

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Meeting of the Executive on 27th January 2025

Feasibility Study for Green Skills Hub

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Growth

Classification	This report is Public
Contact Officer	Richard Winter Climate Change Officer

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To seek approval to accept funding from East Midlands Investment Zone to complete a feasibility study into the proposed Green Skills Hub at Portland Drive Shirebrook

To seek approval to appoint consultants to deliver the feasibility study.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 As members of the Executive are aware, Bolsover District Council is developing a Green Skills Hub at Portland Drive, Shirebrook that is funded through the UK Government Regeneration Fund. The Green Skills Hub is being developed as part of the long-term strategy to develop green and retrofit skills across the district and follows on from the successful retrofit skills projects that Bolsover District Council has led on including Phases 1 and 2 of the Retrofit Pilot.
- 1.2 In November 2024 Bolsover District Council submitted a bid to EMIZ (East Midlands Investment Zone) Strand A process for £249,914.25 for the development of the feasibility study into the Green Skills Hub, this bid was submitted with our partners RLB (Rider Levett Bucknall) and is in partnership with local colleges, universities, and businesses. The bid was successful and, subject to EMCCA scrutiny, the support will be funded by EMCCA.
- 1.3 The money awarded through the EMIZ process must be spent by March 2025. Though due to delays in awarding the funds this is being negotiated further into 2025-2026.

2. **Details of Proposal or Information**

2.1 The feasibility project will have several objectives that will develop the Green Skills Hub. Its main aim will be to develop the 'offering' of the Green Skills Hub. This includes:

- Development of the education strand of the project, working with local colleges and universities developing a local needs analysis.
- Development of careers support, promoting the Hub and driving recruitment for courses.
- Community liaison to develop courses and training relevant to the local community. The Green Skills Hub could offer 'one day' style courses for Bolsover district residents.
- Development of private course strategy, provide a low carbon private and public sector training delivery hub for local businesses to use, using support from NAPIT and Elmhurst Energy etc.
- Developing an employer needs analysis with EMCCA businesses through partnership with East Midlands Chamber therefore linking programme plans to industry needs and capital design plans.
- Options developed to examine future funding of the centre and long-term resource roadmap.

2.2 Funding for the project has been awarded by EMCCA via EMIZ Strand A. This funding is being matched 'in kind' by projects and activities already funded in Bolsover. The funding award is for £249,914.25. The funding needs to be accepted by Bolsover District Council.

2.3 The funding will pay for outside consultants to deliver the project on behalf of Bolsover District Council, using local organisations and partners to deliver individual elements and the activities and outputs from EMIZ activity to March 2025 will include:

- Project coordination and Project Management of the EMIZ effort, and technical input for refined Hub Proof of Concept and theory of change, and Hub activity structure.
- Bolsover Staff FTE Buy out for coordination and input, 2.5 FTE for 5 months.
- Education provider provision design input up to £11,000 for each public sector provider partner for programme and provision design input (University of Derby, Nottingham Trent University, Vision West Notts, North Notts College, Chesterfield College).
- Careers and Schools System Engagement – DEBP (Direct Education Business Partnership) careers officer engagement and school engagement to support delivery planning, including Hub careers engagement strategy development.
- Community liaison and engagement support by Bolsover Community and Voluntary Service -- community liaison and Local young people and family survey and needs assessment and hub community strategy, prioritising Hub activity based on community input.
- Hub employer engagement strategy and activity coordination from East Midlands Chamber of Commerce (EMCC), employer sector forums and engagement for hub, including establishing Hub employer forums for two additional green

industries sectors (in addition to retrofit employer forum Bolsover, RLB and EMCC launched in September 2024).

- Private course Hub strategy provider low carbon private and public sector training delivery hub strategy, MCS, PAS2035 and other short courses, support provided by Napit and Elmhurst Energy.
- Education provision analysis -- Hub education needs analysis and local provision feasibility and gap analysis, engagement and coordination.
- Employer needs analysis -- Employer Stakeholder Research and Local D2N2 business analysis for at least three green industry sectors, link programme plans to industry needs and capital design plans.
- Hub Delivery Options Development, Feasibility and Cost / Benefit / Impact analysis
- Options developed to Hub Revenue Business Case and related Activity Delivery Planning against different funding scenarios.
- Sector Hub activity plans, roadmaps and workstream revenue resource plans and roadmaps.
- Establish Hub Advisory group, terms and governance.
- EMIZ Project reporting, combined findings and plans summary report and PowerPoint, stakeholder presentations.

2.4 In addition, the application includes a 'follow on' project that if funded by EMIZ will fund the kit out of the Hub and resource funding for training and 1 x FTE to co-ordinate activities to accelerate delivery of activities following completion of the build out.

2.5 In order to deliver the outcomes it will be necessary to award a contract for the project management of the scheme. It is proposed that the Council appoints RLB under a direct award. The value of the contract is £91,000.75 which will be paid for from the EMIZ funding.

2.6 Normally for a contract of this nature the Council would need to undertake a procurement exercise by way of a formal Invitation to Tender. However the Council's Contract Procedure Rules does allow for contracts to awarded without following a competitive process in exceptional circumstances.

2.7 It is considered that the following exemptions as set out in paragraph 4.8.4 justify a direct award to RLB:

- 4.8.4 (1) (a) The preferred contractor RLB has co-commissioned the project building on the work they did in Phase 1 &2 to design the programme for Phase 2 and this programme meets the funding body's requirements and so there is no reasonable alternative to the consented scheme which includes the contractor's own propriety materials.
- 4.8.4(1) (c) The work, goods or services to be supplied amounts to a continuation of an existing contract and it would not be in the interests of the service to retender in that the preferred contractor has designed a bespoke programme and have set in motion various parts of this programme because of their involvement in the intervening design part of Phase 2 of the Pilot.
- 4.8.4(1)(d) A contractor is required so urgently so as to preclude tenders because the design process and the approval associated process is in part ongoing and the goods and services need to be delivered by no later than 30 September to be able to draw down the funding from DESNZ via the Midlands Net Zero Hub.

3. **Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 The first phase of the project will support officers across the Council and Dragonfly develop the Green Skills Hub proposals at Portland Drive Shirebrook, maximise its potential by ensuring the training and the facilities it will offer drives inclusive growth within the local economy and wider region by making sure the services it will offer are directly relevant to our local residents, our local communities, our local colleges and universities and our local businesses.
- 3.2 If the first phase of the project is successful, there is the potential to obtain additional funding for a follow-on project that will support the kit out of the building and its future operations including delivery of training courses.
- 3.3 However, the short timelines for award of the grant and spend mean that making a direct award of a contract to RLB to undertake part of the project is the only viable option, also considering the appointment of RLB to deliver the project will build on the recent projects they have delivered across green skills and retrofit.

4 **Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 To withdraw the application for funding and return the award, would not stop the development of the Green Skills Hub, but would reduce its potential, and the development of the curriculum, and courses would still need to be undertaken. Additional resource funding, staff time and additional capital expenditure on kit would be needed to complete this exercise without the funding from EMIZ.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. To accept the funding of £249,914.25 from East Midlands Investment Zone
2. To appoint RLB Rider Levett Bucknall to deliver the project on behalf of Bolsover District Council

Approved by Councillor John Ritchie, Portfolio Holder for Growth

IMPLICATIONS:

<u>Finance and Risk</u> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Details: There should be no cost to the Council from this report as all expenditure will be funded by the grant income received.		
On behalf of the Section 151 Officer		
Legal (including Data Protection) Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Details: A direct award of a contract to RLB is considered justified using exemptions contained in part 4.8.4 of the Contract Procedure Rules		
On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council		

Staffing Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Details: There are no staffing implications within this report.	
On behalf of the Head of Paid Service	
Equality and Diversity, and Consultation Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Details: Equality and diversity will be considered at delivery stages throughout the project life cycle.	
Environment Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Details: The Green Skills Hub development will support the ambition of Bolsover District Council to meet its Carbon Neutral Target. This feasibility project will enhance the centre and its course development. With targeted courses and resources, the Hub will reach more students, businesses and residents and raise awareness of climate change and encourage Low Carbon / Green skills. The additional skills and training will also raise the potential of Bolsover residents.	

DECISION INFORMATION:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please indicate which threshold applies:	
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an Executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more wards in the District or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Revenue (a) Results in the Council making Revenue Savings of £75,000 or more or (b) Results in the Council incurring Revenue Expenditure of £75,000 or more.	(a) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Capital (a) Results in the Council making Capital Income of £150,000 or more or (b) Results in the Council incurring Capital Expenditure of £150,000 or more.	(a) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) <input type="checkbox"/>
District Wards Significantly Affected: (to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the District) Please state below which wards are affected or tick All if all wards are affected:	All <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Site of Green Skills Hub = Shirebrook South Ward	

<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If No, is the call-in period to be waived in respect of the decision(s) proposed within this report? (decisions may only be classified as exempt from call-in with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer)</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Consultation carried out: (this is any consultation carried out prior to the report being presented for approval)</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

<p>Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment, Housing</p>

DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

Appendix No	Title

<p>Background Papers</p>
<p>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive, you must provide copies of the background papers).</p>