

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Susan Carey, Cabinet Member Environment

DECISION NO:

22/00029

For publication

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: 21 MW Solar Farm in the West Country

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Environment, I agree to:

1. Support the purchase, by Commercial Services Kent Limited, of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) , via the deployment of £14.415M of Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Funding (see decision 21/00034 for further details on PSDS Funding).
2. For the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Director of Infrastructure and the Corporate Director of Finance, to transfer the necessary PSDS funding to Commercial Services Kent Limited for the purchase of the SPV, subject to:
 - the terms and conditions of the PSDS grant being met;
 - the technical, legal, and due diligence conclusions being acceptable to KCC;
 - and that the remaining funding for the project can be secured;
3. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to take relevant actions, including, but not limited to, entering into contract and other legal agreements as required to arrange and deliver this project.

Reason(s) for decision:

Effective use of the Decarbonisation Funding to deliver carbon reduction initiatives. Acquisition of the Solar Farm will reduce KCC's electricity costs either directly via a discount or via the dividend and, crucially, reduce carbon creation.

Reason for urgency

To benefit from the £14.415m Salix PSDS grant, the project must be delivered by 30th June 2022. The solar park SPV must be purchased before the 3 April 2022 and ideally in this financial year or the letter of intent signed between the parties expires

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposal is being discussed by Members of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on 17 March 2022.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

- Do Nothing: Site is not developed for a Solar Park: Under this option, KCC would seek alternative carbon reduction solutions; this would mean handing back the PSDS grant funding and would be a financial loss to KCC.
- Purchase a Site in Development with Planning: This option would incur significant timeline and project risks including seeking a willing seller, leading to potential loss of the grant funding.

- Purchase Existing Solar Park: This option would incur a loss of grant funding to KCC as Salix grant does not support existing facilities

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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signed

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date