

The council proposes a delegated decision to submit a regional consortium bid for up to £400 million from the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) for the Warm Homes Social Housing Fund. It is imperative to ensure that our bid aligns with the funding guidelines established by DESNZ. This includes verifying that we meet all eligibility criteria and fully understand the conditions attached to the funding. Any failure to comply could jeopardise our application.

In terms of delegation of authority, I advise that we confirm that the delegation to the Head of Sustainable Warmth Programmes is consistent with the council's governance framework. Proper delegation is essential to ensure the legitimacy of actions taken under this authority.

I would recommend a thorough review of the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA). It is crucial to assess the obligations and liabilities outlined in the GFA, including grant recovery provisions, as well as the termination rights. This assessment will help identify any potential risks to the council and ensure that the terms are favourable.

We must ensure that our process, particularly the use of Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS), complies with public procurement regulations. Adhering to these regulations is vital for maintaining transparency and competitiveness in awarding contracts.

It is important to confirm that any extensions to existing staff contracts and any necessary recruitment comply with employment law and our council policies. Clear communication of these terms will help mitigate potential legal challenges.

It will be critical to ensure that any consortium agreements with bid members clearly define roles, responsibilities, funding distribution, and liability sharing to protect the council's position as the lead authority.

We should also ensure that the project complies with state aid or subsidy control regulations to avoid any risks of breaching these frameworks.

Given the scale of the project, I recommend confirming that appropriate liability insurance or indemnities are in place to cover potential risks, including delays or contractual issues.

If the project involves data collection or processing, compliance with data protection regulations (GDPR) must be ensured, and data handling protocols established to prevent any breaches.

While the decision states that an EIA is not required, we should ensure that equality and inclusion are considered, particularly in the delivery of services to vulnerable groups.

Environmental and regulatory compliance should also be ensured, particularly in relation to decarbonisation efforts and building regulations, to avoid delays or penalties.

All expenditures from the funding will require further approvals from the Legal, Finance, and Procurement departments before any allocation or spending can occur. This means that while we are moving forward with the DDM for the bid submission, any financial decisions arising from this bid will necessitate subsequent approvals, so we must plan accordingly and maintain clear communication with the relevant departments.