



Winchester
City Council

PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR BUILT ENVIRONMENT

TOPIC – LOCAL PLAN 2036 EVIDENCE BASE PROCUREMENT

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Head of Legal Services (Interim), the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director: Resources are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

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SUMMARY

Approval is sought to obtain quotes from organisations and suitable consultancies to deliver a range of studies to inform the preparation of Local Plan 2036 and to evaluate these based on a variation in the weightings for price/quality as set out in 9.1. (d) (ii) of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules

Background

Preparation of Local Plan 2036 has commenced and a key requirement is to have a robust evidence base to support both the identification and allocation of sites and the expression of emerging policies. The Council is therefore proposing to select various suitably qualified and experienced organisations to deliver the various elements of the evidence base, which will cover a range of topics.

The Local Plan update report to Cabinet (Local Plan) Committee (Cab(3084)LP) on 3 December 2018, identified a number of evidence studies including:-

Strategic Housing Market Assessment
Employment needs assessment and assessment of sites
Town centre uses – retail, leisure, cultural/community etc.
Landscape character assessments
Open space, green infrastructure
Built environment / conservation areas/heritage matters
Climate change
Infrastructure - transport, water supply, waste water, flooding, community facilities, power sources/renewable energy, health, education etc.
Integrated impact assessment to include: - sustainability appraisal, strategic environmental impact assessment, Habitats regulation assessment, Equalities impact assessment and Health impact assessment
Viability assessment of potential development allocations and policies

There may be additional assessments required to explore further elements in detail during the plan making process.

DECISION

That authority be given to the Head of Strategic Planning to obtain quotes and select an organisation(s) for the delivery of reports as identified above, in addition to further research as necessary based on a 60:40 ratio in respect of quality/price for the evaluation of quotes received.

Initial enquiries with experienced consultants has indicated that these individual commissions will fall below the Council's tender threshold of £100,000 we will therefore be seeking a minimum of 3 quotations for each study as per the requirements of Contracts Procedure Rules.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Having a robust evidence base is critical to ensure that a local plan can be determined as sound in due course.

The Council's Contract Procedure Rules set out in 9.1.(d) (ii) the preferred evaluation method as at least 60% for price, for contracts up to a maximum value of £250,000. In all other cases, the evaluation model must be approved prior to inviting quotations or tenders either by Cabinet, Committee or the relevant Portfolio Holder under the scheme of delegation in the Constitution. The use of framework has also been explored but discounted on the basis of finding a suitable consultancy that would cover the range of topics required for the evidence base.

However, to ensure the robustness of the evidence based reports, it is recommended that the quality of the methodology and delivery of the reports is evaluated higher than that of price.

It is therefore proposed that the evaluation method to be used to evaluate the quotes received to deliver the evidence base for Local Plan 2036 is 60:40 in favour of quality over price.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Resources needed to undertake preparation of the Local Plan including procurement of the evidence base and community/stakeholder engagement have been approved as part of the budget process.

The current forecast external expenditure of approximately £600,000 for the period 2018/19 to 2021/22 is within existing budget projections and supported by the Local Plan reserve (opening 2018/19 balance of £454,000) as well as baseline revenue budget projections. This is in addition to existing in-house employee resources.

DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Council will ensure before entering into a contract that it is satisfied that selected companies are fully compliant with current Data Protection legislation.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

All senior officers and members will be consulted via the Portfolio Holder Decision making process.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

The alternative option of adopting the Council's preferred evaluation method of a 60:40 split in favour of price has been considered and is not supported on this occasion.

It is considered that to achieve the best results from the various commissions for the local plan evidence base- that the quality of the methodology is of greater significance than cost.

One comment was received during the consultation period, this requested that the study of town centre uses includes reference to new homes and that consideration be given to funding for Winchester based work as a result of discussions at a recent meeting of Winchester Town Forum. This PHD does not prescribe the details of the commissions required for the Local Plan evidence base, it simply lists examples of studies which will be required and it will be for the individual briefs to specify the

details. In this respect a draft in preparation of the retail and town centre uses study does refer to residential uses. With regard to the Winchester Town Forum, at this stage it is unclear as to what additional evidence would be required over and above that commissioned for the local plan.

It is therefore considered that the comments received do not have an impact on the request sought to amend the procurement process to 60:40 in favour of quality over price.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

N/A

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

N/A

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision
25 March 2019

Councillor ASHTON – Portfolio Holder for FINANCE in Consultation with the Portfolio Holder for the BUILT ENVIRONMENT.

APPENDICES:

None