

SHEPTON MALLET TOWN COUNCIL

Meeting	Full council, Item 4
Date	6 October 2020
Author	Town Clerk
Subject	Market square resurface and regeneration

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 For councillors to receive a presentation from the project lead from Somerset County Council to consider the range of materials for the market place resurface project. A mood board of images of surfaces is attached.
- 1.2 For councillors to agree which is their preferred surface and the physical area to be resurfaced, within the budget constraints of £100k from Shepton Mallet Town Council, £70k from Mendip District Council and £130k from Somerset County Council. Somerset County Council are the lead, with support from the town council and financial support from the town council and the district council.
- 1.3 For councillors to consider any recommendations from the Market Place Working Party of what street furniture could be added to the market place at the same time of its resurfacing as part of an overall regeneration project.
- 1.4 For councillors to consider and agree the proposal, including agreeing an upper budget for the street furniture for the market place.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 It was agreed at the council meeting on 8th September 2020 that this meeting be arranged for the purpose of discussing the market place resurface project.
- 2.2 The resurface of the market place has been considered over a number of years. The Council resolved to commit £100,000 from the Local Projects Capital Earmarked Fund for the town centre and market square resurfacing project and to work in partnership with Somerset County Council and Mendip District Council, at a meeting on 22nd January 2019. For a number of reasons, the project has been delayed, but has reached a point where decisions need to be made and for the work to commence in the next 6 months.
- 2.3 The town council representatives asked SCC for a commitment to the works being carried out at the soonest possible date, once a design has been agreed by councillors. The point was also made that the timing of the works would need to be carefully considered, recognising that the spring time is likely to be a busier time for businesses. The timing of Easter (Sunday 4 April) and the Easter school holidays (22 February to 02 April) were also noted. At the last meeting with SCC, it was suggested that the work would be completed by the end of the current financial year (end of March 2021). The contractor did however inform the group that some works would not be able to be carried out in cold weather.
- 2.4 The town clerk requested that SCC arrange for a section 52 of the Highways Act 1990 agreement be put in place, such that the newly surfaced area be

protected from subsequent non-essential works being carried out for a defined period of time. In plain English, the idea being to protect the new surface from being dug up and patched up shortly after its completion. This would of course not protect it from emergency works.

2.5 It was agreed that the next steps would be as follows:

a. Skanska will prepare a costed proposal that will be presented to an additional meeting of the town council in early October. Alyn Jones of SCC had previously offered to attend this meeting and present to councillors. Councillors will be asked to agree to a design at this meeting.

b. For the council to submit a list of additional requirement that might be installed the same time, funded by the town council.

c. A period of consultation will follow, carried out by both SCC and SMTC.

d. Once any final adjustments have been agreed, a date will be set for the works to be carried out.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The council has an Earmarked Fund, entitled Local Projects Capital, containing £203,626. £100,000 will be taken from this fund to pay for the resurface, leaving £103,626. It is from this pot that funds could be taken if the council wishes to add some other improvement to the market place, such as the installation of power sockets, charging stations, bike racks, water fountains or any other such infrastructure which would benefit from being installed at the same time as the market resurface. As a very crude indication a budget of £12,000 will achieve a new noticeboard, new bins, some new seats, planters and bike racks. The cost of reinstating the water fountain is unknown and the cost of providing powers sockets is unknown.

3.2 Therefore, councillors are advised to agree an upper limit of expenditure from the fund, so that the Market Place Regeneration Working Party has an indication of the funds that are available. Officers have yet to cost out the items, but will be able to prepare a costed proposal, within a budget, for consideration at a future meeting.

3.3 Councillors are reminded that the council has a policy on what it must retain in its General Reserves. General Reserves currently stands at £215,125 and this needs to be retained as a minimum of between one quarter (£145,063) and one third (£193,417) of the current precept (580,252) in General Reserves. Therefore, councillors might wish to spend a sum, not to exceed £21,718, from General Reserves on this project, and retain the Local Project Capital fund. Councillors need to be aware that if they are aspirational to purchase any building or land in the future they will require substantial funds for this.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The town clerk requested that the environmental impact of the materials chosen be considered and where possible, that local materials and supplier be

favoured. Also, that consideration be given to the disposal of the existing market place surface material.

5.0 TOWN PLAN REFERENCE

Place making

<p>Ensure the town centre is attractive and welcoming</p>	<p>Invest in improvements in the Market Place, in partnerships with others</p> <p>Support the retention of the Library in the centre of town and its development into a wider Community Hub</p> <p>Improve the signage, information boards and street furniture to make the town more welcoming</p>
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Promotion

<p>Support the market and events</p>	<p>Promote the delivery of a wide range of annual, seasonal and regular activities that includes the markets, Carnival, Lantern Parade, Snow Drop Festival, Festival of Dogs, Collett Festival and others, that encourages local participation and attracts visitors</p>
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6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 For Councillors to note the presentation from the project lead
- 6.2 For Councillors to agree the materials that will be used
- 6.3 For Councillors to agree the geographical area that will be resurfaced
- 6.4 For Councillors to agree an upper limit budget, and from either the Local Projects Capital fund or General Reserves, to enhance the market place
- 6.5 For Councillors to delegate authority to the Town Clerk to pursue quote for the additional items, and to consider at a future meeting
- 6.6 For authority to be delegated to the Project Officer to more the project forward, subject to decisions made at this meeting.