

Single Member Cabinet Decision

Executive  
Forward Plan  
Reference**E3257**

## Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal Programme – WECA 'Love Our High Streets' Funding for the Market Square scheme

<b>Decision maker/s</b>	Cllr Richard Samuel, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Resources
<b>The Issue</b>	The Single Member Decision (SMD) requests agreement to delegate the full acceptance of the £895k grant funding award from WECA for the Midsomer Norton Market Square to the Director of Sustainable Communities. This grant funding award will be spent in line with the Midsomer Norton Market Square Full Business Case approved at WECA Committee on 28th January 2022 and the Approved Capital Budget. The associated SMD report summarises key items of proposed spend, funding approval mechanisms and the key deliverables and outputs anticipated.
<b>Decision Date</b>	Not before 28 February 2022.
<b>The decision</b>	The Cabinet Member agrees that approval to accept the £895k Love our High Streets grant from WECA can be delegated to the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the s151 officer. These funds will be spent over a two-year period in line with the Full Business Case and the approved concept designs. This will allow full approval of the confirmed £845k in capital funds for the Market Square project (and Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal scheme) and confirmed £50k for revenue budget support (one off for spend 2022-2024) as outlined in Section 5 of the SMD report. It will also enable the Provisional Capital Budget of £1.015m to be approved and moved into the Approved Capital Budget.
<b>Rationale for decision</b>	<p>B&amp;NES Council recently secured £895k from WECA's 'Love our High Streets' grant programme for the redevelopment of The Island, Midsomer Norton, via a Full Business Case approved at WECA Committee on 28th January 2022.</p> <p>The rationale for the focus on The Island, specifically the creation of a new Market Square at the western end of the High Street, is to support the market town's local economy by boosting footfall to this location, supporting the economic resilience of the wider High Street, enhancing and revitalising the public realm and historic environment, and enhancing the function and sustainability of this key civic space. This funding will in turn support the wider Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal initiatives and thereby complement schemes seeking to improve footfall and occupancy within the town centre and provide opportunities for diverse local businesses, community groups and residents to thrive.</p>

<b>Financial and budget implications</b>	<p>The SMD to delegate full acceptance of the £845k capital grant for the Midsomer Norton Market Square to the Director of Sustainable Communities would allow these funds to be integrated into the Council's approved capital programme.</p> <p>The SMD would also delegate full acceptance of the £50k revenue grant (one off for spend during 2022-2024) to the Director of Sustainable Communities and allow these funds to be included within the Council's revenue programme for Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal.</p>
<b>Issues considered</b>	<p>Social Inclusion; Sustainability; Young People; Equality (age, race, disability, religion/belief, gender, sexual orientation); Health &amp; Safety; Other Legal Considerations</p>
<b>Consultation undertaken</b>	<p>Ward Councillor; Town Council; Staff; Other B&amp;NES Services; Service Users; Local Residents; Community Interest Groups; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Financial Officer; Monitoring Officer</p>
<b>How consultation was carried out</b>	<p>The development of the project scope has been informed by consultation and engagement with local residents, businesses, community groups and stakeholders. The scheme proposal was developed by a partnership of stakeholders formed of the Project Team, appointed professionals, Midsomer Norton High Street Steering Group –including representatives from the Town Council, Town Trust, Community Trust and Somer Valley Chamber of Commerce– and external funders Historic England. A letter of support for the funding bid and scheme proposal was submitted as part of the WECA funding bid.</p>
<b>Other options considered</b>	<p>There is an option to decline the grant and not progress the High Streets Renewal programmes, or to re-scope parts of the projects. However, our high streets are in urgent need of support and releasing funding now will allow benefits for businesses and the community to be realised as soon as possible.</p> <p>Another option would be to focus the Love our High Streets grant on another part of the Midsomer Norton High Street; however the proposals aim to bring maximum benefits and animation within Midsomer Norton to support footfall and economic vibrancy. This scheme forms part of a package of interventions within the wider High Street Renewal Programme for Midsomer Norton and therefore The Island is considered to be the location most suitable for this investment. A Delivery Plan for the wider package of interventions outside of the WECA LoHS funding has already been agreed.</p>
<b>Declaration of interest by Cabinet Member(s) for decision:</b>	<p>None</p>

<b>Any conflict of interest declared by anyone who is consulted by a Member taking the decision:</b>	None
--	------

<b>Name and Signature of Decision Maker/s</b>	Cllr Richard Samuel, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Resources
<b>Date of Signature</b>	01/03/2022

**Subject to Call-in until 5 Working days have elapsed following publication of the decision**