

Public Report with Exempt Appendices
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 23 December 2019

Report Title

Town Centre Masterplan Public Realm Improvements Phase 1

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Boston Castle

Report Summary

This report seeks Cabinet agreement for the design proposals and to the release of funding in the approved capital programme to implement phase 1 of the public realm improvements contained in the Town Centre Masterplan.

Recommendations

1. That approval be given to Phase 1 of the public realm improvement scheme.
2. That approval be given to the allocation of funding from the Town Centre Investment Fund (TCIF), to progress to final design and implementation.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Proposed public realm designs and phasing programme.
Appendix 2 Cost plan (Exempt Item)
Appendix 3 Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Forge Island Development Report - June 2018
Rotherham Town Centre Masterplan Report - July 2017

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

An exemption is sought for Appendix 2 under paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains sensitive commercial information of letting a tender.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information, as the Councils commercial interests could be prejudiced by disclosure of this commercial information.

Town Centre Masterplan Public Realm Improvements Phase 1

1.	Background
1.1	At its meeting on 11 September 2017, Cabinet resolved to approve the Town Centre Masterplan.
1.2	The masterplan identified a package of interventions including public realm improvements, across a number of key strategic areas, to help improve the function, aesthetics and linkages into and across the core of Rotherham town centre.
1.3	The Masterplan highlighted the critical importance of public realm enhancements to help encourage and improve movement and connectivity, particularly between Forge Island and the wider town centre, and to improve the physical environment and experience within the town centre.
2.	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The locations proposed for improvement as part of the public realm scheme are detailed in Appendix 1 and summarised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 - College Street, Bridgegate, Howard Street (Frederick St to Market Sq), Effingham Street (All Saint's Sq to Market Sq).
2.2	<p>Works proposed as part of the scheme include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional parking spaces along College Street to help improve access and introduce additional short term parking closer to the heart of the Town Centre; • Replacement and upgrade of old and tired surface materials; • Introduction of new 'pop up' features to add additional interest and vibrancy; • Review of the number of trees with the possibility to remove and replace trees elsewhere to improve surveillance by CCTV and improve the function and aesthetics of the spaces; • Removal of planter beds and seating on Bridgegate, to address issues relating to Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and provide a more open view of the Minster; • Improvements and upgrade to lighting to help improve safety and CCTV functionality; • Improved layout of market stalls along Effingham Street to provide additional space for traders and space to expand the offer to other street markets including continental food markets; • Infrastructure works to provide new power supplies for market stalls and events; • Feature lighting to add interest to the streetscene; • Upgrading of street furniture.

3.	Options considered and recommended proposal
3.1	<p>Options considered are as follows:</p> <p>Option A – do nothing. This would mean one of the key interventions of the Town Centre Masterplan would not be implemented.</p> <p>Option B – deliver elements of Phase 1. This would implement selected sections of public realm on an ad-hoc basis, which would not deliver all of the intended benefits of the works and would delay delivery.</p> <p>Option C - implement Phase 1 as outlined above and detailed in Appendix 1. This would deliver the first phase of public realm improvements and help achieve a number of benefits expected from the scheme as detailed in the adopted Masterplan. This is the recommended option.</p>
3.2	It is therefore recommended that Option C is accepted and taken forward.
3.3	It is recommended that this project is added to the Council's approved Capital Programme, with funding taken from the approved Capital Programme Budget of the Town Centre Investment Fund. The estimated cost of this project is shown in the exempt Appendix 2.
4.	Consultation on proposal
4.1	Throughout 2019, consultation has and will continue to take place with a wide range of stakeholders and groups to ensure all users and stakeholders feedback is incorporated within the final designs.
4.2	On the 9 January 2019, an initial stakeholder meeting took place. This included representatives from the voluntary sector, a member of the Business Growth Board town centre sub-group that represents town centre businesses, Ward Members, the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and Council officers.
4.3	Further consultation has taken place with: Rotherham Older Peoples forum, the Business Growth Board town centre sub group, senior officers within Children's and Young People's service and external parties including Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance (ROAR). Consideration of the proposed scheme has also been given by the Rotherham Voice and Influence Partnership group on 3 March 2019, which is chaired and run by young people.
4.4	As part of the consultation process, meetings have taken place with South Yorkshire Police and this dialogue will continue. Consideration is to be given to "Secure by Design" standards; the police initiative which supports the principles of "designing out crime" through the use of effective crime prevention and security standards. This includes the layout of communal spaces, the use of lighting, removal of street furniture (which may cause issues of anti-social behaviour) and advising on any design decisions which could increase the risk of crime.

4.5	The public realm proposals were discussed with Members as part of the Transforming Cities funding workshop led by the Transportation Unit on 14 March 2019.
4.6	Regular project meetings have taken place with the Project Team which includes officers from Highways, Transportation and the design consultants. Feedback received has included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on what materials should or should not be used with regards to maintenance and sustainability of the public realm furniture. • Options for potential lighting upgrades and catenary lighting features. • Options and feasibility for added security measures including removable bollards.
4.7	A Members information seminar took place as part of a wider Masterplan Project seminar on 2 October 2019. The event updated and informed Council Members on the progress of the Town Centre Masterplan and offered Members the opportunity to give feedback on the proposed scheme. This initial feedback was positive and the designs were well received. Several suggestions were made, including: emphasising the need to incorporate trees/ green space and ensuring that the proposals are welcoming and accessible to all.
4.8	On 9 October a meeting took place with a selection of young people from the Barnardo's Young Carers Council.
4.9	On 17 and 18 October, businesses within the Phase 1 areas were visited by Council officers to discuss the plans and provide feedback.
4.10	A public information event took place on 29 October 2019 on the Tuesday street market, to inform town centre users of the developments which are proposed as part of the delivery of the adopted masterplan. <p>Feedback received from the public and users of the town was positive, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seats need to be higher in some places for those less able to get up and down. • Trees need to be kept.
4.11	Consultation with a student focus group at Rotherham College took place on 6 November 2019.
4.12	As part of the promotion of the works which are to take place, a press release will be produced to bring the proposed public realm improvements to the attention of the public. This will also incorporate the work which the Rotherham Advertiser is doing in relation to the "Standing Up for Sitting Down" campaign. This is a national initiative to improve access to local high streets by improving the seating available to those who need it; this will include upgrading benches which will be more user-friendly.

5.	Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision	
5.1	Activity	Target Date
	Detailed designs of Phase 1 to RIBA Stage 4.	Jan 2020
	Procurement exercise for a main works contractor.	Jan – Feb 2020
	Phase 1 works commence on site.	April 2020
	Phase 1 complete.	Oct 2020
5.2	Accountability for implementation of this decision lies with the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment.	
6.	Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications	
6.1	The indicative costs for the public realm works are contained within the exempt Appendix 2. The funding for this project can be contained within the £17m Capital budget for the Town Centre Investment Fund (TCIF) to deliver the Masterplan. Appendix 2 details the commitments already approved against the TCIF, indicating the remaining balance both before and after the inclusion of the proposed public realm works. The remaining balance is available to be called upon to support further town centre investment schemes identified as part of the Masterplan.	
6.2	All works undertaken must be in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.	
7.	Legal Advice and Implications	
7.1	There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations within this report.	
8.	Human Resources Advice and Implications	
8.1	There are no direct HR implications arising from this report.	
9.	Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults	
9.1	Initial engagement with CYPS took place with senior officers on 31 st January 2019 where consideration was given to how young people could be positively involved.	
9.2	Public realm was considered by the Rotherham Voice and Influence partnership group, which is chaired and run by young people on 3 March 2019. received was positive and further discussions are to take place with the Voice and Influence Partnership who have identified a number of additional groups to engage with.	
9.3	The Rotherham Voice of the Child Lifestyle Survey 2018 borough wide report has also been taken into consideration as part of the feedback from young people.	

9.4	A meeting took place with a representative from Public Health in March 2019 to discuss the inclusion of reducing obesity promotion as part of the design and using the scheme to promote activity and exercise for users.
9.5	Consultation will continue to take place throughout the process. This will include further meetings with Barnardo's, a meeting with Rotherham Sight and Sound and a public information event.
10.	Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications
10.1	The Initial Equality Screening form has been completed. Consideration of accessibility and the needs of all will be reviewed and implemented as part of the design process, to ensure it adheres to current regulations.
11.	Implications for Partners
11.1	The work in the town centre may cause temporary disruption within the specified project area(s). All business operators in the project area(s) will be consulted and notified of works within their vicinity in advance and will be kept informed of works and duration.
12.	Risks and Mitigation
12.1.	Developing any of the public realm interventions identified in the Masterplan will reduce the budget available from the Council's approved Capital Programme for the Town Centre Investment Fund to deliver other identified interventions outlined in the Masterplan.
12.2	To help mitigate this risk the public realm will be included in the detailed funding bid submitted as part of the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) and the allocation of the Transforming Cities Fund to potentially help reduce the capital contribution required from the Council.
12.3	The Council is in the process of applying for the FHSF; updating and re-imagining the town centre public realm is one of the key projects to be included within the bid. The aim of the fund is to provide infrastructure investment to help renew and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that improves experience, drives growth and ensures future sustainability. Progression to the business case development phase of the FHSF does not guarantee capital funding for the scheme. Successful bids are expected to be announced in summer/autumn 2020.

12.4	The FHSF is to provide co-funding towards capital projects, securing private sector or other public sector funding. Any award will be subject to a condition that third party co-funding referred to in the business case is fully legally committed and, when taken together with any FHSF award, will be sufficient to complete the scheme(s). The TCIF balance of £7.826m has been identified as a source of co-funding for the FHSF bid. Expenditure on projects identified in the FHSF business case prior to MHCLG approval can be included, which will allow phase 1 works to commence on site in April 2020.
13.	Accountable Officers
	Daniel Watson, Investment and Economic Initiatives Manager, Investment & Economic Initiatives Team

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	12/12/19
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	27/11/19
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	28/11/19

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