

Report to: Policy and Performance Advisory Committee

Date: 30 June 2021

Title Investment in green energy initiatives- update

Exemption: None

Report of: Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning

Ward(s): All

Purpose of Cabinet report: To provide an update to the work initiated by the report considered at Cabinet on 25 March 2021. To provide further allocation of revenue funding to: facilitate delivery of the Ouse Valley Solar Farm project to planning application stage; to reduce risk to the project failing; and associated due-diligence work and business case development.

Officer recommendations to the Cabinet:

- (1) To delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Cabinet member for finance and assets, to increase the loan provision to OVESCO up to a maximum of £155,000 for development funding to take the solar farm proposal set out in section 2 and Appendix 1 of this report to planning submission, subject to further due diligence being carried out, satisfactory loan terms and milestones being agreed (see recommendation 2 below).
- (2) To approve the setting up of a cross-party Ouse Valley Solar Farm Oversight Board to oversee the project. The group will consist of 3 Councillors as set out in paragraph 5.2. The group will meet 4-6 weekly and OVESCO will be expected to provide updates in order to facilitate the release of loan tranches as detailed in the loan agreement and otherwise agreed in writing.

Recommendations to the Committee The recommendations are detailed at 1.3 of this report

Reasons for recommendations to the Committee: To provide a critical friend challenge to the Cabinet decision and policy making process.

Contact Officer(s): Name: Nick Peeters
Post title: Committee Officer
E-mail: nick.peeters@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk
Telephone number: 01323 415272

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In its role as a provider of public scrutiny and as critical friend, the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee has a duty to provide a challenge to the executive decision and policy makers.
- 1.2 The Policy and Performance Advisory Committee is able to provide this challenge through the inclusion of the Council's Forward Plan of Decisions as a standing item on each of the Committee's agendas, allowing the Committee to request the inclusion of reports due for consideration by the Cabinet on its agenda and by asking that the relevant officers, heads of service or directors, attend the Committee meetings and discuss the content of the reports.
- 1.3 Following consideration of each item, where the Members will be able to ask questions of the relevant officers, heads of service, directors and other stakeholders, the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee will provide one of the following three recommendations to the Cabinet:
- 1) To support the recommendations in the report in full; or
 - 2) To support the recommendation in the report subject to the consideration by the Cabinet of any amendments agreed by Committee; or
 - 3) To not support the recommendations in the report and give reasons.
- 1.4 The Cabinet will be provided with the recommendations from the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee when it considers the main report.

2 Financial / Legal / Risk Management / Equality Analysis/ Environmental Sustainability Implications/ Background Papers

- 2.1 All implications are addressed in the Cabinet report attached at Appendix 1.

3 Appendix

- Appendix 1 – **Investment in green energy initiatives- update** Cabinet report and EXEMPT appendix (Report of Local Partnerships- Renewable Energy Investment for Lewes District Council)