

JOINT MEETING OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE AND REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE



Friday 30 June, 2017

at 10.00 am

**in the Council Chamber
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors, Belcher, Hind, Hunter, James, Lawton, Loynes, and Richardson.

MEMBERS: REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE:

Councillors S Akers-Belcher, Cook, Cranney, Lindridge, Loynes, Moore and Thompson

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

None.

4. KEY DECISIONS

- 4.1 Town Centre Highway Improvements - *Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*

5. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

None

6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

None.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

JOINT NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

30 June 2017



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: TOWN CENTRE HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key Test (i) and (ii) applies – Forward Plan Reference RN 28/16.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek approval for a number of highway schemes in the Town Centre area which are designed to improve pedestrian connectivity. The schemes are part of the Hartlepool Regeneration Masterplan, and link to the Innovation and Skills Quarter (ISQ) project which will see major improvements in the Church Street/ Church Square area.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Church Street ISQ forms an important part of *Hartlepool Vision* - the strategy for the regeneration of the Waterfront and Town Centre. The ISQ aims to revitalise Church Street and the surrounding area by providing a positive environment for the creation and growth of new businesses. It aims specifically to boost the growth of the creative industries sector in Hartlepool building upon the £11m investment that has been made to create new teaching facilities for Cleveland College of Art and Design (CCAD) on Church Street. The proposals will also improve connections between the Waterfront and Town Centre by creating high quality public realm space.

3.2 There are four projects within the ISQ Programme:

- i. The creation of 31 managed workspace units within the former GPO building on Whitby Street;
- ii. A scheme of public realm improvement works along Church Street;
- iii. A major public realm improvement programme on Church Square; and

- iv. A new pedestrian crossing, highway improvement and traffic signaling works on Stockton Street.
- 3.3 The ISQ was the subject of a conditional allocation of £5.5m from the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership in 2015. The conditions of grant award required the Council to develop its plans to a sufficient level of design detail to enable firm cost estimates to be made for each of the projects within the Programme.
- 3.4 Further details of the Innovation and Skills Quarter scheme can be found in the Joint Finance and Policy and Regeneration Services Committee report of the 27th March 2017.
- 3.5 The A689 corridor through the Town Centre has long been seen as a barrier to pedestrian connectivity. Whilst it is the key traffic route through the town, and most certainly a benefit in that respect, it can lead to longer pedestrian journeys between key town centre locations. It will also support the Council's vision to improve connectivity thereby supporting the Council's key regeneration plans.
- 3.6 In developing proposals to address this, it is important to ensure that there is not a significant detrimental effect on traffic flows and junction capacities, and the measures outlined in Section 4 of this report aim to achieve this balance.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The proposals can be summarised as pedestrian crossing improvements and traffic signals upgrades, along with access and environmental improvements. The individual schemes identified are as follows:-
 - **A689/ Church Square (Appendix 1) – Removal of some of the pedestrian islands to improve crossing facilities.** At present people seeking to cross from one corner to another are required to cross 5 or 6 legs of the junction, under signal control, and in the worst case scenario this can take several minutes. Removing some of the islands will shorten this time and simplify the junction for people on foot.
 - **A689/ Victoria Road (Appendix 2) – Provision of a 'one phase' pedestrian crossing from Church Square to Wilkinson's Corner.** The current proposal will support pedestrian access and has been modelled to have a minimal impact on traffic using this part of the network.
 - **Stockton Street – Removal of the central wall.** Introduced around 20 years ago, the wall was originally an environmental improvement on the previous street scene. The proposed removal of the wall, in conjunction with the railings along each side of the road, will make for a much more open, pleasant town centre environment, creating a sense of approach for residents and visitors as you enter the Town Centre.

- **Stockton Street (Appendix 3) – Provision of a traffic signal controlled right turn into the multi-storey car park.** At present, vehicles travelling into the town centre from the north that wish to access the multi-storey are required to turn left into Church Street, and then filter around Tower Street, to turn right back onto Stockton Street at the Huckelhoven Way junction. By facilitating a right turn directly into the car park this will remove the need for these vehicles to use this part of the network, and the associated unnecessary trips on it, which will be of particular benefit to the very busy Stockton Street/ Huckelhoven Way junction. The multi-storey car park is owned and operated by the Council so any improvements will benefit both the Council and Middleton Grange Shopping Centre, and further support the growth and the Town Centre.

- 4.2 It is proposed that the works to Stockton Street will commence once the works to Church Street and Church Square have been completed. The programme and phasing will be confirmed once contractors have been appointed. An indicative programme for Stockton Street is shown below:

Stockton Street	
Design Freeze	June 2017
Commencement of Procurement	September 2017
Identification of Preferred Bidder	November 2017
Contract Award	January 2018**
Contractor Mobilisation	March 2018**
Start on Site	April 2018**
Completion	December 2018

* Subject to the completion of Church Square

- 4.3 The implementation programme could potentially be affected by issues such as delays in funding approvals, adverse weather conditions, delays in the delivery of materials or unforeseen issues once on site. Delays will be minimised wherever possible.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Public consultation events took place on 7th and 8th September, at Christchurch and Middleton Grange Shopping Centre. These were publicised in the local press plus the Council website/ facebook/ twitter pages. Emergency services, bus companies, and other key stakeholders were also consulted via the Council's Traffic Liaison Group.

5.2 Consultation Results

22 responses received.

Results as follows:-	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Stockton St/ Church Square	14	6
Stockton St/ Victoria Rd Crossing	14	5
Multi-Storey Car Park Entrance	15	3

**Not everyone answered every question, hence the discrepancy between the results and the total respondents.*

2 letters were also submitted, one suggesting widening Gateway Bridge to provide a bus lane, the other referring to European policies but not suggesting anything specific.

Discussions with attendees at the consultation events were generally positive, with people keen to see improvements in the area.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The ISQ is a major Town Centre regeneration programme and carries a number of risks that will need to be properly managed. It has therefore been important to ensure that the locations of underground utilities are clearly identified; design work has been completed in sufficient detail to enable contractors to price the work properly, and all necessary planning and funding approvals have been authorised.
- 6.2 Prior to construction a risk register will be prepared for each project. Risks will be carefully monitored throughout the construction programme. Key risks that will need to be managed include utility approvals, temporary traffic management diversions, liaison with residents and businesses affected by construction work; monitoring of the construction timetable and budget; and contingency planning around external variables such as adverse weather.
- 6.3 It will be important that construction work is managed in such a way as to minimise disruption to businesses and residents in Church Street. There will be a need to ensure early communication about areas where work will be taking place and any changes that may be needed to local traffic management, including diversion routes. Council officers will ensure that there is proper communication with local residents and businesses about each of the ISQ projects and the impact of the construction work.
- 6.4 The funding risk will also be managed through the timing and phasing of the works to ensure that the overall project is delivered within the resources available. If cost increases occur it may be necessary to reduce the scope of works in later phases of the programme, including Stockton Street to fit the remaining budget.

- 6.5 A successfully implemented programme will bring about significant improvements for the Town and the reputation of the Council. Proper risk management procedures; early identification of problems and speedy resolution of potential difficulties will therefore be key to successful delivery.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The proposals set out in 4.1 of the report are estimated to cost approximately £1.7 million.
- 7.2 Members should note that the project costs may change once tender prices have been received which may result in the need to value engineer or reduce the scope of projects in the later phases including the works identified for Stockton Street
- 7.3 Members should note that the delivery of the ISQ programme is dependent upon the successful completion of the TVCA due diligence process.
- 7.4 The breakdown of the overall ISQ budget is shown below, as reported to the Joint Finance and Policy and Regeneration Services Committee report on the 27th March 2017.

Project	Latest Estimated Costs (000's)
Managed Workspace	£3,137
Church Street	£2,169
Church Square	£1,423
Stockton Street/Highway Improvements	£1,729
Church Street High Speed Broadband	£30
TOTAL	£8,488

The sources of funding identified for the ISQ programme is set out in the following table:

Project	Total Funding Allocation (000's)
Local Growth Fund	£5,500
Heritage Lottery Fund	£282
Hartlepool Borough Council	£2,334
S106	£222
Local Transport Plan	£150
TOTAL	£8,488

- 7.5 An application for £300k of National Productivity Investment Fund has also been submitted to support the economic growth of this area through the improvements being carried out on the strategic road network, which if successful will offset HBC contribution.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 There are no legal considerations attached to this report.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 9.1 There are no child and family poverty implications attached to this report.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 The proposals put forward aim to create an improved pedestrian experience as a number of changes to the existing layout have been made to improve accessibility which will benefit people with disabilities.

11. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no Section 17 considerations attached to this report.

12. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no staff considerations attached to this report.

13. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 There are no asset management considerations attached to this report.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 That the Joint Neighbourhood Services/Regeneration Services Committee approves the proposed improvements.

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 To give improved pedestrian connectivity in the town centre, while maintaining traffic flows at acceptable levels.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 Joint Finance and Policy and Regeneration Services Committee report of the 27th March 2017.

17. CONTACT OFFICER

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