

Full Council

Title:	Air Quality Educational Project
Date:	13 August 2024
Contact Officer:	Becky Reid, Environmental Project Officer

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Council on the quotes received to deliver this project and recommend 2 actions for the council's consideration to enable the project to launch in the Autumn 2024:
 - a. Approve the partial forward funding of the project
 - b. The signing and sealing of a legal deed with South Oxfordshire District Council to receive the Section 106 funding that will enable implementation of this project.

Background

2. At the Full Council meeting on 18 June 2024 an Air Quality Educational Project was proposed, and two resolutions were made to
 - a. *Apply for Section 106 funds totalling no more than the £43,879.22 outlined in the report to help deliver the Air Quality Educational project.*
 - b. *Employ a specialist contractor, as the lead delivery partner, subject to approval from SODC's Section 106 application process.*

Current status

3. Following the meeting 3 quotes were obtained to deliver this work. These are broken down in the table below. Companies were asked to quote on delivering the following areas, but not all chose to quote for all areas:
 1. Sessions in each school to raise awareness & educate about Air Quality
 2. Community based activities raise awareness & educate about Air Quality
 3. Development of future communications plan for schools to enable them to keep education going after the project is completed – including lesson plans, resources.
 4. Creation of a 'safe routes to school' map: this will identify walking and cycling routes to school that use the streets with the best air quality and will include a research project led on by students from the schools.
 5. September Street Fair project: monitoring Air Quality impact of the fair
 6. Reimagined Streets': future travel plans developed in partnership with schools.

	Company 1	Company 2	Company 3
Areas quoted on	1, 2,3,6	1,4	All areas
Total direct costs (exc. VAT)	£25,900	£36,650	£28,900
Total additional costs for resources/additional services – such as printing services, Air Quality monitors etc. – that Thame Town Council would pay for directly.	£28,820		£7,350
TOTAL	£54,720	£36,650	£36,250

4. All 3 companies have experience in delivering Air Quality programmes. As you can see from the table, Company 3 is able to complete the full project brief within budget and we will therefore move ahead with them as our preferred provider, subject to reference.
5. There is wide disparity between the quotes. This is primarily explained by the fact that the outcomes being delivered most closely match the previous work of Company 3, who was therefore able to draw on previous experience, rather than being required to start the work from scratch. The consultant is also local, actively involved in volunteering with environmental groups and has children in 2 different Thame schools and therefore already well connected and had no need to cover costs for developing these connections and relationships.
6. An application has been submitted to S106 to this effect. The budget being requested is £39,875 which includes a 10% contingency. Should the funding be approved by SODC we would like to launch this project in Autumn Term 2024 (looking at a later October/early November start). The project will run for a minimum of 2 years, but up to 3 years if necessary to fit with school term dates and availability.
7. Once Section 106 funding has been approved by SODC we will receive written confirmation of the award, and at this point it cannot be retracted. However, it can take a further month to release the funds due to their legal processes.
8. It is recommended that, if our finances allow, that Thame Town Council forward fund the project, to allow it to be launched in the Autumn term as planned.

This project will provide statistics, education and awareness to Thame residents as part of implementing the actions approved within the Thame Green Living Plan.

Recommendation:

- i) To approve that Thame Town Council forward fund the project to a maximum of £13,000 once we have written confirmation from SODC approving this funding.*
- ii) That, if awarded successfully, the Town Council agrees that the legal S106 Agreement with South Oxfordshire District Council for the Air Quality Education Project can in accordance with Standing Order 20 be signed and sealed by the Proper Officer in the presence of two Members of the Council who shall sign the deed as witnesses.*