

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 12 April 2021

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WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Cllr James Swindlehurst, Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Strategy

PART I **NON-KEY DECISION**

DEVELOPMENT AND EXECUTION OF A PLACE BRAND FOR SLOUGH

1 **Purpose of Report**

To update the Cabinet on the procurement of a design agency partner, for the development and execution of a place brand for Slough.

2 **Recommendation**

That the Cabinet note the decision to award the contract for the development and execution of a place brand for Slough to Hemingwaydesign.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

It is anticipated that the development of a place brand for Slough will support the delivery of the third priority outcome of the SJWS – strong, healthy and attractive neighbourhoods.

3b **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The development of a place brand for Slough will be an important tool in communicating the ambitions of the council and partners, as laid out in the Five Year Plan, Slough 2040 Vision and other major strategies. It is anticipated that it will have a particularly significant impact on the council's ability to deliver the following priority outcomes of the Five Year Plan:

- Outcome 3: Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay.
- Outcome 5: Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents.

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

Following a competitive tendering process, officers awarded the contract for the development and execution of a place brand for Slough Council to Hemingway design. The contract is estimated to cost £50,000 in 21/22, which will be fully funded from the allocated S106 money within the service.

(b) Risk Management

There are no risk management implications to the recommendations of this report.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no legal implications to this report. The tender process was carried out in accordance with the proper procurement procedures (see section 5.1).

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been carried out in relation to this report.

It is hoped that the place brand and narrative being developed will articulate how the opportunities for Slough as a place that are being pursued will be inclusive and beneficial for all Slough's residents.

(e) Workforce

The development of the place brand will require support from SBC officers across multiple teams, and from senior leaders.

5 **Supporting Information**

5.1 Background

Throughout 2020 and 2021 SBC has been working with our partners to develop an ambitious shared 20-year vision for the town. The Slough 2040 Vision was endorsed by the Cabinet in February, following a three-month period of engagement with residents, councillors, partners, and businesses. Discussions have now begun on how the vision might be implemented and how residents can be included and engaged in all steps of the journey.

The council has also recently published a number of further ambitious plans for the future of the town – including the Slough Inclusive Growth Strategy and the Slough Regeneration Framework Masterplan – with further place-based strategies also being developed by our strategic partners.

All these strategies present a positive and ambitious picture for Slough as a place; however, the complexity of the story provides a challenge.

It has been identified that there is a need to bring all the different opportunities and narratives under one umbrella, which can clearly, concisely and articulately communicate this story of place, and provide a narrative that can be flexible and appropriate to a variety of stakeholders.

A tender was put out in February to find a place branding agency who could work with the council and partners to deliver such a brand narrative, as well as developing marketing collateral and an initial implementation plan.

Following a competitive process, the decision was taken to award the contract to Hemingwaydesign, who joined the council and partners for the virtual launch of the Slough 2040 vision on 22nd March.

The process used to select Hemingwaydesign was based on selecting the most economically advantageous supplier; and therefore looked at the track record of agencies, their staff and their experiences and capabilities, the approach they will use to generate the Slough brand, examples of materials produced and the plan to launch the Slough brand.

Hemingwaydesign were selected from eight bids, with three bidders interviewed.

Hemingwaydesign have been offered a two-year term contract, allowing the use of further work to support the execution of the brand beyond the initial development should this be necessary.

5.2 Hemingwaydesign

Hemingwaydesign is a multi-disciplinary design agency with expertise across a number of areas, including: placemaking, urban design, affordable housing, landscape planning, masterplanning, cultural events, public art, installations, place branding, place promotion and regeneration.

Their approach involves “listening to people, bringing communities together, defining a shared vision and then making it happen”.

Hemingwaydesign have spent decades working on “projects with purpose”, often in ‘much maligned “underdog” towns that have often been given unfair treatment by the media’, including: Blackburn, Basildon, Lowestoft, Margate, Whitehaven, Skelmersdale, Crewe, Gateshead, Redcar, Middlesbrough and Bognor Regis.

6 Comments of Other Committees

This report is yet to be seen by any other committee.

7 Conclusion

The development of a place brand for Slough presents an opportunity to create a single, clear and positive narrative that can be used to communicate the ambitions for Slough as a place.

8 Appendices

A - Hemingwaydesing Placemaking & Events Credentials