

PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISIONS



Please refer to Guidance Notes overleaf

Forward Plan Ref. No.	2016 260 November – Economic Development PER Consulting	Date of decision 03.11.16
Name of Portfolio Holder/s	Cllr Tom Killen – Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth	
Name of Officer	Ian Bowen	
Details of Decision	<p>To award a contract to PER Consulting to undertake a refresh of the Economic Development Strategy. The work required includes the following:</p> <p>Baseline Data Review - Collation and analysis of key data sets comparing Mendip with Somerset Districts, national and regional trends.</p> <p>Stakeholder Engagement - Conducting workshops, telephone interviews and 1-2-1 discussions with internal/external stakeholders to reflect on activity/trends and issues and begin to shape future priorities/options. Engagement with invited audiences to include: Business Groups/Skills Groups/Tourism Sector/Developer & Agents/ Officer discussion/high level member review. Also to include presentation to Economic Development Group and Cabinet.</p> <p>Strategy Update & Action Plan - Refreshed report on priorities and themes, detailed Action Plan and updated project pipeline.</p> <p>The total budget for the above work is up to £15,000 plus VAT for a Draft Final Report.</p> <p>The contract is given exemption under paragraph C12.1 (f) of the Contract Procedure Rules whereby PER Consulting have already provided related specialised service to the Authority having previously been awarded the contract through a competitive process and, since that time, been closely engaged with key funders and stakeholders on behalf of the Council. As such, no realistic alternative source of supply exists. Further details are found in “reasons for decision”.</p>	
Details of consultation carried out:		
Tick		
	Relevant Group Manager - Ian Bowen	Date 01/11/2016
	The Leader of the Council – Harvey Siggs	Date 02/11/2016
	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth – Tom Killen	Date 02/11/2016
	Other – Tracy Aarons, Deputy Chief Executive	Date 01/11/2016
Reasons for Decision	The Economic Development Strategy (EDS) is a critical part of delivering Mendip’s future growth aspirations, being the principal means of identifying barriers and exploring	

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	<p>innovative local solutions to achieving business growth. The challenges facing local authorities and the business community have rapidly evolved even within the last three years since the current Strategy was published, in particular with the prospect of both Devolution and a future 'Brexit' and an review/refresh is required as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>Having previously been commissioned to prepare the current Economic Development Strategy (in 2013) and having provided ongoing consultancy support to the small core in-house Economic Development service since that time, there are unique technical and cost advantages in appointing PER Consulting to conduct this further work.</p> <p>Specifically, Mendip's partnership engagement with other authorities, stakeholders, businesses, senior LEP representatives and Defra have strengthened through maintaining a strategic link with Keith Thomas, of PER Consulting. In this capacity, he has developed a comprehensive understanding of the council's objectives, member aspirations and drivers of the Mendip economy. Given the importance of the Economic Development Strategy and the need for a swift review, the required advice could not be obtained at this stage from an alternative contractor. The daily rates have been checked against equivalent professional providers bidding for the 2016 Somerset Growth Plan review and remain very competitive. Best value would not therefore be obtained by seeking competitive tenders from alternative providers given the limited budget and stringent timescales involved.</p>
Any alternative options considered and rejected	<p>1) Rely on in-house resource to deliver the strategy. This was rejected due to limited staff capacity, who are already focussed on practical economic development and investment actions.</p> <p>2) Run a new competition. This was rejected as the Council would fail to capitalise on the specialist knowledge and experience the provider has gained whilst developing the existing strategy and supporting related work since that time.</p>
Financial and personnel implications	Economic Development is one of MDC's two corporate priorities and an update of the EDS is fundamental to future delivery of this cross-cutting service priority. This approach is considered to offer best value for money.
Any relevant personal Interest under the Code of Conduct	None
Reports and Background papers relevant to the decision	None
Date e-mailed to Members incl Scrutiny Board Chair	Thursday, 3 November 2016

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Date of Publication of Notice	Thursday, 3 November 2016
Date Decision comes into force (*see below)	Friday, 11 November 2016
* Please Note: The decision detailed above will come into force, and may be implemented, 5 clear working days after Publication unless subject to call-in by the Scrutiny Board.	
Signature of Portfolio Holder

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