

Agenda Item 3

For decision - Market Place Phase III

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Summary

This report provides an update on the progress made to date on the Market Place Phase III works for further improvements to the area around Boyle Cross, and sets out the approach to funding for the scheme.

The report also seeks Cllr approval for the proposed designs and delegated approval to investigate sources of funding and to obtain any permissions required.

Following the decision at the last Council meeting on 24 June 2020, staff and Councillors have continued to work together to develop ideas for improvements to the area around the Boyle Cross, providing new planters and seating.

As agreed, Nicholas Pearson Associates were asked to provide designs which would be sensitive to the historic area of the Market Place. A design has been produced and sketches shared with Councillors. In order to move towards obtaining any necessary consent from the landowner or to establish if any planning consents will be required, Cllrs will need to approve the proposed designs.

The proposal will provide three additional planters with two bench seats in between along the carriageway edge, an extension to the existing seating at the top end of the Boyle Cross to provide additional planting, an additional bench seat adjacent to TSB Bank along the pavement edge and an additional rubbish bin. Due to the sloping nature of the site all the seating and planters will be bespoke, the proposed material for the planters is corten steel. The sketches are attached at [appendix 1](#).

The cost for the works as designed is estimated at £25,000, which was the amount agreed by Council in June, with approval to progress the scheme as far as possible within the constraints of the existing project budget for Phase II of the Market Place.

We are not currently in a position to confirm how much money will be available from the Phase II contingency budget. In addition to the contingency fund associated with Market Place Phase II, the following funding approaches are also being pursued:

- Sponsorship

Initial conversations with the Chamber of Commerce suggest there is interest in sponsorship from local businesses and we are grateful for their enthusiasm for this project.

- External grant funding (public sector or commercial).

As yet, we have not identified any sources of grant funding; however, this is likely to form a further line of investigation.

- Existing Council funds

It is the intention to explore all other sources of funding before identifying how much might need to be drawn from existing Council budgets. (Staff will provide to Cllrs an initial year end budget forecast by the end of September to help inform this decision).

Jane Llewellyn and Cllr Dove will continue to report back to Councillors, especially as the extent of the Phase II contingency becomes clearer. Any proposal to use existing budgets or EMRs will be brought to the next Council meeting in November.

Recommendations

1. Agree the design that has been prepared
2. Delegate authority to the Planning & Development Manager to obtain any permissions required from Mendip in its capacity as owner of the site and as the planning authority.
3. Delegate authority to the Planning & Development Manager to investigate sources of funding for the project and work with the RFO to explore the potential of using existing council funds to make up any shortfall
4. Bring a report back to the next Council meeting in November