

## Agenda item 8

### For decision – Station Approach improvements project

Author: Jane Llewellyn – Planning & Development Manager

#### Summary

This report sets out the progress made and the current situation regarding the Station Approach improvements scheme, which was developed by FTC in 2015.

Somerset County Council have committed £30k of S.106 agreement funding to the project. Due to the length of time it has taken to get the relevant consents and legal agreement in place, a revised quote was requested from the lowest tenderer and the cost of implementing the original scheme has risen by £1857.00

As the amount of S106 funding available is fixed and the Town Council reserves are so tight the only option is to revise the scheme to bring it in on budget.

The proposed revision is to remove the proposed bus stop from the scheme.

#### Background

In 2015, FTC developed a scheme for improvements to the Station Approach. In summary, the scheme included:

- Pedestrian and cycle signage between the station, Town Centre and other destinations
- A widened footway on the west (Town Centre) side of Station Approach
- A fully disabled accessible bus stop on the approach in readiness for a bus service (currently there is no bus stop at the station)
- A safe accessible route for pedestrians across the forecourt
- Sheltered cycle stands
- Relocation of the taxi rank to enable the bus stop to be installed

A plan of the scheme approved by Somerset County Council is attached at Appendix 1.

The provision of the pedestrian & cycle signage was not included in tender costs; this is being provided with grant funding from GWR, who since the original scheme was drawn up have also installed the sheltered cycle stands.

Since the scheme was developed, the cost has risen by £1857.00 given how tight FTC's reserves are, there is a need to identify savings to bring the scheme within budget.

#### Proposal

The element that could be removed with least impact on outcomes for users in the short term would be the accessible bus stop given that none of the bus companies are proposing to provide a service to the station. By removing the bus stop, it may then not be necessary to relocate the taxis but advice will be sought on this point. The amendments will however need to be approved by Somerset County Council who are providing the funding.

The amended scheme would provide:

- A widened footway on the west (Town Centre) side of Station Approach
- A safe accessible route across the forecourt

A draft section 278 agreement (a legally binding document to ensure that the work to be carried out on the highway is completed to the standards and satisfaction of the Local Highway Authority) has been received for the original scheme, so it is hoped that any amendments can be resolved quickly.

When the amendments have been agreed and approved by the County Council, the next step would be to instruct the contractor, Dave Lucey Ltd who was the lowest tenderer when this first went out to tender. They will as part of their traffic management plan inform the Station Manager and surrounding businesses of the schedule of works and any likely disruption, which for the level of works proposed will be minimal.

The proposed signage does not form part of the S278 Agreement and is being dealt with separately. The signage comprises new fingerpost and way marker signs and updating of the fingers on the existing fingerpost signs in the town. As the signs will be placed on the highway (pavement) a separate licence is required from SCC which has been applied for and is expected shortly.

#### **Recommendation**

The Station Approach improvements scheme is amended by removing the provision of a bus stop from the scheme to enable the remaining improvements to be delivered within the £30k budget.