

## **The Lamp, Market Place, Wincanton – Funding Contribution (Executive Decision)**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

To consider onward responsibility and a funding contribution towards the re-instatement of the plinth and traditional lamp column in the Market Place, Wincanton

### **Public Interest**

Supporting and helping to improve town centre amenity

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Members

- 1) Allocate up to £2,700 from the Members Discretionary Budget towards re-instating the traditional lamp column and plinth on the basis that this is a final contribution to the structure and Wincanton Town Council insure/assume onward responsibility for the structure.

### **Background**

Following anti-social behaviour over Christmas 2014, the plinth and the traditional column of the feature lamp were damaged and subsequently removed by contractors acting on behalf of Somerset County Council (SCC). These were returned to Wincanton last year and are stored locally.

It is understood a local organisation, the Fairs and Feoffees Charity, owns the Market Place but for some years it has been accepted that it is under the 'operational control' of Somerset County Council's Highways Department (SCC).

There was no change to ownership/responsibilities following an enhancement scheme which took place around 2002 funded jointly by Wincanton Town Council (WTC), SCC, SSDC in conjunction with English Heritage. It is understood the installation of the traditional lamp, around 1999, predated the enhancement of this area – the lamp being a replica of a historic lamp which previously stood in the Market Place.

Around 2003 there was damage to the lamp/plinth following a motor vehicle incident, this necessitated major repair to the stone base. It appears that at that time, the plinth was remounted but only held in place by a mortar bed and gravity – the former had fully eroded by the time of 2014 incident.

### **Current Situation**

In most circumstances SCC would re-instate the column and plinth, usually asking for local funding to cover the additional cost associated with re-instating a 'non-standard' column. However, following technical advice from their specialist lighting team SCC's position is that they will **not** re-instate the plinth/column in its present form because it will not comply with current safety requirements. They are

not therefore willing to assume responsibility for the structure going forward. On this basis, it would appear that the options are:

1. To re-instate (remount the plinth with bolting or an adhesive bonding + erect column) under licence from SCC with liability/responsibility resting with another body or
2. Not to reinstate the plinth or lamp and use the base for other purposes/displays (the plinth has been used to display a variety of art displays over the last year or so) or
3. Reduce the height of the base (although this may leave it more vulnerable to vandalism) and then erect the column under licence from SCC with liability/responsibility resting with another body

Wincanton Town Council used the plinth for a few months last year, during which time several art installations were displayed generating a good response from the public. At their February meeting, the Town Council voted to have the lamp re-instated and agreed to accept onward responsibility for the structure. Permission to re-instate the lamp would need to be obtained from SCC/Fairs and Feoffees Charity. There are a number of ways in which SSSDC can assist the process. The Property & Engineering services manager (a former Highway Engineer) has visited site and prepared a specification for these works, it is therefore suggested that he would be well placed to commission and oversee the re-instatement. If Members are minded to see the lamp re-instated, financial assistance could be provided on the following basis:

- SSSDC contribution of 50% towards scheme cost + shared responsibility for the structure going forward
- SSSDC fully fund the reinstatement but onward responsibility for the structure is passed to WTC

It is suggested that the latter is the tidiest option as it clearly differentiates between the commissioning and ongoing liability for each organisation. It would also mean that there is no onward revenue implication for the District Council

Based on prices obtained in 2016 it is likely that the cost of re-instatement would be in the region of £2,700, which breaks down as follows:

Remove lamp column from base, shot blast and paint black, return to site and erect column and base on plinths, using stainless steel bolts and resin.	1000
Replacement column head 'Windsor traditional'	800
Electrical estimate approx.	300
Contingency	600
<b>Total estimated cost</b>	<b>2,700</b>

To comply with financial standing orders quotations will need to be refreshed ahead of commissioning but the contingency figure is generous so it unlikely that revised budget will exceed the suggested budget provision. Additionally, arrangements with SCC and Wincanton Town Council would need to be formalised.

If the committee preferred to opt for sharing the reinstatement/running costs, it estimated that the revenue costs are likely to take the form of electricity supply estimated to be £100 per annum and general cleaning. Additionally, the District Council's liability insurance would not have a separate premium for the structure but it does not make provision for future repair (in the event that damage occurs again).

## Financial Implications

If Members have supported the recommendations in the two previous reports and are also minded to support the proposal contained in this report to fully fund the lamp re-instatement at a cost of up to

£2,700, there would be no unallocated balance in the Members' Discretionary Budget. Usually, at the start of the financial year this budget receives a new allocation to spend in 2017/18.

### **Corporate Priority Implications**

None

### **Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications**

None additionally resulting from this report

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

None directly resulting from this report

### ***Background Papers:***

*None*