

OFFICER DECISION NOTICE**8TH OCTOBER 2019****Birkenhead Regeneration Framework****REPORT SUMMARY**

This report is to record that the Director for Economic and Housing Growth proposes to award a contract to undertake the Birkenhead Regeneration Framework and detailed Delivery Action Plans. The study outputs are urgently required to provide evidence to inform and justify the brownfield first strategy of the emerging Local Plan and to provide the context for ongoing regeneration investment decisions and negotiations for potential funding and partnership working.

The Birkenhead Regeneration Framework Study will affect the following Wards: Birkenhead & Tranmere, Bidston and St. James, Seacombe and Claughton

This is a key decision

RECOMMENDATION

- 1- That the Director for Economic and Housing Growth proceeds to award a contract, via the Fusion 21 Framework, to Avison Young in the sum of £345,151 (excluding VAT) to undertake the preparation of the Birkenhead Regeneration Framework and associated Delivery Action Plans.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The Birkenhead Regeneration Study outputs are urgently required to inform the emerging Local Plan's brownfield first strategy, and provide the context for ongoing regeneration investment decisions and negotiations for potential funding and partnership working.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Do Nothing: The Council takes no action and does not award the contract for the Birkenhead Regeneration Framework Study. This option would result in significant risks in terms of:

- potential loss of investment and grant funding to assist the regeneration of Birkenhead and the delivery of strategic mixed use developments;
- result in a lack of evidence to inform and justify the brownfield first approach in the emerging Local Plan

- 2.2 In house delivery: the Council does not have the capacity and range of skills and expertise required to undertake this multidisciplinary study.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 There is an urgent need to appoint an economic and design-led specialist team to produce a visionary and exemplary Birkenhead Regeneration Framework (BRF) and detailed Delivery Action Plans (DAPs) to guide the regeneration of the Central Birkenhead Area over the next 20 years. It will define and provide evidence for a critical element of the emerging Local Plan which is the brownfield first approach and specifically the regeneration of Birkenhead.

- 3.2 The study outputs will provide:

- input into the Birkenhead Future High Streets Fund Bid by December 2019;
- evidence to inform the emerging Local Plan in particular its brownfield first strategy by April 2020; and
- essential background for ongoing investment decisions and negotiations and bids in relation to regeneration projects in Birkenhead.

- 3.3 The BRF, will build on, review where appropriate and set into a wider context various existing regeneration initiatives to provide a comprehensive delivery strategy and plan for Birkenhead. The outcome will play an important role in setting a standard for design excellence in future development. It will act as a catalyst for transformation and serve to provide the spatial framework for future private and public sector investment.

- 3.4 The BRF and DAPs for specific neighbourhoods will build on the spatial planning - Vision, Development Frameworks and Key Structuring Principles – produced by

Wirral Council to date, working in partnership with key investment and delivery partners as set out in:

- The Birkenhead Integrated Regeneration Strategy (BIRS);
- Wirral Waters 'Vision Statement' and East Float Outline Planning Permission (including supporting Design and Access Statement and Guiding Principles Documents);
- Wirral Strategic Regeneration Framework – Economic Growth Plan – adopted by Wirral Council 2017;
- Strategic Transport Framework (Final Draft July 2019)
- A41 Feasibility Study (draft) 2019 (Transport);
- Wirral Waters Feasibility Study (draft) 2019 (Transport);
- Birkenhead Urban Blueprint

3.5 This major study will join up the various ideas and projects for Birkenhead into a comprehensive regeneration framework. Key outputs of the study will be:

- A spatial regeneration vision for Birkenhead;
- Identification of priority development sites/ areas;
- Highways and infrastructure requirements;
- Delivery action plans including appropriate delivery mechanisms; and
- Evidence for the Local Plan in terms of potential new mixed-use development sites and neighbourhoods and delivery mechanisms.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The cost of the study can be met from within existing Capital budgets. Owing to the urgency to obtain early outputs to inform the Birkenhead Future High Streets Fund Bid, ie by December 2020, and for the emerging Local Plan by March 2020 a Direct award to a single supplier through the Fusion 21 public framework was determined to be necessary and compliant with the Council's procurement rules. This reflects the need to work to a shorter timetable than would normally be expected. The chosen supplier Avison Young has the necessary expertise to undertake this strategic study and has significant current knowledge of the study area, key regeneration projects and the emerging Local Plan.

4.2 The costs for the study represent value for money since it has been procured through the Fusion 21 Framework. The Fusion 21 framework is fully compliant with EU and UK legislation and it enables its users to access greater efficiencies and therefore deliver value for money. In addition, Fusion 21 is a social enterprise and delivering social value through procurement is a fundamental building block of its approach.

4.3 The successful delivery of the study will provide a spatial and investment context and evidence with which to support the Council in making bids for various public sector

funding which in turn could lever significant additional private sector investment within the Birkenhead area.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Contract Procedure Rules will need to be followed.
- 5.2 As this contract will be awarded under the Framework of Fusion 21, the terms of that Framework agreement will need to be followed in order to ensure that the contract is validly procured.
- 5.3 The contract once entered in to will be legally binding and subject to the terms and conditions set out in that contract.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Study will be managed through staff in the Place and Investment team and Change and Organisational Design. In addition, various technical officers from across the authority will provide input as appropriate to inform the study.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Project milestones not met meaning delays in the availability of evidence to support the emerging Local Plan Brownfield first strategy. The study will be managed through a project team reporting to the Regeneration and Place Programme Board. A detailed study project plan will be developed at the outset and closely monitored throughout to ensure that key milestones are met.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The study will be undertaken with close engagement and involvement of key partners including the Combined Authority, Mersey Travel, MUSE/ Wirral Growth Company, Homes England, Peel Holdings and major landowners.
- 8.2 Portfolio holders, Ward Members and key stakeholders will be engaged at key stages in the preparation of the study.
- 8.3 The draft study and delivery action plans will be subject to public consultation in spring 2020.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The potential impact has been reviewed with regard to equality and links to the existing EIA conducted for Wirral's Growth Plan. <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2014-0>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Study brief includes a key requirement to promote sustainability to create a “Green” Birkenhead having regard to the emerging Wirral Climate Change strategy, please see <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/climatestrategy>.

The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to:

Reduce emissions of CO2

REPORT AUTHOR: (Name) **Keith Keeley**
(Designation) Project Officer
telephone: (0151) 691 8283
email: keithkeeley@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Birkenhead Regeneration Framework Draft Boundary

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date