

Decision under Delegated Powers

Officer Requesting Decision

David Hankin (Regeneration and Economic Development Officer)

Officer Making the Decision

Richard Bennett (Head of Planning and Regeneration)

Recommendation

That approval is given to enter into a Partnering Agreement, executed as a deed, with the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP), Leicestershire County Council together with city and district authority partners with a commitment of £2,260 towards the commissioning of consultants.

Reason

To define the terms and conditions for the joint procurement and funding of a consultancy to undertake a study into the strategic distribution sector in Leicester and Leicestershire to inform the development of an overall strategy and future policy responses.

Authority for Decision

Under the provisions of the Constitution the Head of Service has delegated authority to sign contracts up to a value of £50,000 entered into on behalf of the Council in the course of the discharge of an Executive function (subject to compliance with the Financial Regulations).

Decision and Date

Background

The first joint employment land study in Leicester & Leicestershire was undertaken in 2008. In 2012, post economic downturn, the Housing, Planning and Infrastructure Group (HPIG) of the LLEP commissioned Lambert Smith Hampton, PACEC and Warwick BML to review that study. The purpose of the review, completed in April 2013, was to provide an up to date evidence base to inform emerging employment land policies in Local Plans.

A summary of the forecast demand for B8 Strategic Warehousing (units larger than 10,000 m²) provision over the period 2010 to 2031 and the Demand / Supply balance from the 2013 study is set out below;

District	Forecast Demand (ha)	Supply (Tier 1-deliverable sites) (ha)	Demand / Supply Balance (ha)
Leicester City	19.2	0	-19.2
Blaby*	13.8	12.5	-1.3
Charnwood*	0	0	0
Oadby & Wigston	0	0	0
Harborough*	40.9	2.85	-38.05
Hinckley & Bosworth*	3.5	13.19	9.69
Melton	0	0	0
North West Leicestershire*	51.9	29.49	-22.41
Total L&L HMA	129.30	58.03	-71.27
<i>Sub Total Sub Mkt (iii) M1 Corridor*</i>	<i>110.10</i>	<i>58.03</i>	<i>-52.07</i>

Source: L&L HMA ELS Update April 2013 (PACEC) [compiled from a selection of separate tables]

Data disaggregation and SIC assignment issues specific to distribution and B8 employment uses, lead to some collective unease over the robustness of these forecasts. However, the table serves to illustrate the general scale of the issue and the likely shortfall in the provision of sites to accommodate strategic warehousing (super-size) to 2031, faced across the Leicester & Leicestershire area and in the M1 Corridor sub-market.

Amongst its conclusions the 2013 study identified a strong case to plan for the strategic distribution and logistics sector within the 'Golden Triangle' (defined by the M42, M1, M6) sub region to ensure that no one Leicestershire district unjustifiably becomes subject to excessive development pressures and the benefits of road – rail links and job creation are maximised.

Specifically the Leicester and Leicestershire Employment Land Study of 2013 recommended that:

"The LLEP and the LPAs (local planning authorities) strengthen the evidence base for employment land planning for supersize warehouses through:

- A sector based research study into the market drivers as well as the economic, employment and environmental impacts; and
- A 'Golden Triangle' wide Employment Land Review"

Subsequent to the completion of the 2013 study and in the context of the revocation of the East Midlands Regional Plan (specifically Policy 21), the publication of the NPPF and the emerging NNPG (specifically the presumption in favour of sustainable development / Duty to Co-operate) the M1 corridor LPA's, LCC and the LLEP have formed together to commission a study. The detailed requirements have evolved from the original recommendation to reflect the collective and individual wishes of the partners in terms of spatial planning and economic development.

The Partnering Agreement provides the framework for the procurement of consultants to undertake the study, defines operating practices within the context of the Duty to Cooperate and apportions costs across the partnership in accordance with the agreement reached by HPIG.

Comments from HR

The report has no HR implications

Financial Implications

The total costs of the commission will run to £29,800 with £2,260 being apportioned to the Borough Council, as set out in schedule 2 to the partnering Agreement. The costs can be met from the consultancy budget within the Regeneration and Economic Development cost centre.

Risk Management

No specific risks have been identified with this report.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: Draft Partnering Agreement
(Harborough District Council)