

Yeovil Refresh Public Realm Change of Scope Request (Urgent Item)

Executive Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Peter Gubbins, Yeovil Refresh
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Purpose of the Report

1. The report is seeking a change of scope to the public realm workstream of the Yeovil Refresh project. Tenders have been received for all the remaining areas of public realm and in order to remain within the overall approved project budget, the funds for the last area of public realm at Wyndham Street would need to be reallocated to the other larger areas to enable them to continue as planned.
2. The public realm workstream is one of the four key areas of delivery identified for action with the Yeovil Refresh and is a priority project for the Council.

Forward Plan

3. This report did not appear on the District Executive Forward Plan.
4. This report is brought forward under Part 4 of the Council's Constitution: Access to Information Procedure Rules, Point 15: General Exception, and Point 16: Special Urgency. A request for inclusion of an urgent item was submitted and agreed by the Chair of District Executive and also the Scrutiny Committee Vice-Chairs (in the absence of the Chair).
5. An urgent decision is required to enable contracts to be signed based on the recent procurement exercises. There is significant cost pressure relating to materials and labour, the majority of which can be fixed through signing of these contracts. Two key areas of the remaining public realm works would become affordable within the overall agreed budget if the change of scope is agreed. However, delay in signing the contracts would result in increased costs which would exceed the current approved budget.

Public Interest

6. The report seeks a change of scope to the Yeovil Refresh public realm budget. This would enable the agreed budget of £10,329,000 to be used to deliver the public realm plans in Westminster Street, High Street, Borough, Middle Street and adjoining streets and the Triangle public square but would omit Wyndham Street from the current works programme.

7. That District Executive recommend that the Chief Executive agree to reallocate the £769,000 funding currently earmarked for Wyndham Street to the completion of Westminster Street North (Phase 2), Middle Street (and adjoining streets), High Street and The Borough, Yeovil within the Yeovil Refresh public realm budget.

Background

8. The Yeovil Refresh was adopted in late 2018 following a detailed consultation programme. It seeks to regenerate Yeovil Town centre through four key theme areas which together create a comprehensive strategic approach to town centre improvement.
9. This report deals with the public realm theme which seeks to deliver fundamental changes to the core street within the town centre. These streets run from Westminster Street in the Western edge of town to the area of streets around Wyndham Street in the eastern part of the town centre. This is an ambitious plan which will create a shared space environment through High Street, Middle Street and connecting streets. This will be complemented by improvements to the Borough civic space and the delivery of a new public entertainments space at the Triangle.
10. There are a number of aims in delivering these streets which include; the introduction of street trees and planting, improved drainage, decluttering of streets, reduction of the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles, reduction of through traffic and improvement of air quality.

Change of scope of allocated budget

11. The construction of public realm is currently split into a number of different sections which have been subject to tendering using the SSDC Public Realm Framework.
12. The construction of the street sections is split as follows:
 1. Westminster Street South Phase 1 – Contract in place
 2. Westminster Street North Phase 2 – Contract negotiated and awaiting signature
 3. Triangle and Wine Street – Contract in place
 4. Middle Street, High Street and Borough – Contract negotiated and awaiting signature
 5. Wyndham Street area – Tender prices submitted
13. In February 2022, a budget of £10,329,000 was agreed to deliver all of the above sections. The budget also included a contingency sum. The detail used to set this budget was based on pricing from previous tender exercises in September 2021.
14. As members will be aware Midas, one of the contractors within our public realm framework became insolvent in February of this year. This has created a need to re-tender sections 1 and 4. We have also sought prices for section 5.
15. These tender exercises have meant we are now clear on costs for delivering all sections of the public realm. These have significantly inflated due to large rises in material costs,



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broader inflationary pressures and the availability of labour. These changes have been driven by a combination of factors which include the Covid pandemic, the war in Ukraine, high levels of inflation and significant local infrastructure projects such as A303 improvements and Hinkley Point.

16. These prices are not included within this report for commercial sensitivity reasons. However in broad sense we can advise that the allocated budget is sufficient to enable us to deliver sections 1- 4 described above. Section 5 is currently unaffordable within that budget envelope.
17. At this stage we are requesting a change of scope to enable all of the available funding to be utilized on sections 1-4. This change of scope would enable signing of contracts on these sections. There is an urgency around this created by constant price inflation. This decision would allow prices to be agreed and signed in the next few days to secure contracts within the approved budget.
18. However, this would mean pausing planned works in the Wyndham Street area whilst we consider and review the options for delivery. We would propose to bring a further report relating to that area to District Executive in August 2022 outlining the options once they have been fully evaluated.

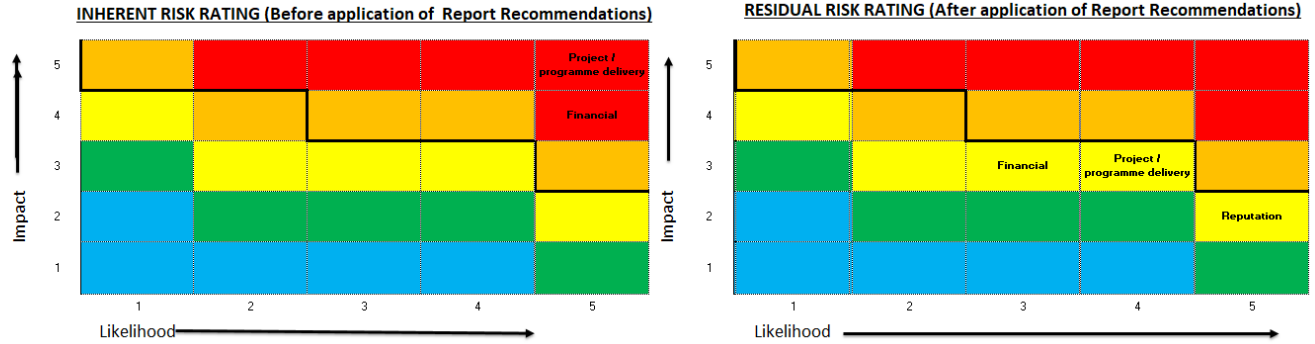
Financial Implications

19. The detail of the tenders remains commercially sensitive at this stage of the procurement process. However, in order to deliver sections 1-4 as detailed above, the full budget allocation of £10,329,000 is required. This includes the contingency sum of £939K detailed as part of the agreed budget and also the £769K funding currently allocated to Wyndham Street.
20. A further report on potential other funding sources for Wyndham Street will be submitted to District Executive in August 2022.
21. Given that there is no overall increase in the project budget required, and that the tenders, if District Executive agrees to these proposals, will be signed before 16th June there is no requirement to seek Somerset County Council's agreement under the Section 24 Directive. The proposals comply with the Finance and Assets Protocol, which is currently in place until the 16th June 2022.

Legal implications and details of Statutory Powers

22. There are no specific issues identified within this report. This report is a change of scope to use agreed budget funds which requires approval by District Executive. This is part of the standard budget management processes of the council.

Risk Matrix



Risk Ref	Risk Category	Inherent Risk Rating	Residual Risk Rating
1	Project / programme delivery	25	15
2	Financial	21	14
3	Delivery of Services	0	0
4	Staffing & Capacity	0	0
5	Reputation	21	11
6	Health & Safety	0	0
7	Governance & Legal	0	0

Risk Description	Mediation / Controls
Unable to deliver all areas of public realm	Reallocate funding to complete 4 sections rather than 5
Current programme of works would exceed agreed budget	Reallocate funding to complete 4 sections rather than 5
0	0
0	0
Unable to deliver a priority project in the council plan	Investigate any other potential funding sources for the remaining area of public realm
0	0
0	0

Council Plan Implications

23. The Yeovil Refresh is a council plan priority for 2022/23. If committee agree the recommendation, it would enable delivery of significant element of that priority.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

24. This report seeks a change in the way funding is allocated so does not directly impact this theme. Carbon Emissions and climate change has been taken into account in design of the public realm including the promotion of active travel and an increase in street trees and areas of planting.

Equality and Diversity Implications

25. This report is purely a financial change of scope. Equality and diversity has been considered in all of the projects at design and construction phases. This will continue to be applied but is not directly applicable to this report content.



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<i>An Equality Impact Relevance Check Form has been completed in respect of the Proposal?</i>	Yes
<i>The Impact Relevance Check indicated that a full EIA was required?</i>	No
<i>If an EIA was not required please attach the Impact Relevance Check Form as an Appendix to this report and provide a brief summary of its findings in the comments box below. – Attached</i>	
Additional Comments	
None	

Privacy Impact Assessment

26. There are no identified impacts in this area of assessment related to this report.

Background Papers

27. None