

Committee: CABINET

Date of meeting: 6 July 2016

Subject:	Weybridge Streetscape Improvement
Lead Officer:	Natalie Anderson, Head of Organisational Development
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Stuart Selleck – Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development
Link to Council Priorities:	All
Exempt information:	None
Delegated status:	For resolution
Key Decision:	No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Council is committed to supporting our local economy, businesses and town centres through the Enterprise Elmbridge Action Plan 2015-2017 and the Elmbridge Civic Improvement Fund. These help to ensure that Elmbridge remains an attractive place to invest, work and do business.

This report outlines the work to date to support the Weybridge Town Business Group and seeks approval from Cabinet for funding to progress the design element of the Elmgrove Road to Ship Yard streetscape project.

RECOMMENDED: THAT

(A) CABINET APPROVE FUNDING OF UP TO £6,000 FROM THE CORPORATE INITIATIVES REVENUE BUDGET TO UNDERTAKE THE SITE SURVEY AND DESIGN STAGE OF THE ELMGROVE ROAD-SHIP YARD STREETScape PROJECT.

REPORT:

1. Background and context

- 1.1 The Elmbridge economy generates £3.2bn in Gross Value Added (GVA), with 9,195 businesses and approximately 57,000 employees. The economic base is built on a strong and thriving small business community and is not dependant on any one sector or large employer. The area has a long-standing reputation for business growth and resilience with supportive town centres and local amenities.
- 1,2 The retail sector provides an important source of employment in the Borough contributing approximately 10% of all jobs and 7.1% of our total GVA.
- 1,3 Residents living within the Elmbridge retail catchment area spend a total of £901million per annum on comparison goods, £510 million per annum on convenience shopping and £446million on commercial leisure activities.

1.4 The importance of retaining as much of this expenditure locally is seen in research that shows that for every pound spent in a local independent shop or locally owned business, around 50 to 70 pence of benefits are retained in the local community, whereas as little as 5 pence from every pound finds its way back to the local area from an online purchase.

2.0 Weybridge Town Business Group

2.1 Weybridge is the second largest town centre across the borough in terms of the number of units (166) and the total floorspace (29,590 sqm). The centre supports a population of approximately 21,000 people with a mix of national and independent retailers, restaurants and cafes serving a predominantly local catchment.

2.2 The town retains approximately £38 million of comparison expenditure with the majority (£27 million) drawn from its immediate local catchment.

2.3 In addition to trade draws outside the borough such as Kingston, Woking and Guildford a further £48 million is spent at the Brooklands retail park outside the town centre with future external competition such as Addlestone ONE due to open in 2017.

2.4 Over the past twelve months the Council has worked closely with the Weybridge Town Business Group to develop a co-ordinated programme of events, environmental improvements and community initiatives to support the vitality and viability of the town centre.

2.5 The Weybridge Town Business Group has expanded its partnership to build on its retail base to work with St James Church, the Weybridge Society and Brooklands College.

2.6 The partnership has delivered a range of new events and initiatives including:

- The Christmas in Weybridge weekend
- Party on the Green to celebrate the Queen's birthday
- Becoming a Dementia Friendly Community
- Artist in Residence programme; and
- Brooklands College town map design brief challenge

2.7 In addition, the Council has supported Weybridge with the current upgrade to the Churchfield Recreation ground play area, £147,000 in grants to local businesses through the Elmbridge Civic Improvement Fund and events to drive footfall such as Proms in the Park, Elmbridge Street Live and Leisure Live.

3.0 Elmgrove Road to Ship Yard streetscape project.

3.1 Feedback from town centres businesses and stakeholders has highlighted a range of issues and opportunities to deliver improvements to key sites within Weybridge town centre that will act as a catalyst to reenergise the town for shoppers, businesses and visitors.

- 3.2 The Elmgrove Road to Ship Yard streetscape project aims to create a small plaza as a focal point in the high street through an improvement scheme that will declutter, bring environmental improvements and provide flexibility to enable new events such as a monthly farmers market and street performance.
- 3.3 The area from Elmgrove Road to Ship Yard is bounded by a mixture of national retailers such as Waitrose and independent shops such as Weybridge Sports. Ship Yard is adjacent to the Monument Green conservation area with the high street primary shopping frontage continuing beyond Elmgrove Road.
- 3.4 A concentration of street furniture, a public toilet, phone boxes and an environmental station are located in a cluster toward Elmgrove Road with cycle hoops, a bus shelter/stop and planting toward Ship Yard/Monument Green. This serves to break up pedestrian flows, inhibits gatherings and interactions and fails to use the area to support a pleasant shopper environment.
- 3.5 There is scope to declutter, renew and reimagine the space for events and performances, with a wide carriageway offering the opportunity to expand the pavement. This could deliver an attractive and flexible space to meet the needs of the town centre users and provide space for potential future events. Initial feedback from the Highways Authority is that the width of the carriageway will allow pavement widening and the retention of the current on-street parking provision.
- 3.6 The project can be developed in two phases to allow progress as and when funding is identified. Phase one could provide some of the decluttering and environmental improvements while phase two can deliver the pavement widening for a flexible future event space.
- 3.7 Phase 1 – Elmgrove Road to Weybridge Sports (44 High Street) (See map in appendix A)
- Removal of 2x BT phone boxes
 - Removal of APC toilet
 - Removal/relocation of environmental air quality monitoring station
 - Repaving and levelling (subject to drainage and services feasibility)
 - Street furniture renewal
- 3.8 Phase 2 – Weybridge Sports (44 High Street) to Ship Yard (See map in appendix A)
- Repaving and levelling (subject to drainage and services feasibility)
 - Pavement widening to enable ease of pedestrian movement/events space
 - Street furniture decluttering and renewal

4.0 Outline costs

4.1 The below table outlines the costs to initiate the site survey and design elements of the project and outlines the potential future costs of decluttering the elements in phase 1 where known.

Activity	Costs*	Notes
Site survey and design/costings		
Preparation of site survey including topography, underground and drainage services	£800 (Topography survey for site area)	-Surrey County have indicated they can provide the underground and drainage services information - Topography survey can be booked and delivered within 3-4 week turnaround - Price based on best value quote
Street scene design drawing and approximate. costings	£4,680	Price based on best value quote from Broadway Malyan
Total site survey and design costs	£5,480	This is the funding currently sought to initiate the project
Phase 1 decluttering		
BT phone box removal	£4,162.80	Weybridge Town Business Group has been through the 90 day Ofcom consultation period for the removal of the two phone boxes with no objections
APC toilet	£1,250 (Finance estimate of cost of 15% of remaining rental)	- APC contract due to end in February 2018 - The Council has to give 12 months' notice to JC Decaux for the removal of an APC toilet - If notice is given to remove an APC toilet before the end of the contract, the Council will have to pay 15% of the remaining rental costs - The Council would also have to pay the cost of

		removing the APC toilet (including capping the utilities) and transportation back to the JC Decaux depot. (Costs not yet known)
Air quality station	£9,639 (Costs based upon purchase of new monitoring station, installation, provision of power supply and hard standing)	-Current air quality monitoring station is out of product service guarantee - Environmental Health team feedback that moving the air quality station would result in damage requiring expensive repairs or new station - In order to achieve a full years data from the site removal would need to take place after Dec 2016 - Environmental Health has been allocated some capital funds for a replacement air quality station and consideration could be given to bringing forward these funds within the Capital Programme if required
Total costs to declutter	£15,051.80	

*All prices exclude VAT

- 4.2 The up to £6,000 in funding required to initiate the site survey and design/approximate costings element would provide the basis of an outline project that would allow bids for funds for future implementation. Funding bids for implementation could for example include a Community Infrastructure Levy bid to the Local Spending Panel. The site survey, design and costings element of the project if agreed would likely take 4 months to complete.
- 4.3 Should the project proceed through the initial design stage and receive backing for further development then additional funding would be required for detailed designs for construction and tendering purposes before the project could move to the implementation stage.

Financial implications:

It is recommended that the project be funded through the Corporate Initiatives Revenue Budget for expenditure of up to £6,000.

Environmental/Sustainability Implications:

Economic development contributes to sustainable communities. Specific scheme such as the Elmbridge Civic Improvement Fund can contribute to customers buying produce locally, reducing vehicle trips.

Legal implications:

None

Equality Implications:

None

Risk Implications:

Failure to promote economic growth could result in a reduction in business rate revenues, which under new legislative proposals could affect Council income.

Community Safety Implications:

None

Principal Consultees:

Council Management Board, Portfolio Holder, Heads of Service, Businesses, Business Networks, Partner Organisations.

Background papers:

None

Enclosures/Appendices:

Appendix A: Elmgrove Road – Ship Yard project map

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