funding commitment of £500k to deliver key improvements to Hertford Town Centre, noting that the Council's funding proportion of the total budget will be either 50% or 62.5%, depending on whether the Local Enterprise Partnership funding is secured. |
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Executive will recall that on 6 September they agreed that up to £500k should be allocated to fund a project to deliver key improvements to The Wash, Maidenhead Street and Bull Plain in Hertford (plan attached at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**). The project emanated from the Hertford Urban Design Strategy, and is a partnership project between East Herts Council, Hertford Town Council and Hertfordshire County Council.
- 1.2 The recommendation was made at a time when the remaining £500k for this £1m project was in the pipeline but not secured. Therefore the recommendation stated:

'That East Herts Council commits up to a maximum of 50% of the £1m required to implement key improvements to The Wash, Maidenhead Street and Bull Plain Hertford, as detailed in the Hertford Urban Design Strategy, subject to other partners coming on board.'

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Hertford Town Council approved £300k to fund the project at a meeting on 17 October, leaving a shortfall of £200k. An application is currently being considered by Hertfordshire LEP to gap fund this shortfall.
- 2.2 There are three sections of the project (The Wash, Maidenhead Street and Bull Plain) and if the LEP funding is not forthcoming, two of the three sections can be delivered initially (likely to be The Wash and Maidenhead Street) with the third being postponed until funding is secured from another source. This option is estimated to cost £800k.
- 2.3 Given that Hertford Town Council now has its funding in place, and a scheme to the value of £800k is deliverable, the Executive is asked to release the £500k capital funding so that the project can proceed. All endeavours will be made to secure the LEP funding.
- 2.4 If the LEP funding is not secured, this will mean that the Council's funding proportion changes from up to 50% to up to 62.5%.
- 2.5 All costs are currently estimates, prior to the work being designed and tendered. The contribution from East Herts is capped at

£500k.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on the financial and corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

The final report can be found at:

<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/documents/s32498/Hertford%20Town%20Centre%20UDS%20%20ERP%20B%20strategy.pdf>

The Executive report of 6 September can be found at:

<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/documents/s35597/Hertford%20Urban%20Design%20Study.pdf>

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