

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	To approve the design and construction of Widemarsh St enhancement scheme
Date of decision:	11 November 2022
Decision maker:	Director for Economy and Environment
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>On 7 October 2021 the Cabinet Member Infrastructure and Transport took a decision to authorise the various Hereford City Centre Improvement elements to be progressed and authorised the Director for Economy and Environment to take all operational decisions necessary in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer to progress and deliver the programme elements within the overall programme budget outlined within the report on a programme basis across the projects.</p> <p>This decision can be viewed using the following link: https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=8255</p>
Ward:	Central
Consultation:	Consultation of this decision has taken place with the council's finance legal services and communications teams.
Decision made:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To design and construct/deliver a scheme to remove the 50mm upstand by lifting and replacing the road surface, with new channel blocks and provision of a linear drainage system.
Reasons for decision:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The council entered into a grant agreement with the Marches LEP on 15 December 2020 and varied on 20 December 2021 to jointly fund a package of improvement works throughout Hereford City Centre. This scheme of works must be completed by 31 March 2024. 2) The report for the Cabinet Member decision of 7 October 2021 set out that this work will be commissioned through the Balfour Beatty Living Places public realm contract. This procurement route has been identified to achieve the timescales and utilising continuity of knowledge through the works and schemes that BBLP have already provided. 3) It was noted in the above report that the budgets were high level and that there was significant risk that these would vary. 4) The existing Widemarsh St design scheme completed in 2011 has been subject to a number of specialist technical design and safety reviews. All have concluded that the scheme is fully in line with design guidance and best practice. 5) The 7 October 2021 Cabinet Member decision set out the HCCI programme with a budget to enhance Widemarsh St, in recognition that some members of the public continue to experience difficulties in traversing the street despite the scheme compliance. 6) A wide variety of options for improving the street have been explored and discounted. 7) The key factors to consider were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The visual impact of the street • The ease of use for pedestrians in terms of the pavement • Safety of pedestrians regarding the use of the street by vehicles • Cost • Drainage 8) Taking all of these factors into account the recommended option is a

	<p>full lift of the road surface to remove the 50mm upstand with replacement of the kerb and provision of a linear drainage system.</p> <p>9) The estimated total budget envelope for the scheme design and construction/delivery is £1.3m. This will include full design including any additional surveying, drainage modelling etc and the construction including the lifting of 690m² road surface, incorporating new porphyry sets, replacement of kerbing, provision of drainage, traffic management, communications and contingency. It is estimated that the construction works will be an approximately 16 week programme.</p> <p>10) It should be noted that the use of new porphyry sets is more cost efficient than lifting the existing sets, cleaning off of mortar and relaying. The old sets will be recycled.</p> <p>11) The re-profile of HCCI budgets as set out in the Record of Officer Decision dated 6 October 2022 increased the initial provisionally estimated budget to account for the anticipated spend required for this Cabinet supported scheme. ie there is sufficient capital budget to carry out this scheme within the HCCI package of works.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Under the terms of the grant agreement the HCCI package of works must be completed before 31 March 2024, therefore construction/delivery must be concluded before that date. 2) There is a risk that a level street surface will affect surface water levels in times of high rain-fall, which may result in ponding. This will be mitigated by drainage modelling within the design phase to provide a suitable drainage system (eg Acco drains). 3) There is a risk that detailed design work could identify further necessary budget increases. Much survey and design work has already been undertaken in previous scheme iterations. Development of this scheme will be monitored robustly using the council's project management protocols including reporting to Project and Delivery Boards. Oversight of the contractor by the Contract Management Team will ensure best value. 4) There is a risk of disruption to businesses whilst construction work takes place. This will be mitigated by detailed project planning and comprehensive communications. The construction works will be phased to ensure access to businesses are maintained.
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To not carry out the design and construction of Widemarsh St. This has been rejected due to Cabinet Member instruction to provide a solution to the difficulties that some members of the public experience when traversing this street.
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None recorded.</p>