

Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal Steering Group

Town Hall, Midsomer Norton, BA3 2HQ

www.yourmidsomernorton.co.uk

Metro Mayor Dan Norris
West of England Combined Authority
70 Redcliff Street, Bristol, BS1 6AL.

Date: 11th July 2024

Dear Dan,

Re: Letter of Support for West of England Combined Authority Change Request for Scheme match funding swap out and re-profile (May 2024)

I am writing to express my support for the above funding decision ahead of the 26th July 2024 WECA Joint Committee, in my capacity as chair of the Midsomer Norton High Street Steering Group.

The relocation of the Town Hall bus stop is an essential part of the Market Square scheme, enabling it to progress to site and ensure the new junction arrangement meets current standards. It has long been an aspiration locally to remove this awkwardly placed bus stop where passengers need to cross the road 3 times to reach the High Street. The proposed works to strengthen the High Street bus stop will bring a centralised bus stop to the High Street for most bus routes, improving access for users and tying in with the Somer Valley Links proposal for a Mobility Hub on the lower High Street.

The prospect of delaying these improvements while CRSTS funding is arranged would leave Midsomer Norton without a central bus stop for several key bus routes. Meaning that passengers need to walk up Silver St to the temporary bus stop, making it unusable for some residents with limited mobility.

A positive decision in July would enable the new bus routes to the High Street to be registered and live in September reducing the amount of time that the temporary bus stop was in use.

The project will support our ambitions for the return of markets to Midsomer Norton which has hosted regular markets since the 13th Century. The investment follows the transformational change being delivered in the 1860s Grade II listed now community owned Town Hall, which adjoins the market square, with works on-site, the two projects are linked. We are grateful also for the support that the Combined Authority has provided to support the delivery of this important community project.

The High Street Renewal Steering Group, which I am the chair of has been closely engaged in the co-design of the new Market Square over the last 3 years, and we are really keen to see this happen. We have seen through the engagement activities that this is a scheme supported by the community.

Midsomer Norton Town Centre has lacked investment in recent years and has become a Conservation Area at risk due to the poor quality of its public realm and unsympathetic changes to historic buildings. This project offers a real chance to turn this around and rebuild confidence in our amazing town.

We hope you will support this proposed Change Request to release this extra funding for Midsomer Norton Town Centre.



Yours sincerely,
On behalf of members of the High Street Renewal Steering Group,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shaun Hughes".

Councillor Shaun Hughes,
Chair of Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal Steering Group