

Andover Town Centre and South of Romsey Town Centre Project – Amended Delegation

Report of the Leader and the Deputy Leader

Recommended:

That delegated authority for the expenditure from the allocated Masterplan budget be amended as follows:

- a) For works up to £5,000 delegated authority be given to the Regeneration Manager or Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development;
- b) For works up to £25,000 delegated authority be given to the Regeneration Manager or Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development in consultation with Head of Finance & Revenues;
- c) For works up to £50,000 delegated authority be given to the Regeneration Manager or Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development in consultation with Head of Finance & Revenues, Finance Portfolio Holder and either the Andover Vision Portfolio Holder, where the expenditure relates to Andover Town Centre, or the Romsey Future Portfolio Holder where the expenditure relates to South of Romsey Town Centre;
- d) For works over £50,000 approval will be required in line with the Council's Financial Regulations.

SUMMARY:

- The purpose of this report is to update and amend the delegated authority for the expenditure of budget related to the regeneration of Andover and Romsey town centres.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update and amend the delegated authority for the expenditure of budget related to the regeneration of Andover and Romsey town centres.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council has committed to the regeneration of both Andover and Romsey town centres. The adoption of the respective masterplans in September 2020 outline the plans and proposals for creating attractive areas where people will want to live, work and spend their leisure time. In June 2019 Council agreed a budget of £1M, funded from the New Homes Bonus Reserve, to enable progress to be made with both the Andover Town Centre regeneration and the South of Romsey Town Centre project through their respective masterplans.

- 2.2 Delegated authority for the use of the budget to progress with the Andover project was given to the Head of Planning and Building in consultation with the Leader, Finance Portfolio Holder and Head of Revenues. For the Romsey project delegated authority was given to the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development in consultation with the Deputy Leader, Finance Portfolio Holder and Head of Finance.
- 2.3 Since that authority was put in place both masterplans have been adopted and the Council now moves on to implementation. The responsibilities for both masterplans now fall within the Planning Policy and Economic Development Service. To support the Council as it moves to the next stage of the projects a new Regeneration Manager post has been created at a senior level within the organisation. This post will report direct to the Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development. The new post will be the lead technical expert on regeneration.
- 2.4 Whilst there is clear benefit of having an in-house specialist there will continue to be the need to seek specialist advice (e.g. commercial, legal etc) as the Council moves to delivery. This will continue to be funded from the budget previously agreed by Council.
- 2.5 In addition, since the delegated authority was approved an internal restructure has been undertaken and the Head of Finance and Head of Revenue role has merged. As such, with the next stage of the regeneration commencing; the change in structure; and the creation of the new regeneration post there is an opportunity to review the process for delegated authority.
- 2.6 At this stage of the project it is not possible to predict exactly what the Council's expenditure will be or what the cost of individual pieces of professional advice will be. Where possible officers will look to commission work for both projects in order to achieve economies of scale. The budget agreed in 2019 was suggested to provide sufficient funds to enable specialist advice to be procured without having to continually revert back to Council. At this time this remains the case however, it cannot be guaranteed that further funds will not be required.
- 2.7 The current authority requires all expenditure regardless of amount to be undertaken in consultation with the respective officers and portfolio holders. Given that the cost of the tendered work will vary depending on the size, complexity and specialism there leads to the situation of relatively small pieces of work requiring the current 'sign off' process to be undertaken. When compared to other pieces of work across the Council this would ordinarily have been undertaken with only the sign off from a Head of Service or other named officer. As such it is proposed that the process is simplified and the current delegated authority is amended.
- 2.8 The proposed approach would see a tiered delegated authority introduced incorporating the role of the Regeneration Manager. The proposed tiers are:-
- 2.8.1 For works up to £5,000 delegated authority be given to the Regeneration Manager or Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development;

- 2.8.2 For works up to £25,000 delegated authority be given to the Regeneration Manager or Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development in consultation with Head of Finance & Revenues;
- 2.8.3 For works up to £50,000 delegated authority be given to the Regeneration Manager or Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development in consultation with Head of Finance & Revenues, Finance Portfolio Holder and either the Andover Vision Portfolio Holder, where the expenditure relates to Andover Town Centre, or the Romsey Future Portfolio Holder where the expenditure relates to South of Romsey Town Centre;
- 2.8.4 For works over £50,000 approval will be required in line with the Council's Financial Regulations.

3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 3.1 Growing Our Potential – the Corporate Plan 2019 -2023 identifies town centres as a strategic priority. It recognises the need to change the face of the High Street. Future-proofing our town centres to be accessible places where people live, shop, work and spend their leisure time. Enhancing public realm and improving the appearance and environments of our town centres will also require investment over time.

4 Consultations/Communications

- 4.1 Significant public consultation has taken place in conjunction with Andover Vision and Romsey Future in the production of the masterplans. The projects flow from that consultation and the identified aspirations of the community.

5 Options

- 5.1 The option to consider is whether to amend the existing delegated authority and whether the proposed tiered delegation is appropriate.

6 Option Appraisal

- 6.1 The existing approach requires updating to reflect the merging of the Head of Finance and Head of Revenues role as well as the creation of the Regeneration Manager post and the respective reporting lines. The creation of the tiered delegated authority would simplify the process and allow for momentum to be continued whilst ensuring the levels of control are in place where the release of significant funds are required.
- 6.2 To continue with the current level of delegation, albeit with amended named posts, and no tiered approach creates an unnecessary layer of process for relative small elements of work. There would continue to be the necessary level of control over the larger pieces of work.

7 Resource Implications

- 7.1 The proposed recommendation can be met from within existing budget. The expenditure from the budget as at 30 November 2020 is £213,102.60.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications of the proposed recommendation.

9 Equality Issues

9.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

10 Other Issues

10.1 Community Safety – None.

10.2 Environmental Health Issues – None

10.3 Sustainability and Addressing a Changing Climate – None.

10.4 Property Issues – None

10.5 Wards/Communities Affected – Andover and Romsey wards.

11 Conclusion

11.1 The report outlines proposed amendments to the delegated authority for approving future expenditure arising from the Andover and Romsey masterplan projects.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
None			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	0	File Ref:	N/A
(Portfolio: Leader and Deputy Leader) Councillor P North and Councillor N Adams-King			
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