

## **Cabinet Member Delegated Decision Form**

### **Decision Title**

Green Solutions – Staffordshire County Council (SCC) delivery of the Pilot Business Energy Advice Service (BEAS)

### **Decision Required**

That the Director for Economy Infrastructure & Skills, in consultation with the Director for Corporate Services, be given authority to contract with the WMCA to deliver Green Solutions in Association with the Pilot BEAS programme, in advance of formal Cabinet approval.

### **Decision Date**

A decision is required at the earliest opportunity, following successful negotiation of the appropriate contract, to allow grants to be made available to the business community without delay.

### **Decision Summary**

Staffordshire County Council was invited by West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to become the Primary Delivery Partner for the Stoke and Staffordshire region, to deliver Energy Assessments and Grants on behalf of the Pilot BEAS programme in the Stoke and Staffordshire region alongside their Green Solutions Programme.

The programme will deliver 300 Energy Efficiency Assessments and £2M in grant funding to small and medium sized businesses SME's in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

The time frames for the delivery of the Pilot BEAS programme are short. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) require at least 4,000 energy efficiency assessments (nationally) to be completed by the 31st of March 2025. To achieve this target, WMCA as Accountable body for this funding, are aligning the Pilot BEAS with regional programmes which will ensure efficiencies through utilising our existing local networks

### **Aims and Objectives of the Pilot BEAS:**

The objectives of the Pilot BEAS are in summary:

- Learn lessons and gather data to inform future policies on energy demand reduction, and
- Support energy demand reduction in Small and Medium-sized companies.

Becoming a delivery partner in the Pilot BEAS programme enables us to significantly expand on the current SCC Green Solutions programme from supporting 60 business to 300 businesses contributing to our strategic objectives to reduce SCC's carbon emission to achieve Carbon Zero by 2050 by supporting the Economy to Become Net Zero Ref: Corporate delivery plan 2023/24 v5.0

Development of the programme by WMCA/DESNZ has been 'at pace' with final detail of delivery and contracts received on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023. To maximise the timeframe for operational delivery and enable flow of grant funding to Staffordshire and Stoke businesses, the purpose of this Decision Notice is to allow the contract to be signed in advance of a Cabinet decision which would result in a pause in activity. This pause would not be deemed in the best interests of our SME's.

### **Member Delegated Function**

General Delegation to Cabinet Member – Section 6 of the Constitution

### **Specific Delegation to Cabinet Member**

*If 'Specific Delegation to Cabinet Member' is selected above, please complete this section.*

N/A

### **Public / Exempt**

*If the decision is exempt, please identify the relevant paragraph number from the list below.*

Public

### **Options Considered**

1. Do nothing – no benefit to Staffordshire Businesses
2. Continue with existing Green Solutions Programme funded through SCC/UKSPF – limited benefit to Staffordshire Businesses 60 businesses supported £550K grants across 3 Districts
3. SCC become Delivery Partner for Pilot BEAS – additional 220 businesses supported, additional £2M grants available, support available across All Districts and Stoke-on-Trent

### **Consultation Process**

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Philip White  
Director for Economy, Infrastructure & Skills – Darryl Evers  
Director for Corporate Services – John Tradewell

Assistant Director for Business and Enterprise – Anthony Hodge  
Economic Strategy Delivery Group  
Stoke on Trent City Council – Jon Rouse, City Director  
Cabinet Member – Tina Clements – Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny committee  
Leader of the opposition and Cabinet Member – Charlotte Akins

## **Electoral Divisions Affected**

All Divisions

## **Name of Cabinet Member Making Decision:**

Cllr Philip White - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills

## **Community Impact Assessment**

### *Key Issues*

Energy and Resource Efficiency Assessments will provide businesses with clear information on where and how energy savings can be made.

Achieving net zero requires considerable investment to retrofit properties and decarbonise businesses. Securing external funding is critical to transitioning to Net Zero.

Grants will encourage investment by businesses in energy efficient manufacturing and process equipment and buildings measures.

Support Staffordshire's businesses to achieve long term sustainability and maximise their business opportunities and efficiency through reduced energy usage and spend.

Investment through grants will also stimulate demand for Net Zero goods and service in Staffordshire supporting our local supply chain development and subsequent jobs, skills and growth.

### *Resource and Value for Money Analysis*

Budget provision is within the Funding Agreement to SCC from WMCA as follows:

	<b>23/24</b>	<b>24/25</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Energy Assessments	£87,500	£212,500	<b>£300,000</b>

Grant Allocation	160000	£1,840,000	<b>£2,000,000</b>
Project Management	£95,000	£250,000	<b>£300,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£342,500</b>	<b>£2,302,500</b>	<b>£2,645,000</b>

Project management costs are covered by the funding including marketing budget and staffing.

### *Risk Analysis*

The following risks need to be considered:

- a. Demand may not reach the allocation if potential applicants do not come forward. There is a pipeline of businesses already expressed interest in energy assessments and grants. By continuing the previous collaboration between the County Council, Districts & Boroughs, City Council and local business support services there is a low risk of not reaching enough businesses – Low risk.
- b. Demand may exceed the allocation. The scale of the fund is considered appropriate within the timescale. Energy Assessments and Grants will be awarded on a first come first served basis – Low risk.
- c. Funding may be granted to a business that is not eligible – The programme will be efficiently managed by experienced SCC programme managers will be working with WMCA to ensure eligibility of businesses and grant delivery – fortnightly operations group meetings with WMCA. Claims will be monthly so quickly highlighting any issues/risks to eligibility of expenditure – Low risk.

### *Legal Analysis*

Corporate Services have reviewed the MoU and Funding Agreement and approved for signature.

### **Implementation**

*Is any implementation action required?*

Yes

To be implemented by: Delivery to be implemented by EI&S Environmental Business Support Team

### **Implementation Status**

Work to commence on: 2 October 2023 (WMCA eligible expenditure in contract is backdated)

Work in progress: 2 Oct 2023 – 31 March 2025  
Work completed on date below: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

### **Report Author**

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### **Submission on Mod.Gov**

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Date uploaded: **Date**

