

Area West Committee – 22nd January 2014

10. Environmental Improvements to Chard Town Centre (Executive Decision)

Strategic Director: Rina Singh (Place and Performance)
Assistant Director: Helen Rutter (Communities)
Service Manager: Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West)
Lead Officer: Paul Philpott, Neighbourhood Development Officer
Contact Details: paul.philpott@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01460) 260359

Purpose of the Report

To facilitate improvements to Pig Lane, Chard.

Public Interest

Pig Lane, Chard is an important access route to Chard town centre. The tarmac surface is in a poor state of repair and requires replacement.

Recommendation

That a contribution of £5,247.50 be made towards the cost of resurfacing Pig Lane with block paving.

Background

Chard Town Team was established in 2012 to coordinate and if necessary deliver projects to regenerate Chard town centre for visitors and residents.

Successful projects to date include improvements to Fore Street through the replacement of oversized trees, a Pop Up Shop in the Stringfellow Gallery on Holyrood Street and a Traders Board on the shop frontage of Sainsbury's that tells visitors where to find local shops, cafes and pubs.

The Town Team now wish to improve Pig Lane.

Pig Lane

The Chard Regeneration Plan emphasises the need to include support for the existing town centre retail cores around Fore Street and Holyrood Street.

Pig Lane is a busy thoroughfare. It is also an important gateway to these town centre streets, providing a first impression to visitors and shoppers. For a long time, Pig Lane has been in a poor state of repair and this, combined with its significant slope, can make the surface difficult to walk on especially in wet or freezing conditions. In short, it looks tired, run down and unwelcoming.

Improvements to the surface of Pig Lane would greatly improve the appearance of this access route, reduce trip hazards and may increase footfall to this area of Chard. It would also make a small but significant contribution towards the on-going regeneration of the town centre.

County Highways

County Highways are responsible for the upkeep of Pig Lane and will provide patch repairs when required. However, they have no plans to undertake resurfacing work within the next two years and such work is likely to remain a low priority.

Nevertheless, County Highways Officers agree that the lane would benefit from improvement and have been supportive in helping to find a way forward.

Resurfacing Project Description

Given the importance of this route and following advice from SSDC’s Conservation Manager, the Town Team are proposing that Pig Lane is resurfaced with block pavers. It is anticipated that this work can be carried out in April and will take between one and two weeks.

Once constructed, County Highways have agreed to maintain the block paving on a ‘like for like’ basis, rather than repair it with tarmac patches. This offer is based on current policy for repairs within conservation areas.

SSDC Engineering and Property Services Manager advises that block pavers are a good choice and unlikely to be in need of repair within 10 years. If not disturbed by underground works to utilities, they could last a lot longer before repairs are required. The risk of unacceptably high future maintenance costs are therefore thought to minimal.

Project works and funding.

A quotation for the proposed resurfacing work has been obtained by the SSDC Engineering and Property Services Manager using the County Highways approved contractors list.

Project	Resurfacing of Pig Lane. Chard
Project works	To excavate the lane surface and lay 75m2 of block paving.
Project Cost	£ 6,247.50
VAT	-
Total	£ 6,247.50
SSDC	£ 5,247.50

Funding source	Amount	Status
SSDC	£ 5,247.50	Pending
Chard Town Council	£1,000.00	Confirmed
Total Project Cost	£ 6,247.50	

Recommendation

It is recommended that a contribution of £ 5247.50 be made towards the cost of resurfacing Pig Lane with block paving.

Financial Implications

The recommended contribution can be funded from the unallocated Capital programme, which would then be reduced from £79,489 to £74,242.

Council Plan Implications

Focus One: Jobs – Enhance the vitality of town centres.

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI 188)

None.

Equality and Diversity Implication

Improvements to the lane will provide a safer paving surface for all users.

Background Papers:

Chard Town Team - Report to Area West Committee, 20th November 2013
Our Plan- Your Future 2012 -2015
Chard Regeneration Plan 2010
