

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 16 JANUARY 2018

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| Title of report | MARLBOROUGH SQUARE REFURBISHMENT |
| Key Decision | a) Financial No b) Community Yes |
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| Purpose of report | To update Cabinet on proposals to redevelop Marlborough Square transforming the square from a car park into a more usable public space. |
| Reason for Decision | Cabinet approval is needed to progress the project further. |
| Council Priorities | Homes and Communities Building Confidence in Coalville Business and Jobs |
| Implications: Financial/Staff | A budget has been secured to complete capital works. Revenue costs include officer time, and will be met by existing staff budgets. Future maintenance, parking income, and administrative costs will need to be worked up in more detail, and will depend in part on the final detailed design for the development |
| Link to relevant CAT | Not applicable |
| Risk Management | A risk register has been prepared, and was reported to Cabinet in June 2017. Additional risks have been identified at paragraph 2.5 of this report. This project will be run in accordance with the council's corporate project and risk management framework. |

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| Equalities Impact Screening | If necessary, a Human Rights and Equalities Impact Assessment will be conducted |
| Human Rights | See above |
| Transformational Government | This project has been progressed to this point in close collaboration with local stakeholders. It is proposed that, following completion of the works, the majority of the square will cease to be highway, and will pass from the county highway authority to the district council. |
| Comments of Head of Paid Service | The report is satisfactory. |
| Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer | The report is satisfactory. |
| Comments of Monitoring Officer | The report is satisfactory. |
| Consultees | Marlborough Square working group Ward Members Leicestershire County Council |
| Background papers | The Prince's Foundation's Regeneration Strategy for Coalville (2009) . Four Squares and Streets Investment Plan (2010) . Report to Cabinet (26 July 2016) Extending the Coalville shop front improvement grant scheme and update on the Coalville Project . Report to Cabinet (13 June 2017) Building Confidence in Coalville – Proposals and Funding . |
| Recommendations | <p>IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CABINET:</p> <p>(I) NOTES THE PROGRESS MADE ON THE PROJECT.</p> <p>(II) APPROVES THE COMMISSIONING OF DETAILED DESIGN AND FEASIBILITY WORK (BY LCC) TO REFURBISH MARLBOROUGH SQUARE TO DETERMINE THE ACTUAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION.</p> <p>(III) APPROVE THE CONCEPT PLAN THAT CREATES A NEW PUBLIC SPACE, NEW BUS STOPS, NEW TAXI RANK WITH A LIMITED AMOUNT OF SHORT STAY PARKING.</p> <p>(IV) ARE ASKED TO NOTE THE INTENTION TO RELOCATE EXISTING FREE BAYS TO OTHER COUNCIL CAR PARKS WITHIN THE TOWN</p> |

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| | (V) CENTRE. APPROVES THE COMMENCEMENT OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE CONCEPT PLAN. |
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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Marlborough Square Project has previously been reported to Cabinet (13 June 2017). This report sets out progress made since 13 June 2017. Cabinet has reserved £1.1 million for this project.
- 1.2 The project forms part of a wider scheme of public realm works proposed across Coalville to improve the appearance of the town and encourage inward investment. Other related projects include proposed works to Oliver's Crossing and Ashby Road. It is part of a programme to realise the guiding principles which were established by the Prince's Foundation work, for four squares and connected streets. Marlborough Square is one of the four squares, and improvements to two of the connecting streets is well advanced (Hotel Street / High Street, and Belvoir Road/Jackson Street).

2.0 PROJECT PROGRESS AND UPDATE

- 2.1 Officers have worked closely with Leicestershire County Council, local businesses and other stakeholders to explore ideas and develop a concept plan.
- 2.2 An option that satisfies the requirements of the project brief and the day to day operational needs of the square has been identified. This option can be found appended to this report.
- 2.3 The proposals will create a high quality area of public space (one of the town's four squares) with:
- Outdoor seating areas.
 - New tree planting.
 - A more pedestrian friendly environment, with vehicles encouraged to drive through the square at lower speeds through changes in carriageway width and surfacing.
 - Improved bus passenger waiting areas.
 - New taxi rank.
 - New Christmas tree pit.
 - New short stay parking spaces (limited to 15 minutes).
 - Space for events that can take place without closing the square to vehicles.
 - Underground power cabling to allow events to take place more easily.
 - New public art linked to Palitoy in response to suggestions made by stakeholders.
- 2.4 The existing free parking spaces could be relocated to Needhams Walk and/or James Street and/or Margaret Street car parks. As part of the project it is proposed that the majority of the square will be transferred to District Council ownership. This will enable the District Council to use the space more freely but this will require the District Council to take responsibility for the maintenance of the square.
- 2.5 It is important to recognise the the concept proposal will form the basis of the detailed design, however adjustments will need to be made to the exact position of features, for

example, trees and public art to ensure that vehicles (when authorised) can access the surface of the public space and move around. The final position of any trees will depend on the underground survey work that will commence if Cabinet approve project progression. Authorised vehicles that will be permitted on the main surface of the square will be those servicing businesses along the northern side of the square, those involved in events and council maintenance vehicles. As detailed work progresses, officers will work with Leicestershire County Council to address considerations relating to:

- land ownership and the status of the proposed vehicle route along the southern side of the square that will link Jackson Street and Belvoir Road
- access for those with visual or mobility restrictions
- native tree species selection and the design of tree pits
- lighting
- non-slip surfaces
- utilities
- enforcement
- the tracking of vehicles.

2.6 Subject to Cabinet approval, the following key stages will commence:

January 2018

LCC undertake technical and design detailed work; calculate construction costs. LCC will also undertake detailed ground investigations (e.g. topographical, services) and prepare a detailed project programme.

January 2018

Traffic Regulation Order consultation begins ('Stopping Up' order) for 12 weeks.

February 2018

Public exhibition/consultation led by NWLDC.

March 2018

Refinement of design proposals.

April 2018

Traffic Regulation Order consultation ends.

May 2018

Report to Cabinet seeking final approval for project implementation.

2.7 A risk assessment has been conducted and was provided in the 13 June 2017 Cabinet report. These risks are still considered relevant, however the following additional risks have been identified. These risks will be mitigated as follows:

| Potential risk | Suggested mitigation measure |
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| Project management failure (project implementation; communication; cost management; contractor supervision). | LCC will have their own Project Manager for the project; however it will be necessary for a District Council officer to be nominated as project manager. |
| Lack of support from bus operators. | Officers have worked closely with Arriva to ensure that the proposals allow bus services |

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| | to operate effectively and efficiently. Arriva are aware that during construction works temporary bus stops will need to be provided. LCC are to advise where these bus stops could be located. Continued communication will be required between LCC, District Council and bus operators. |
| Lack of support from local businesses. | The stakeholder meetings have been effective in building interest and support in the project, but have also enabled the District Council to understand issues and concerns. It is recommended that the stakeholder group continues to meet through project development and implementation; in particular how construction works will come forward and how minimal disruption to businesses can be assured. |
| Lack of support from taxi operators. | A new taxi rank is provided on the western side of the square. Following comments from the taxi operator representative, additional evening bays have been provided along the eastern side of the square. These bays will be operational from 7pm to 7am daily. |
| Misuse of the square by private vehicles. | The redevelopment of the square will provide considerably less shoppers parking. There is a risk that shoppers will seek to leave cars in bus bays and/or the taxi rank. Some anti parking (half on pavement parking) might be expected. Robust enforcement will be necessary to ensure that the square is used correctly to ensure it functions well for the community as a whole. The detailed design will seek to carefully locate trees and items of street furniture to 'design out' anti-social parking as far as possible. |
| Public perception that an empty space has been created. | A programme of events will be prepared to ensure that the square functions as a high quality and vibrant public space throughout the year. A detailed events programme will be appended to the next Cabinet report. |
| Detailed designs exceeded allocated funds. | Work is scheduled to commence in January (subject to Cabinet approval) for the commencement of detailed design and costings work. This work will include ground investigation works. Once this work is complete, it will be possible to fully cost the proposals (including contingency). If works exceed the allocated funds it is proposed that officers (including Property Services) will work with LCC to bring the project cost within the |

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| | budget allocation and ensure ongoing maintenance costs are reasonable. |
| Poor communication with the public, local businesses and other stakeholders | The District Council's Communications Manager will prepare a communications strategy in consultation with LCC. |
| Loss of parking revenue as a result of relocating free parking bays from Marlborough Square to other Council car parks (the free spaces would reduce the number of chargeable parking spaces). | The maximum estimated reduction in parking revenue will be £22,512. This is an inevitable consequence if the Council wishes to develop the square as envisaged and relocate existing free parking spaces to other council car parks. The reduction in income will need to be factored into the Council's budget from June 2018 (the earliest date construction works might begin and when free short stay spaces would be provided at other council car parks). |
| Selection of inappropriate tree species and the failure of planted trees. | Officers will consult with the Council's Tree Officer. The Tree Officer is aware of the project and welcomes the introduction of more trees within the town. However, he stresses the importance of appropriate species selection and the use of underground tree crates to allow tree roots sufficient space to grow and protect roots from compaction. |

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 An earmarked reserve of £1.1 million is in place to implement the project.
- 3.2 In order to remove the requirement for the District Council to pay commuted sums to LCC it is proposed that the District Council take ownership of the square from LCC. This will create additional liability for the District Council as it will be required to meet the costs and manage any repairs required to hard and soft landscaping. NWLDC's Property Services are to review the design and specification of the scheme in order to ensure ongoing maintenance responsibilities are reasonable.
- 3.3 A budget provision of £12k has been included in the Council's draft 2018/19 budget to support the delivery of a 24 month events programme for Marlborough Square throughout 2018/19 and 2019/20. Planning for the events programme will commence when a construction timetable is confirmed to ensure that planned events can be delivered. Initial event ideas include: guest markets (food and drink, vintage, continental etc.), craft fair, street entertainment, promotion of voluntary and charitable organisations (National Volunteer Week), recycling roadshows, seasonal events and participatory activities. Further to this the square will be promoted to other organisations and businesses to encourage them to utilise the space to sustain a programme of activity in the area.
- 3.4 To implement the scheme as envisaged, the Council will need to commission Leicestershire County Council to instigate the process of Traffic Regulation Orders. The District Council will need to make changes to current car parking orders to redesignate chargeable parking spaces in other council car parks to free spaces (advised cost of £1,200). There will be costs associated with moving the free spaces into other Council car

parks. These costs will relate to: signage and lining, changes to ticketing machines and changes to parking orders. Budgetary provision will need to be made to meet these costs.

- 3.5 In the short term, it may be necessary for the council to provide additional enforcement to ensure that the new parking arrangements within the square operate effectively.
- 3.6 Once detailed designs are produced, it will be possible to more accurately calculate the revenue implications of maintaining the square to a high standard.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Officers have worked closely with the Leader, Ward Members, local businesses and stakeholders to identify a concept proposal that meets collective aspirations for the square. The Urban Designer has spent a considerable amount of time working closely with all those involved to secure consensus whilst also building support and enthusiasm for the project.

4.2 If Cabinet approves progression to the next stages of the project, officers will work through practical details relating to:

- land ownership
- enforcement of new parking bays, taxi rank, church bay (for wedding cars and hearses) and bus stops,
- how the free parking bays will be operated effectively and efficiently (e.g. a parking machine would be uneconomical for a small number of spaces),
- signage and lining,
- detailed design of raised planting and other soft and hard landscape features (in consultation with NWLDC Grounds Maintenance and Property Services),
- air quality issues associated with the proximity of outdoor public seating to bus stops (perhaps a 'turn off engine' agreement could be secured with bus operators if buses are at bus stops for longer than 2 minutes),
- loading capacity of the public square surface (to ensure that service and event vehicles can access and cross the surface without damaging the surface materials and/or the sub-surface structure/utilities).

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Officers will also work through various event scenarios to ensure that all over surface items are carefully located so as not to unreasonably preclude certain events taking place.

4.3 Cabinet is requested to approve the recommendations made to enable to project to progress further.