

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

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| 1. | Meeting: | Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Development |
| 2. | Date: | 3rd March 2014 |
| 3. | Title: | RERF - Markets growth plan & options assessment |
| 4. | Programme Area: | Environment and Development Services |

5. **Summary**

This report seeks approval of an allocation of £19,000 RERF revenue towards work on a growth plan and physical options assessment for the Rotherham Markets complex.

We are also seeking approval for the work to be awarded directly to the Retail Group, outside the normal tendering procedure set out in Council's standing orders. This is due to the tight timescales for both spending the money and requiring the outcomes of the work.

6. **Recommendations**

That £19,000 of RERF revenue is approved towards work on a growth plan and options assessment for Rotherham Markets.

That approval is given to directly award this work to the Retail Group in order for it to be completed in what is a relatively constrained timeframe.

7. Proposals and Details

In order to identify how the Council should make best use of the current short term opportunities to invest in and support the market, as well as why they should do so, it is essential to identify what the right markets offer will be for Rotherham and its future customers.

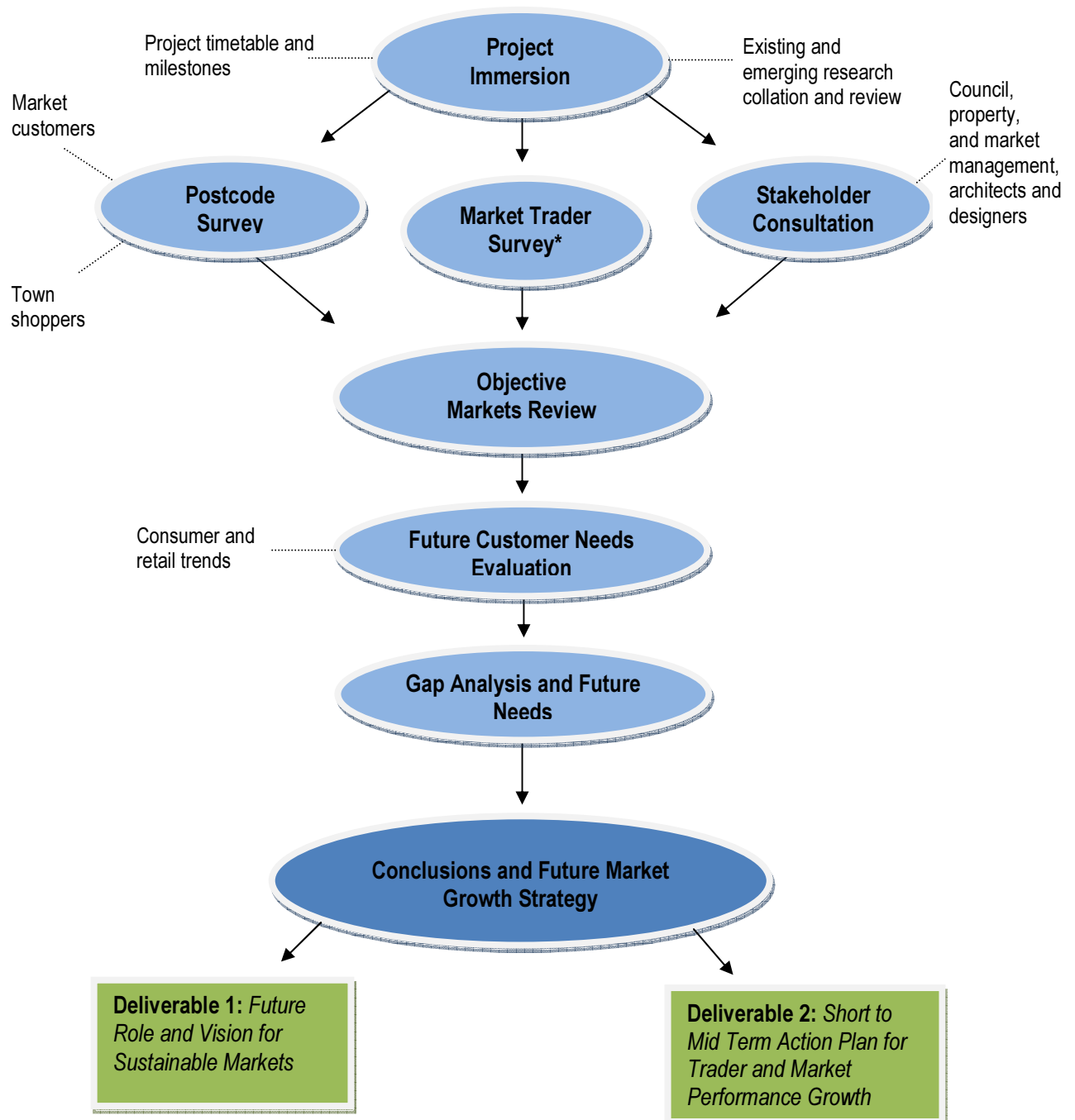
Key questions to answer include;

- What is the right market offer?
- What do customers and traders want?
- What do existing and future retailers want?
- How can the markets further help the town?
- How can the markets compete locally and regionally?
- What are the right themes and events?
- What is the best use of the current outdoor space?
- How can the markets act as a catalyst between Tesco and the town centre?
- How will an improved market (indoor and outdoor) help the town?
- What investment is required and what is merited?
- How can the markets be improved in the short term and strategically?

Therefore the objectives of the work will be;

- ***To identify the future strategy and growth plan for Rotherham Markets, the right markets offer for the town and its customers.***
- ***To identify the rationale for investing in improvements to the markets, and the optimum additional physical requirements both short and long term.***
- ***To identify actions to improve performance and to effectively utilise the development opportunities available.***

These will be achieved through a work programme as set out below.



- Growth opportunities
- Target retailers
- Expenditure retention (market share)
- Market positioning
- Facilities
- Tactical recommendations

- The consumer and their needs
- Gaps in offer
- Improvements needed
- Target product categories
- Target operators
- Changes to mix
- Target customers

- Size, number of stalls
- What
- Where
- When
- Optimum layout
- Trading days
- Core offer

There is a pressing need for the work to be completed as quickly as possible as the RERF money has to be defrayed by no later than 31st March 2014. We have also been recently informed that the opening of the new Tesco store on the former Civic site may open late 2014. This work is an essential part of us identifying the appropriate activity to carry out on the Market Complex to maximise the benefits and minimise the threat from the Tesco store and as such is needed as a matter of urgency.

The Retail Group has previously worked with the Council in producing a Town Centre Retail Strategy, which was awarded after an open tender process. This was also a very good piece of work. It also means they already have a good knowledge of Rotherham town centre and the dynamics of its retail offer.

Bearing the above in mind, we are seeking to award the contract directly to the Retail Group; to allow us to get the work completed in as short a timeframe as possible, while achieving a high quality piece of work

8. Finance

| Funding | Status of funding. Approved/ Awaiting Approval | 2012/2013 | 2013/2014 | Total |
|------------------------------|---|------------------|------------------|---------------|
| RERF | | | | |
| Capital | | | | - |
| Revenue | | - | 19,000 | 19,000 |
| TOTAL RERF | | - | 19,000 | 19,000 |
| Other Funding Sources | | | | |
| | | | | - |
| | | | | - |
| TOTAL OTHER FUNDING | | - | - | - |
| Grand Total | | - | 19,000 | 19,000 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

There is currently £19,000 remaining of the 2013/14 RERF revenue allocation, which this approval will use in its entirety.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Further funding would need to be secured to deliver any redevelopment of the Markets complex on the back of this work.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Redevelopment of the Markets complex will contribute to the following themes of the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan:-

- Revitalise the town centre

- Improve access and remove barriers to employment.
- More people come to the Town Centre for work, shopping and things to do and see

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Consultation on the redevelopment options for the markets has taken place with a number of Officers including the Strategic Director for EDS, the Markets Manager, the Land and Property Manager, the Business and Retail Investment Manager, Director of Planning, Regeneration and Cultural Services, and the Finance Manager.

Part of the funded work will be to consult with Market traders and other stakeholders on the possible ways forward in the redevelopment of the Market Complex.

A copy of the full RERF application form for this project is available on request.

RMBC Finance and Legal have been consulted on the report.

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