

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

DELEGATED EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REPORT

Report to: Executive Member for Environmental and Regulatory Services
Date: 31 January 2022
Report for: Decision
Report of: Corporate Director of Place

Report Title

Altrincham Public Realm Improvement Works

Summary

This report provides an update on the next phase of the public realm improvement works for Altrincham Town Centre that cover George Street, Market Street, Regent Road and Moss Lane; and identifies a preferred option in terms of the commencement of those works.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Executive Member for Environmental and Regulatory Services:

- (i) Approves and authorises in principle the undertaking of the schemes identified in Section 2.0 of the report.
- (ii) Delegates authority to the Corporate Director of Place to make minor amendments to the schemes as necessary in consultation with the Executive Member for Environmental and Regulatory Services.
- (iii) Delegates authority to the Corporate Director of Place to deliver the schemes, including engaging external resources, commissioning surveys, investigations and any other works required to deliver highways and public realm improvements; and applying for planning permission if required.
- (iv) Authorises the Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy to finalise and enter into all legal agreements required to implement the above decisions.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Stephen James
 Head of Growth, Communities and Housing
 Extension: 4330

Appendix 1 – Public Realm Improvement Works Plans
 Appendix 2 – Consultation Summary Report

Background Papers: None

Implications:

Relationship to Corporate Priorities	The Altrincham Public Realm project supports the Council's Corporate Priorities of Reducing Health Inequalities and Addressing Our Climate Crisis.
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	At a Greater Manchester level, the Altrincham Public Realm project supports the GM Strategy and GM Local Industrial Strategy 2019.
Financial	The public realm improvement works are funded from Section 111 contribution from the Primark development at the Trafford Centre specifically for Altrincham Town Centre. The contribution was to assist in delivering the highways and public realm improvement works to the town centre. The funding for the public realm improvement works is identified in the Capital Programme.
Legal Implications:	The Council will need to ensure that any Section 111 monies are spent in compliance with the Section 111 Agreement.
Equality/Diversity Implications	Planning and delivery of projects will ensure compliance with the Council's Corporate Equalities Strategy 2021-2025 to understand clearly how different groups may be impacted, and what mitigation or proactive steps need to be taken.
Sustainability Implications	The works will be delivered in line with a Site Waste Management Plan that will be developed by the team to minimise waste and divert any surplus materials to recycling or re-use schemes. The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems will also be incorporated into the project.
Carbon Reduction	The public realm improvement works will deliver active travel improvements to support increased cycling and walking. Traffic calming measures will be put in place to effectively slow the traffic and give more priority to pedestrians and cyclists.
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	Existing resources will support delivery of the schemes identified.
Risk Management Implications	A Risk Register has been produced and will be monitored and updated as required.
Health & Wellbeing Implications	The improvement works will contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of local residents.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council has played a vital role in the revitalisation of Altrincham through the wholesale public realm improvement works delivered to date. The next phase of improvement works represent the ‘last piece of the jigsaw’ utilising the available funding, to further cement the town’s reputation as a destination in its own right. The next phase includes George Street, Market Street, Moss Lane and Regent Road.
- 1.2 Altrincham town centre has been transformed but there remain key areas, such as George Street, that require improvements to benefit residents, visitors and businesses; and help the town centre recover following the pandemic. In addition, improving the experience for pedestrians and cyclists is key in reducing carbon emissions, improving health and wellbeing, and in making the town centre a safer environment overall.
- 1.3 There is a perception that traffic has increased in the town and in line Corporate Priorities, plans and strategies, and those of key partners such as TfGM; the next phase of improvement works will provide new and improved cycle lanes to encourage people to use other modes of transport to access amenities. In addition to the cycle lanes, the proposals also detail changes to one way traffic on part of Regent Road and Market Street to reduce the ability of vehicles to ‘cut through’ the town, pushing them to use the outer road network to the town. However, access will still be available to all car parks in the town centre with the new layout signage to guide motorists to the nearest car park to their entry point.

2.0 Public Realm Improvement Areas and Options for Delivery

- 2.1 As identified, the improvement areas are George Street, Market Street, Moss Lane and Regent Road and include the following works (see Appendix 1 – plans):

George Street:

- will be renewed with the same pallet of materials used on earlier phases of the Public Realm such as Shaws Road and Cross Street. There will also be a number of breakout and seating areas to the centre of George Street to encourage food and beverage establishments. Both options include a number of trees sustainable drainage (SuDS) and green infrastructure. The works will end at the boundary of the Graftons rather than to the end of the Street to Regent Road in light of the future regeneration of the Graftons. This will therefore prevent wasting finite resources on high quality paving works etc. only for it to be ripped out when the Graftons is re-developed.

Market Street:

- this involves the reversal of the existing Market Street one way system to reduce speed, numbers of vehicles and reduce the cut through / rat run that exists and takes place on New Street; along with restriction to Groby Road access from Dunham Road (access out of Groby Road to Dunham Road will still be available).

Moss Lane:

- this involves the renewal of surfacing to Moss Lane to match the same pallet of material of Cross Street and Shaws Road along with widening the footpaths

and narrowing the carriageway. Vehicles will still be able to access all areas as before, however the existing cycle lane will now be segregated.

Regent Road:

- will become one way from the junction of Railway Street and Market Street and will be accessed in a westerly direction towards Dunham Road. There will be a new contraflow cycle lane that is segregated and lined with 'rain gardens' that introduce trees, green infrastructure and SuDS to the area.

2.2 In terms of delivering the works above, two options have been identified:

Option 1:

Works start on Market Street and George Street

Tender – end Jan 22

Start on site – end May 22

Complete on site – Nov 22

Works follow on Regent Road and Moss Lane

Tender – Jan 22

Start on site – Jan 23

Complete on site – Sept 23

Option 2:

Works start on Regent Road and Moss Lane

Tender – end Jan 22

Start on site – end May 22

Complete on site – Dec 22

Works follow on Market Street and George Street

Tender – Jan 22

Start on site – Jan 23

Complete on site – Sept 23

2.3 Due to the ongoing works to Regent Road car park, it is felt prudent that this area is 'rested' to give residents, businesses and visitors a break from the disruption construction causes. Therefore it is proposed that Option 1 is the preferred option with improvement works for George Street and Market Street commencing in May 2022 and completing before the Christmas shopping period. Works to Regent Road and Moss Lane would therefore commence in January 2023 and be complete before the Christmas shopping period in 2023.

2.4 To achieve economies of scale and to allow for increased flexibility, it is proposed that one tender is produced for all the public realm improvement works that would be delivered in the timeframes identified in 2.2 above.

3.0 Consultation

3.1 Public, business, stakeholder and key groups were consulted between 25th August 2021 and 30th September 2021 via a series of questions using the Commonplace online tool (see Appendix 2). In addition a number of briefing sessions were held with local ward Members, and a briefing session was set up for Bowdon and Hale ward Members and the Shadow Executive. Also a number of 'face to face' meetings were

held with key stakeholders, such as Altrincham BID. The consultation was advertised via the Council’s website and twitter account, Altrincham Today and a leaflet drop to businesses and residents inside and around the periphery of the areas of the proposed public realm improvement works. Consultation boards and drawings were placed in the Pott Street library and in the windows of the contemporary art gallery on Stamford New Road.

- 3.2 Appendix 2 provides analysis in terms of overall comments, key issues raised and the response and whether this has resulted in any material changes to the public realm improvement works. The vast majority of responses received were positive and mostly positive over the proposed improvement works. Some key comments made identified the need for more planting and trees being installed with sustainable drainage being included where possible. In response to this, the design has been amended to include a total of 30 trees within Regent Road and Market Street and including more SuDS¹ areas.
- 3.3 Other comments made included concerns over cycling safety, particularly cycle and car conflicts. In response to this the design has been amended to include a segregated cycle lane which will provide more protection for both vehicles and cyclists. The other main point raised in the consultation responses was concerning the adverse impact the proposal would have on the surrounding road network. The response to these concerns is that the interventions had been reviewed and modelled by TfGM with the conclusion that the impact would be negligible and the benefits of the improvement works would outweigh the negatives. Therefore no changes have been made to the designs with regards this issue.

4.0 Budget / Spend

- 4.1 The public realm improvement works are funded through a Section 111 agreement linked to the Primark development at the Trafford Centre. The total available budget is c£2.8m, (which includes a potential contribution from Citybranch for access works) and Table 1 below identifies the spend profile for the public improvement works.

Table 1 – Budget and Costs for Public Realm Improvement Works

Budget:	£2,802,000
Potential contribution from Citybranch	£37,000
Total	£2,839,000
Est. Costs:	
Market Street	402,535
George Street	633,994
Regent Road	922,214
Moss Lane	528,719
New Wayfinding	97,000
Fees	254,438
Total	£2,839,000

(Note – contingency is built into the est. costs for each project)

5.0 Next Steps

¹ Sustainable Drainage Systems

5.1 It is proposed that works are to commence with Phase 1 George Street and Market Street with the following estimated dates:

- Tender Process – February to April 2022
- Start on site – May 2022
- Complete – November 2022

5.2 Following a break over the Christmas shopping period Phase 2 Regent Road and Moss Lane would commence with the following estimated dates:

- Start on site – January 2023
- Complete – November 2023

6.0 Other Options

6.1 The continued revitalization of Altrincham is essential to not only build upon the previous public realm improvement works that have dramatically improved the town centre, but also to steer the town through recovery following the adverse effects of the pandemic. If the public realm improvement works identified above are not delivered then the town's recovery will be severely hampered.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendation

7.1 The Executive Member for Environmental and Regulatory Services is asked to approve the public realm improvement works for Altrincham town centre to secure its future viability and to benefit residents, businesses and visitors.

Key Decision (as defined in the Constitution): No

Finance Officer Clearance (type in initials)...PC

Legal Officer Clearance (type in initials)...TR

[CORPORATE] DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE *(electronic)* 

To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Corporate Director has cleared the report prior to issuing to the Executive Member for decision.