



Report for:	Commercial Board (CB)
Date of meeting:	Virtual decision

Title of report:	Commercial Board
Author	Nathalie Bateman
Purpose of report:	In order to comply with Dacorum procurement processes for extended contracts beyond £75k.
Recommendations:	To endorse a direct award framework to commission Hyas Associates.
CB decision required (give short explanation)	To decide if a direct award complies with procurement processes.
Are there any commissioning or procurement implications?	The award would be subject to a direct award procurement framework.
Are there any digital implications?	No, the award provides consultancy services.
Head of Digital comments if relevant	Not relevant.
Are there any financial implications?	The scope has been shared with finance department.
Accountant comments & signature	<p>The value of the HYAS contract is expected to be £74,972. Of the £190k Home England grant funding £30k will be attributed to the HYAS fee, the balance will be from HGC funding. I will review the HGC finance tracker with the team before the board meeting at the end of Feb but the current HGC project funding will cover this outlay.</p> <p>Darren Flanagan, Accountant for Place and People.</p>
Head of Commercial Development comments if relevant	
Are there any legal implications?	No there are no legal implications.
Who has been consulted so far	Ben Hosier, Head of Procurement; and Lyndsey Evans, Procurement Manager

Background papers	None
Appendices	<p>Appendix 1 – Hyas scope of works</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Hyas summary of costs</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Importance of work to Local Plan</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Grant Funding Agreement</p>

1. Background

Hemel Hempstead was awarded Garden Town status and Government funding in 2019 to develop “Hemel Garden Communities” (HGC) a development proposal and long-term programme to transform Hemel Hempstead and the wider area. The focus of development will create attractive and sustainable new neighbourhoods and communities within Growth Areas to the north and east of the town as well as proposed strategic sites within the town.

The HGC partners – Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City & District Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter are working together with The Crown Estate and other strategic landowners to deliver the proposal alongside Local Plan processes.

Hyas Associates have provided specialised consultancy support to Hemel Garden Communities and the Local Plan teams over the last 18 months. We have received support from different Hyas consultants specialising in a variety of different aspects of Garden Community development and delivery, these include: planning policy, joint planning committee development, landowner engagement, strategic design code, socio-economic demographic modelling, performance planning advice to support a Very Special Circumstances application for Land East of Hemel Hempstead and stewardship.

Two officers recently vacated posts in the HGC team, as a result, the consultancy support via Hyas has been increased in value to provide resilience in priority areas required for both Local Plan and Grant Funding workstream delivery.

2. Issues/Proposals

Hyas Associates will support the HGC team and partners as set out in Appendix 1, over a period of 26 weeks. The cost for the proposed work is £74,972 with a total cost to date of £215,871.

Their support is expected to provide evidence outputs required for both DBC and SADC Regulation 19 Local Plans. Dacorum has tight timelines for internal sign-off (between March to June 2024) and both Local Plans are considered to be corporate priorities for the authorities. The Regulation 19 Local Plan consultations for both authorities are planned for autumn 2024.

Hyas is expected to provide dedicated support for workstreams associated with the Grant Funding awarded by Homes England in December 2023, which is worth £190,000. However the money can only be claimed through the delivery of key outputs, as per the draft Grant Funding Agreement (Appendix 4) within the claim window up to the end of March 2024. Hyas’ is expected to support 3 out of 4 workstream areas related to the Grant Funding attributed to £30,000 of the total Grant Funding award.

3. Options and Timescales

The options provided below demonstrate the difference in timescales between a direct award and a framework tender process.

Option 1 Framework Tender Process

Procurement Stages	Indicative Timescales
Tender process start date	February 2024
Tender process finish date	May 2024

Work Stages	Indicative Timescales
Appointment & Inception	June 2024
Consultancy Support	Jun – Dec 2024

Option 2 - Direct Award

Procurement Stages	Indicative Timescales
Tender process start date	Feb 2024
Set up of a direct award framework via Matrix or Bloom	March 2024

The elongated timescales for option 1, a framework tender process, would not align with either the deadlines associated with the Grant Funding Award and the Local Plans programme for Regulation 19 consultation.

4. Risks

The main benefits for choosing a direct award:

- A direct award procurement process will improve the opportunity to complete key workstreams for the Regulation 19 Local Plans process.
- A direct award to Hyas will increase the opportunity of maximising the full award of Grant Funding from Homes England up to a value of £190,000.
- The HGC budget is funded by the HGC Partner Authorities (Dacorum, St Albans, and Hertfordshire County Council) where DBC supports the management of HGC finances and therefore has oversight of budgets.

The main risks with not taking forward a direct award contract:

- There is a risk that evidence related to both regulation 19 Local Plans will be delayed.
- There is a high risk that the potential claim for Grant Funding will be reduced which will impact the HGC programme's funding opportunity.

5. Conclusions & Recommendation

A decision is required from Commercial Board in order to comply with procurement processes and approval is sought to appoint Hyas via a direct award framework.

6. Authorisation that will be sought following Board agreement e.g. ODRS, Cabinet,etc

Authorisation will be sought from Sara Whelan, Assistant Director, Planning, through an Officer Decision Record Sheet (ODRS) following Commercial Board agreement.

7. Next Steps

Pursue an ODRS and commission via a direct award framework – Matrix has shown to be slightly cheaper.