



CABINET

This meeting will be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website.

Please also note that under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting. The use of any images or sound recordings is not under the Council's control.

To: Councillors Barkley (Vice-Chair), Bokor, Harper-Davies, Mercer, Morgan (Chair), Poland, Rollings, Smidowicz and Taylor (for attention)

All other members of the Council
(for information)

You are requested to attend the meeting of the Cabinet to be held in Virtual Meeting - Arrangements to Follow on Thursday, 7th May 2020 at 6.00 pm for the following business.

Chief Executive

Southfields
Loughborough

24th April 2020

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS
3. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

3 - 10

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

5. QUESTIONS UNDER CABINET PROCEDURE 10.7

The deadline for questions is noon on Wednesday 29th April 2020.

6. BEDFORD SQUARE GATEWAY PROJECT

11 - 38

A report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration.

Key Decision

7. INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

39 - 41

A report of the Head of Strategic Support.

Key Decision

CABINET 12TH MARCH 2020

PRESENT: The Leader (Councillor Morgan)
The Deputy Leader (Councillor Barkley)
Councillors Bokor, Harper-Davies, Mercer,
Poland, Rollings, Smidowicz and Taylor

Councillor Rattray

Chief Executive
Strategic Director of Corporate Services
Head of Strategic Support
Head of Landlord Services
Head of Planning and Regeneration
Head of Neighbourhood Services
Democratic Services Manager
Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer
Democratic Services Officer (LS)

APOLOGIES: None

The Leader stated that this meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. He also advised that, under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

85. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillors Morgan and Poland declared personal interests in Item 10 – Charnwood Grants, as members of the Outwoods Management Committee.

86. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made.

87. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th February 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

88. QUESTIONS UNDER CABINET PROCEDURE 10.7

No questions had been submitted.

89. COMMERCIALISATION - APPROACH TO

Considered, a report of the Strategic Director of Corporate Services to consider the Council's approach to commercialisation and proposed commercial activities (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Rattray, Chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report detailing the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes).

The Strategic Director of Corporate Services assisted with consideration of the report. A number of typographical errors in the report were identified and it was confirmed that those would be corrected.

RESOLVED

1. that the plan to recruit an additional member of staff at Director level (to be known as the Strategic Director of Commercial Development) to support the Council's commercialisation agenda and, in particular, the process of identifying, evaluating and acquiring commercial investment property be noted;
2. that funding of up to £100,000 from the Reinvestment Reserve to fund the salary of the additional Director be approved;
3. that the proposed checklist and process steps for the evaluation and acquisition of commercial investment properties, as set out at Appendices A and B to the report of the Strategic Director of Corporate Services, be approved;
4. that delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director of Corporate Services and the Strategic Director of Commercial Development, in conjunction with the Leader, to make minor amendments to the above process as deemed required and appropriate;
5. that other actions the Council intends to take to support its commercialisation agenda, as outlined in Part B of the report of the Strategic Director of Corporate Services, be noted;
6. that the report of the Scrutiny Commission be noted.

Reasons

1. To ensure that Cabinet are aware of changes to the Council's establishment and the additional resources being directed at the commercialisation agenda.
2. To fund the costs arising from the recruitment of the additional Director for a restricted time period until costs incurred are offset by additional revenues generated from new commercial activity.
3. To provide assurance to Cabinet on the level of due diligence and decision-making control that will be introduced in the evaluation and acquisition of commercial investment properties.

4. To allow minor process refinements to be implemented efficiently in the light of experience.
5. To make Cabinet aware of the actions the Council intends to take to support its commercialisation agenda.
6. To acknowledge the work undertaken by and the views of the Scrutiny Commission.

90. CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN 2020/21

Considered, a report of the Chief Executive to consider the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan 2020/21 (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Rattray, Chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report detailing the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes).

Councillor Rattray considered that the report did not state correctly the recommendations made by the Commission and therefore set out amendments to recommendations 2 and 9 on agenda supplement page 8. She also wished the Cabinet to consider an additional recommendation relating to recycling targets.

The Chief Executive and the Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer assisted with consideration of the report.

For the purpose of clarity, the Chief Executive outlined each of the recommendations made by the Commission, incorporating the amendments set out by Councillor Rattray.

Amended recommendation 2 would be an addition to the wording on agenda page 61, paragraph entitled Financial Stability, fifth bullet point, such that it read "reduce our reliance on reserves to fund services *and replenish financial reserves in the medium to long-term*". (Additional wording shown in italics).

Amended recommendation 9 would change the action set out on agenda page 50 from "Improve the public realm in our towns" to "Improve the public realm in our Borough" (to support the Commission's view that both villages and towns should be included).

The Cabinet confirmed that it agreed with the recommendations outlined and that the amendments to the Delivery Plan required as a result could be made under the delegated authority set out under Resolution 2. below.

In respect of the additional recommendation relating to recycling targets (agenda page 57, Key Indicators 4a and 4b), the Leader and the Chief Executive agreed to discuss with the service concerned the possibility of a floor target more ambitious than 44%.

RESOLVED

1. that the 2020/21 Corporate Delivery Plan, appended to the report of the Chief Executive, be approved, noting the amendments that will be made as a result of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission;
2. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to make minor amendments to the Corporate Delivery Plan;
3. that the report of the Scrutiny Commission be noted.

Reasons

1. To identify the Council's key activities and performance indicators for 2020/21 that support the objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy (2020-2024).
2. To allow minor corrections and amendments to be made in a timely manner prior to publication and throughout the 2020-21 Corporate Delivery Plan.
3. To acknowledge the work undertaken by and the views of the Scrutiny Commission.

91. HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21

Considered, a report of the Head of Landlord Services to consider the Council's Housing Capital Programme 2020/21 (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Rattray, Chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report detailing the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes).

The Head of Landlord Services assisted with consideration of the report. Reference was made to the lower cost per fire safety door being paid by a number of other councils and it was confirmed that would be looked into.

The Scrutiny Commission was thanked for its useful pre-decision scrutiny work, both in respect of this item and items considered earlier in the meeting.

RESOLVED

1. that the proposed housing capital programme for 2020/21 amounting to £7,339,100, detailed in Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Landlord Services, be approved and the Capital Plan be amended to reflect this;
2. that the report of the Scrutiny Commission be noted.

Reasons

1. To improve the Council's housing stock, in line with the Charnwood Standard, thus delivering the priorities set out in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan approved by Cabinet in September 2014.

2. To acknowledge the work undertaken by and the views of the Scrutiny Commission.

92. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Considered, a report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration to consider a revised Local Development scheme (item 9 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Planning and Regeneration assisted with consideration of the report.

RESOLVED

1. that the revised programme for the preparation of local development documents, as set out in the Local Development Scheme attached to the report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration, be approved;
2. that the Local Development Scheme comes into effect and is published on 1st April 2020;
3. that authority is delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Planning, Inward Investment and Tourism Strategy to make any minor typographical/graphical amendments to the Local Development Scheme prior to its publication.

Reasons

1. To ensure that the Local Development Scheme provides a realistic programme for the preparation of development plan documents.
2. To meet the requirements of Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (amendment) Regulations 2008, 2009 and 2012.
3. To enable the timely publication of the revised Local Development Scheme.

93. CHARNWOOD GRANTS - ROUND 4 2019/20 - COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT GRANT APPLICATIONS

Considered, a report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services to consider applications received for funding in Round 4 of the Community Facilities and Community Development and Engagement Grants schemes for 2019/20 (item 10 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Neighbourhood Services assisted with consideration of the report.

RESOLVED

1. that the following Community Development and Engagement Grants be awarded:
 - £2,000 to Without Walls Christian Fellowship towards a Singing Café;
 - £4,500 to Artspace Loughborough Ltd towards the “Into the Outwoods Sculpture Trail” (£2,500 to be awarded through the Community Development and Engagement Environmental Grant scheme, and £2,000 through the Loughborough Community Grant scheme), subject to them securing the remainder of the external funding applied for;
 - £2,500 to The African Caribbean Club towards general running costs;
 - £3,500 to Exaireo Trust towards an “Exaireo Re-use – office chair project” (to be awarded through the Community Development and Engagement Environmental Grant scheme);
 - £4,750 to Grange Park Centre towards The Arc Community Hub Youth Club (£4,000 to be awarded through the Community Development and Engagement Grant scheme, and £750 through the Loughborough Community Grants scheme);

2. that the following Community Development and Engagement Grant applications be deferred:
 - Falcon Support Services - £10,000 requested – applied for funding towards a “Recycle it at the Falcon Centre” project;
 - The Crop Club CIC - £9,765 requested – applied for funding towards an “Urban Edible Landscape” project;

3. that the following Community Development and Engagement Grant applications be declined:
 - Dementia UK - £10,000 requested – applied for funding towards running costs for the Watermead and Beacon Admiral Nurse Service;
 - The Carers Centre - £8,750 requested – applied for funding towards “Empowering You” sessions for carers;
 - Malika Glover (Individual Grant) - £50 requested – applied for funding towards the cost of an expedition to Tanzania with students from Charnwood College;

4. that the following Community Facilities Grant application be declined:
 - Syston and District Volunteer Centre - £16,000 requested – applied for funding towards the reconfiguration and renovation of their existing offices;

5. that the Head of Neighbourhood Services be given delegated authority to finalise the terms and conditions of the awarded Community Development and Engagement Grants.

Reasons

1. To provide financial support to organisations which meet the criteria of the Community Development and Engagement Grants and Environmental schemes

in terms of community and organisational need and to use funding provided through the Loughborough Grants scheme to support projects in Loughborough.

2. To enable further work to be undertaken with the applicant to see whether the application can be improved and strengthened.
3. To decline to provide financial support to organisations which do not meet the criteria for the award of a grant under the Community Development and Engagement Grant scheme.
4. To decline to provide financial support to organisations which do not meet the criteria for the award of a grant under the Community Facilities Grant scheme.
5. To enable the grants awarded to be finalised and appropriate information to be supplied to the Council about the outcomes of the project.

94. ANNUAL PROCUREMENT PLAN 2020/21

Considered, a report of the Head of Finance and Property Services to consider the Council's Annual Procurement Plan 2020/21 (item 11 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Strategic Director of Corporate Services assisted with consideration of the report.

RESOLVED

1. that the contracts, over £25,000 and up to £75,000, listed in Appendix A to the report of the Head of Finance and Property Services, be let in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules;
2. that the contracts, over £75,001 and up to £500,000, listed in Appendix B to the report of the Head of Finance and Property Services, be let in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules.

Reason

- 1& 2. To allow contracts of the Council to be let in accordance with contract procedure rules.

95. SOUTHFIELDS SECURITY CONTRACT

Considered, a report of the Head of Finance and Property Services to consider tendering for the renewal of the Southfields Security Contract (item 12 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Strategic Director of Corporate Services assisted with consideration of the report. The Cabinet commented that the current security staff undertook their role in a professional and friendly way, in sometimes difficult circumstances, and asked the Chief Executive to pass that comment on to the staff concerned.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approves the request for Council Officers to tender for the renewal of the Security Contract on behalf of the Council and the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) and that delegated authority be given to the Head of Finance and Property Services to award the contract to the successful bidder.

Reason

To provide a high level of personal and building security in Southfields Main Reception areas where we provide front line reception services for the Council, DWP and the Police, and the provision of evening security, key holding and callout services to Southfields Offices, Woodgate Chambers and the Ark and Oak Business Centres.

96. COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION - ANNUAL REVIEW

Considered, a report of the Monitoring Officer to consider amendments to the Council's Constitution following annual review, for recommendation to Council (item 13 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Democratic Services Manager assisted with consideration of the report.

RESOLVED that **it be recommended to Council** that the changes to the Constitution set out in appendix 1 to the report of the Monitoring Officer be made, to be effective from 1st May 2020.

Reason

To ensure the Constitution is kept up to date and fulfils its intended purposes.

NOTES:

1. The decisions in these minutes not in the form of recommendations to Council will come into effect at noon on 20th March 2020 unless called in under Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rule 11.7. Decisions in the form of recommendations to Council are not subject to call in.
2. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 27th April 2020 unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on 20th March 2020.
3. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Cabinet.

CABINET – 7TH MAY 2020

Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration Lead Member: Councillor Jonathan Morgan

Part A

ITEM 6 BEDFORD SQUARE GATEWAY PUBLIC REALM PROJECT

Purpose of Report

To seek in principal approval of the scheme design for public realm works at Bedford Square and Devonshire Square so that work on preparing Traffic Regulation Orders and the necessary detailed technical work on the construction design drawings can proceed.

Recommendations

1. That the project scheme design and specification as outlined in Part B and Appendix 1 of this report be approved in principle;
2. Authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member to make minor modifications to the scheme design and specification during the drawing up of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs);
3. The phased approach to implementing the project, detailed in Section 10 Part B of the report, be approved;
4. That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to seek out additional funding, as may be necessary, to deliver the whole scheme; and
5. That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to enter into a Section 278 Legal Agreement with Leicestershire County Council, along with any other legal obligations necessary, to prepare the scheme for implementation.

Reasons

1. To ensure that Members are in agreement with the proposed scheme design in principle so that it can be submitted to the County Highway Authority to secure the necessary TROs and the final construction drawings can be prepared;
2. To enable minor modifications to the scheme design to be made in response to any technical issues that may arise from the TRO process and also any requirements arising from County Highway Authority advice on the technicalities of the scheme design;
3. To ensure that a scheme of works can be prioritised and delivered in a phased way, within the available budget;

4. To respond to the provisions of the constitution that limit the delegated authority of Heads of Service to accept grant funding above £200k without separate cabinet approval; and
5. To obtain agreement with Leicestershire County Council that the proposed works can be undertaken on the public highway and that any other legal agreements and requirements to prepare the final scheme design for implementation can be secured.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

The Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 is committed to the creation of a strong and lasting economy in Charnwood. In support of that overarching commitment the plan aims to support initiatives which will support our towns and villages to thrive and specifically calls for the preparation of a new and revitalised town centre masterplan for Loughborough.

The masterplan was approved by Cabinet on 12 April 2018 (Cabinet Minute 120: 17/18 refers) and recommended a series of improvements to the public realm between each of the major gateways to the town centre and the pedestrianised area at its core. It specifically endorsed the principle of improvements to the Bedford Square Gateway, including Ward's End and Devonshire Square, which had been the subject of an earlier public consultation exercise.

The new Corporate Strategy 2020-24 sets out the vision to care for the environment, create healthy communities and support a thriving economy. The Bedford Square/Devonshire Square Public Realm Project is expected to make a significant contribution to achieving this vision through the business plan actions for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The project has been progressed to a detailed design stage and this has been subjected to a public exhibition and business engagement exercises in February and March 2020. The remaining elements of the project plan programme are as follows:

- Borough Council to submit final drawings to the Highway Authority for approval (May to July 2020)
- Traffic Regulation Orders and statutory consultations (June to August 2020)
- Cabinet report – appoint contractor (September 2020)
- Contractor to begin site preparatory works (October 2020)
- Contractor commence street works (January 2021)
- Completion of street works (October 2021)

Once the TROs and statutory consultations have been undertaken over the summer, a report will be presented to Cabinet seeking approval of the final scheme design so that contractors can be appointed.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

The total amount of capital funding secured for the project in the Capital Plan is £1,910,000. This is made up by external funding £130k from the Business Rates Pool, £390k from the Business Rate Retention Pilot and £1.39m from the Council's own capital reserves. The additional Business Rates Funding £520k needs to be earmarked and then allocated to this Capital Scheme.

The latest estimate for the capital cost of delivering the whole scheme is £2,195,428. However, the final cost estimate will not be available until the scheme design has been locked down following approval by the Highway Authority. This is currently expected in August 2020. On the basis of latest capital cost estimate, there is a potential funding shortfall of £285,428.

In the eventuality of a funding shortfall, the preferred response is to seek supplementary funding to enable the whole scheme to be delivered in one contract. If additional funding is not secured in the immediate term, it is proposed to adopt the following phased approach to delivering the scheme, according to available resources:

- Phase One: Number 7 Ward's End to South Street
- Phase Two: Bedford Square North and start of Ward's End to Number 7b
- Phase Three: Devonshire Square and Devonshire Lane
- Phase Four: Bedford Square South

Risk Management

The risks associated with the decision Cabinet is asked to make and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Risk Management Actions Planned
Insufficient resources secured to deliver the whole scheme.	Likely (3)	minor (1)	Low (3)	Scheme designed to provide flexibility to implement street works in phases, according to availability of resources
Delays during preparation of detailed design and construction phase	Likely (3)	Significant (2)	Moderate (6)	Robust Project Plan and project management and monitoring procedures.
Inability to appoint highway contractors with appropriate capacity, skills and experience due to national economic situation	Likely (3)	Significant (2)	Moderate (6)	Use of approved Framework including ESPO Framework and Crown Commercial Services Framework to pre-qualify potential contractors prior to procurement.

Equality and Diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared for the proposed Scheme. A copy of the EIA is attached as an appendix to this report. The detailed design for the Scheme has been subject to a Road Safety Audit and a Mobility Audit. A number of design modifications have been made to the Scheme to further improve safety and accessibility, especially for pedestrians and those with greater mobility needs and visual impairment. All parking bays designed to be larger than at present, not just those designated specifically for use by Blue Badge holders.

Crime and Disorder

A guiding principal for the project has been to make the area a more attractive and safer destination for shoppers; thereby helping to increase footfall and improve overall trading conditions in the area.

Sustainability

The scheme seeks to promote pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre and provides for additional cycle parking. The scheme promotes landscaping in Devonshire Square which will assist in absorbing air pollution and trees in Bedford Square and Devonshire Square in planters that may be removed when major events are being hosted such as the fair.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: Loughborough Town Centre Masterplan (2018)

https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/loughborough_town_centre_masterplan_2017

Summary of feedback from engagement

Officer(s) to contact: Richard Bennett
Head of Planning and Regeneration
(01509) 634727
Richard.bennett@charnwood.gov.uk

Steve Dibnah
Regeneration Project Officer
01509 632521
Steve.dibnah@charnwood.gov.uk

Appendices

1. Detailed Design for Bedford Square Gateway Project
2. Equalities Impact Assessment

Part B

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Bedford Square Gateway Project seeks to improve the public realm in Bedford Square, Ward's End, Devonshire Square and Devonshire Lane. The project originated in 2016 in response to concerns from local shops and businesses over the challenging trading conditions they were facing. An initial concept design for the scheme was prepared and subjected to public consultation in September and October 2016. A number of concerns were raised about certain aspects of the concept design and a revised project brief was drafted. The project was then revisited as part of the preparation of a new Town Centre Masterplan in 2018 and identified as a key priority.
- 1.2 Following the announcement by Leicestershire County Council in 2018/19 that it no longer had the capacity to undertake non-County Council public realm improvement schemes, the Borough Council had to assume the project leadership role in order to ensure the project is delivered. This has required the Borough Council to procure the services of a specialist highways and landscape design consultant to prepare the detailed designs and to support the Borough Council through all the necessary approvals processes. This includes concluding the required Section 278 Legal Agreement with the County Council to enable works to be carried out on the public highway to facilitate the public realm improvements. As a result of the County Council's position, the Borough Council will also be responsible for procuring a contractor to undertake the construction of the street works. However, the County Council is providing informal advisory support throughout the design process, to minimise the need for revisions to the scheme design once formal technical consideration of the design proposals is undertaken by the Highway Authority.
- 1.3 A Task & Finish Group was established by the Loughborough Town Team in September 2019 to serve as the main stakeholder group to help guide the preparation of the detailed design and through the construction phase. Regular project briefings are held with the Task & Finish Group.
- 1.4 In October 2019, specialist highways and landscape design consultants, Wood Environment and Infrastructure Solutions UK Limited, were appointed by the Borough Council to prepare a detailed design for the scheme. A revision to the 2016 concept design was prepared by Wood in December 2019 and a draft detailed design prepared in February 2020. A final set of drawings are planned to be submitted to the Highway Authority at the end of May 2020 for consideration and approval. The construction phase of the project is programmed to start in October 2020 with site preparation works, followed by the start of the street works in January 2021. The street works are programmed to be completed by October 2021.

2. Project Context

- 2.1 A fundamental goal of the project is to transform the area around Bedford Square, Ward's End and Devonshire Square from being a heavily car

dominated environment to one that gives greater priority to pedestrians while at the same time retaining as much authorised on-street parking as possible and keeps the area open to traffic.

2.2 From the outset, work on preparing the scheme design has been guided by:

- the overarching needs and concerns of local shops and businesses and their identified priorities for improving the commercial appeal and business prospects of the area; and
- to make the area a more attractive and safer destination for shoppers; thereby helping to increase footfall and improve overall trading conditions in the area.

3. Project Aims and Objectives

3.1 Many local traders in Ward's End, Devonshire Square and Bedford Square feel a number of key developments and major investments in Loughborough town centre, such as The Rushes development, have had a profound impact on their part of the town centre: contributing to a shift in the focus of shopping and retail activity away from to the northern end of the town centre.

3.2 A key aim for this project is to encourage more people who are visiting the town centre to come and explore the local shops and businesses in Ward's End, Devonshire Square and Bedford Square. Evidence from successful public realm improvement schemes in other UK towns and cities shows that shopping is an "experience" rather than a mere transaction and that shoppers and other visitors view the quality of the public space and cultural and social activities as well as the surrounding shops and businesses as the most important factors when deciding where to visit in a town centre. The evidence shows that the availability of car parking is seen as the least important factor. The evidence also shows that if more space is given over for walking and cycling and less to cars, the absence of customers arriving by car is more than compensated for by people arriving on foot or by bike.

3.3 The project's key objectives were agreed with the Task & Finish Group and the Loughborough Town Team as a whole and have guided and shaped the design process. These objectives reflect the overall concerns and priorities of local shops and businesses and in particular the desire to make this area more attractive to shoppers and other visitors. They are:

- To improve safety, accessibility and comfort for pedestrians.
- To retain as much "authorised" on street parking as possible.
- To improve connectivity between the project area and Market Place, Granby Street Car Park and the community resident to the south of the "Gateway."
- To ensure adequate provision for the servicing of the local shops and businesses.
- To include only features of interest that will not attract anti-social behaviour. nor cause longer term maintenance or management difficulties.

4. Scheme Design

- 4.1 The development of the scheme design has been guided by the agreed project's aims and objectives as well as evidence gathered by officers and Wood of examples of good practice and what has worked well in public realm improvement schemes in other UK towns and cities.
- 4.2 A concept design setting out the broad principles of the proposed public realm improvements was prepared by the Borough Council's appointed consultants, Wood, in November 2019 and was presented to the Lead Member for Planning and Regeneration and the lead Member for Loughborough in December 2019. It was also endorsed by the Loughborough Town Team and its Task & Finish Group in December 2019.
- 4.3 Following agreement on the concept design, a draft detailed design was prepared by Wood in February 2020, which was also endorsed by the Lead Member for Planning and Regeneration and the lead Member for Loughborough Town, as well as the Town Team and its Task & Finish Group in March 2020. The Loughborough Town Team considered that the overall benefits and other changes arising from the proposed scheme design represent an acceptable compromise to achieve the project's key objectives.
- 4.4 A copy of the detailed design for the scheme is provided in Appendix 1. The main features of the proposed scheme are:
- Wider pavements throughout the area to improve pedestrian safety, accessibility and comfort.
 - Four new pedestrian road crossing points, including one across the junction between Granby Street and Devonshire Square, to improve pedestrian safety and reduce traffic speeds.
 - Narrower carriageway and raised tables along Ward's End and Devonshire Square to reduce traffic speeds and improve pedestrian safety.
 - Larger on-street parking bays throughout the area.
 - A new loading bay in Ward's End and a larger loading bay in Devonshire Square.
 - Creation of a large level public open space in Devonshire Square.
 - Improved surface material and lighting along Devonshire Lane and replacement of barrier to improve pedestrian access from Granby Street car park
 - A total of 12 new cycle parking stands located in Bedford Square and Devonshire Square.
 - New accesses to Bedford Square north and south car parks, which will help reduce the traffic flow down Ward's End and improve safety when entering and exiting both car parks.
 - New 'character' street lighting will be installed throughout the scheme area
 - New street furniture and landscaping

5. Key Scheme Benefits

- 5.1 The key benefits of the proposed scheme are considered to be:

- Safer and more comfortable walking and shopping environment throughout the area.
- Particular benefits for older people and others with mobility difficulties, impaired vision and hearing.
- Enough space on pavements to enable shoppers to stop and dwell in front of shop window displays.
- Opportunities to create more outdoor seating areas around pubs, cafes, takeaways along Ward's End and in Devonshire Square.
- Creation of a distinct, characterful and pleasant shopping-friendly destination (Loughborough's *Independent Quarter*) that attracts shoppers and visitors from across the town centre and not just those parking nearby.
- A new role for Devonshire Square as a focal point for special events and activities, entertainment and a larger market.
- Safer and more accessible pedestrian access from Granby Street car park into Devonshire Lane and Devonshire Square
- Larger parking bays throughout the area, which are suitable for use by Blue Badge holders in addition to those spaces designated for Blue Badge holders
- More loading bays along Ward's End and Devonshire Square.
- New parking bays in front of Ward's End Post Office.

6. Other Proposed Changes Arising from the Scheme

- 6.1 There are currently a total of 65 authorised parking spaces available within Bedford Square, Ward's End and Devonshire Square on non-market days and 55 spaces on market days (due to the partial closure of Devonshire Square to accommodate the market stalls). As a consequence of the proposals to widen pavements, provide new pedestrian road crossing points, more loading bays and increasing the size of parking bays, there will be a total of 55 parking spaces available on both market and non-market days – the same number as currently available on non-market days. This includes no overall change in the total number of parking spaces in the Bedford Square area arising from the scheme design compared to the current situation. There will be a reduction of two authorised spaces on Ward's End (to accommodate a pedestrian crossing point and larger parking bays). On market days there will actually be an increase of two spaces in Devonshire Square but a reduction of 8 spaces compared to a current non-market day (to accommodate two new pedestrian road crossing points, an enlarged loading bay capable of accommodating an articulated lorry, larger parking bays and a large level public open space).
- 6.2 All of the 14 proposed parking bays in Devonshire Square have been designed to be of a size sufficiently large enough to be designated as a Blue Badge space. However, on the basis of an identified need from local shop owners for there to be some parking spaces retained for use by all car users and given the current high level of Blue Badge spaces currently allocated in Granby Street car park and on Granby Street itself, it is proposed that the 9 spaces on the east side of Devonshire Square be designated specifically for Blue Badge holders and the five spaces on the west side available for any user (which could include Blue Badge holders).

- 6.3 The scheme design proposes a rationalisation of the space allocated for taxi ranks in Devonshire Square and on the corner of Granby Street. An analysis of the current situation shows that the taxi rank on Devonshire Square is used infrequently and the one on Granby Street used even less frequently. Given the need to ensure all space in Devonshire Square is used in an optimal way, it is proposed that the current taxi rank in Devonshire Square be re-designated for car parking but that the large taxi rank on the corner of Granby Street be retained.
- 6.4 The proposal to widen pavements on both sides of Ward's End will mean the carriageway is no longer wide enough to accommodate informal parking by Blue Badge holders on double yellow lines along the western side of Ward's End. As a result, parking by Blue Badge holders on the double yellow lines will be prohibited once the scheme has been completed. While the current ability of Blue Badge holders to be able to park on the double yellow lines along Ward's End is perceived as a benefit for some Blue Badge holders, the overwhelming consensus from the 2016 public consultation and subsequent comments received during further consultation in 2020 is that such parking causes serious problems for pedestrians and other road users. The main concerns are on the grounds of pedestrian and road safety, constraining pedestrian flows and causing an obstruction to other road traffic. It is also said to contribute to the overall perception of congestion in the area.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 An extensive consultation and engagement process has been undertaken with local shops, businesses, other key stakeholder groups and organisations and the general public during the preparation of the scheme design. A 3D animation of the scheme design has been prepared together with exhibition boards, sketch designs and presentations, which have been used during the engagement process. A dedicated page on the Council's website was created specifically for the project and included details of the scheme design, sketch designs and a link to the 3D animation. Information on the project was issued in a Council press release and information was also disseminated through the Council's Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts.
- 7.2 As a result of this engagement process, a series of revisions have been made during the design process to address comments that served to strengthen the scheme design within the context of its agreed aims and objectives.

Engagement Programme

- 7.3 There has been direct engagement with local shops and businesses, other relevant stakeholder groups and organisations as well as the general public concerning the design proposals for the scheme. For example:
- A Task & Finish Group was established by the Loughborough Town Team in September 2019 to undertake the role of the principal stakeholder group for the project and has been consulted throughout the design process.
 - A public exhibition was organised by the Borough Council on 6 and 7 March, accompanied by information uploaded to a dedicated page on

the Council's website as well, as on its Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter accounts.

- Direct one-to-one meetings took place between Council officers and local shops and businesses between 23 February and 16 March.
- A business engagement meeting was organised by the BID on 27 February for local shops and businesses at which Council officers presented the scheme design and engaged in a question and answer session.
- A meeting between Council officers and representatives of the market traders took place on 16 March at which Council officers presented the scheme design and engaged in a question and answer session.
- A survey of visiting intentions of those parking within the scheme area was carried out by Wood in January 2020.
- A prominent article on the proposed scheme appeared in the Loughborough Echo and a news item broadcast in BBC East Midlands Today.

Loughborough Town Team Task & Finish Group

- 7.4 A Task & Finish Group was established by the Loughborough Town Team in September 2019 to undertake the role of the principal stakeholder group for the project. There has been close cooperation and consultation with the Task & Finish Group (as well as the Town Team itself) throughout the process of preparing the concept design and the detailed scheme design. This has helped ensure the design proposals maintain a focus on addressing the overall concerns of shops and businesses in the scheme area. To that end, there has also been a close working relationship maintained throughout the process with the Love Loughborough BID Team.

Public Exhibition

- 7.5 The public exhibition, held on 6 and 7 March at John Storer House, was well attended with 116 people visiting the exhibition over the two days. Officers from the Council and representatives from Wood attended on both days to provide information on the scheme and answer questions. The overwhelming majority of those attending expressed their support for the whole scheme. Favourable comments were particularly made about the proposals for widening the pavements and reducing congestion especially down Ward's End, improving the overall environment and 'character' of the area, providing a large attractive public open space in Devonshire Square for events, improving the pedestrian access to Granby Street car park via Devonshire Lane and branding the area as Loughborough's '*Independent Quarter*'. Only four people were overly negative about the proposals. Two of those seemed to be against the principle of spending public money on such schemes, rather than against any specific aspect of the design proposal. Two others expressed a desire to see the number of parking spaces in Devonshire Square increased rather than reduced.

One-To-One Business Meetings

- 7.6 Council officers engaged in one-to-one meetings with 24 local shops and businesses in Devonshire Square, Ward's End and Bedford Square during February and March. The purpose of these meetings was to provide an opportunity explain in detail the proposals being put forward and to enable individual shop owners to ask questions specific to their own business. Of the 24 shops visited, 21 were fully supportive of the whole scheme. The other three, while supportive of the proposals for Bedford Square and Ward's End, expressed a preference for increasing the number of parking spaces in Devonshire Square rather than the proposed small reduction.

Business Engagement Event

- 7.7 The Business Engagement Event held on 27 February 2020 at John Storer House was organised by the Love Loughborough BID. This event was directed specifically at those shops and businesses located in the scheme area. Council officers were in attendance and provided a detailed presentation on the scheme proposals. A total of 15 businesses from within the scheme area were represented, together with representatives from other businesses in the wider town centre and bus companies. Equal numbers spoke out in support of the proposals and those with concerns regarding the level of parking in Devonshire Square. There was acknowledgement from local businesses that the Borough Council had already listened and changed some aspects of the scheme design to address specific concerns and comments, where these were possible within the overall remit of the project.

Parking Survey

- 7.8 A local parking survey was conducted by Wood on a market day and non-market day in January 2020 covering the parking areas in Bedford Square (North and South), Ward's End and Devonshire Square. The purpose of the survey was to gain a better understanding of the purpose of visits for those using the parking spaces in the area. This information helped inform the scheme design. A total of 400 parking observations were made during the two day survey. The survey results showed that over the whole area, less than half of those using the parking spaces were intending on visiting the shops and businesses in the immediate area.

Design Amendments Arising from the Engagement Process

- 7.9 Throughout the course of the engagement process, a number of comments were received from local shops and businesses, other local organisations and groups and the general public. Following a careful analysis of these comments, a number of revisions to the scheme design have been made, where it was judged they enhance the scheme in line with the project's original remit and objectives. These changes include:
- The addition of a pedestrian crossing point at the Granby Street end of Devonshire Square
 - Provision of a new loading bay at the southern end of Ward's End

- Relocation of proposed loading bay at the north end of Ward's End to Devonshire Square and reinstating parking bays
- Relocation of street lighting in Devonshire Square
- Additional cycle racks in Bedford Square
- Additional street furniture and planting in Bedford Square
- Reorientation of benches at Devonshire Square
- Changing the barrier at the end of Devonshire Lane for removable bollards
- Marking the location for the gateway feature at start of Ward's End and using the theme of "Loughborough's Independent Quarter"
- Addition of 'way finding' at the entrances to:
 - a. Bleach Yard
 - b. Devonshire Lane
 - c. Mills Yard
 - d. Granby Street

8. Road Safety and Mobility Audits

- 8.1 The draft detailed design was subjected to a Road Safety Audit (RSA) and a Non-Motorised Users (Mobility) Audit during March 2020.
- 8.2 The RSA assessed the road safety implications of the proposed scheme design and presented a number of recommendations for amendments to the scheme design to further minimise the potential for future road collision occurrences and severity once the scheme has been completed. The RSA takes into account all road users, particularly vulnerable users such as pedestrians and pedal cyclists.
- 8.3 The Mobility Audit considered how the proposed scheme design will affect pedestrians, cyclists and disabled users and again, made a number of recommendations for revisions to the scheme design. In response to the recommendations from both audits, a further revision to the scheme design has been completed.

9. Costings

- 9.1 The capital costs of delivering the project comprise of the following three main elements:
- a) Consultancy support to prepare the detailed scheme design, final drawings and specifications and obtaining the necessary approvals,
 - b) Street works to deliver the public realm improvements
 - c) Provision of a one-off up-front commuted sum payment **OR** entering into an annual maintenance agreement with Leicestershire County Council to cover future public realm maintenance works in the scheme area.
- 9.2 Table 1 sets out the most up to date costings for the project. Contingency sums have been built into each cost estimate. Members will note the only costs that have been possible to finalise at this stage in the implementation of the project are those for the first element, namely the scheme design. A contract for £81,500 has been awarded to Wood plc to prepare the detailed

designs for the scheme and support the Borough Council through the approvals process with the Highway Authority.

Table 1. Estimated Capital Costs for the Bedford Square Gateway Project

Capital Cost Element	Sub-Total (£)	Total Cost (£)
Detailed Design and Support		81,500
Street Works:		1,921,753*
• <i>7 Ward's End to South Street</i>	<i>359,387*</i>	
• <i>Bedford Sq North & start of Ward's End to 7b</i>	<i>533,782*</i>	
• <i>Devonshire Square & Devonshire Lane</i>	<i>637,156*</i>	
• <i>Bedford Sq South</i>	<i>391,428*</i>	
Commuted Sum (10% Capital cost of Street Works)		192,175*
Total Cost		2,195,428*

* Estimated cost (9 April 2020)

9.3 The capital cost estimates for the street works element of the project cannot be finalised until all necessary approvals for the final drawings and specification have been obtained from the Highway Authority and all the required changes to Traffic Regulation Orders have been approved. At this point, the design can be locked down and final costings calculated. The approval process is now anticipated to be concluded in August. However, there still remains a degree of uncertainty regarding this timescale, given that the current disruption arising out of the restrictions imposed as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, may impose some delay in concluding the approvals process. The situation remains fluid at the moment and is being constantly monitored by Wood, the Borough Council and County Council.

9.4 The third element of project cost relates to the on-going maintenance and repair of the public highway in the scheme area. The Borough Council is responsible for covering those costs. There are two options available for the Borough Council to meet these cost obligations.

- 1) Commuted sum: an up-front, one-off fixed payment, calculated to cover a 50 year period, during which the County Council are responsible for maintenance of the public highway in the scheme area throughout this period;
- 2) Maintenance agreement with memorandum of understanding: where costs are charged to the Borough Council by the County Council every time maintenance is required.

9.5 The commuted sum calculation will be completed by the County Council once the design has been locked down. In practice, such sums are invariably approximately an equivalent to 10% of the total capital cost of the street works, payable up-front. A disadvantage of an annual maintenance agreement is that costs are uncertain year on year, making it difficult to budget in advance. It is therefore considered that option 1 provides the best way forward to manage future maintenance costs.

10. Phased Implementation of Scheme

- 10.1 The total amount of capital funding currently secured for the project is £1,910,000. The current capital cost estimate for completing the whole scheme is £2,195,428. This figure may be revised (downwards or upwards) once the final design has been locked down following approval of the technical details by the Highway Authority and final quotes received for all cost items. On the basis of current capital cost estimates, that would indicate there is a potential funding shortfall of £295,428. However, as part of the final stage of the design process, a value engineering exercise will be undertaken, which will identify where any reasonable cost reductions could be made, thus potentially reducing that funding shortfall.
- 10.2 A key goal for the project has been to deliver a high quality public realm improvement scheme and, if necessary, to deliver this in a phased approach according to the funding available, rather than compromise the scheme quality to meet available resources. Accordingly, the scheme has been designed in such a way for it to be capable of being implemented in a phased approach, according to the level of resources available.
- 10.3 The proposed phasing and prioritisation of street works is as follows:
- Phase One: Number 7 Ward's End to South Street
 - Phase Two: Bedford Square North and start of Ward's End to Number 7b
 - Phase Three: Devonshire Square and Devonshire Lane
 - Phase Four: Bedford Square South
- 10.4 The most cost efficient approach is to deliver all four phases of the scheme in a single construction contract. However, the current estimated costs indicate only the first three phases could be implemented in an initial construction contract without supplementary funding being secured.
- 10.5 In the event of a funding shortfall, the proposed approach is:
- a) Firstly, to seek supplementary funding, as necessary, to deliver the whole scheme as part of a single construction contract;
 - b) Secondly, if the search for supplementary funding is unsuccessful or likely to result in undue delays imposed on the construction programme, to proceed with those phases of the scheme that can be delivered within the current level of funding available in accordance with the prioritised approach outlined above.
 - c) Thirdly, to complete any remaining phase(s) in priority order, according to the availability of resources at the time.
- 10.6 Members will note in the event no supplementary funding is secured within a reasonable timescale, the geographical separation of phase four (Bedford Square South) from the rest of the scheme area would mean that if such a scenario occurred, phases one to three could proceed with minimal disruption caused to the activities currently being undertaken in Bedford Square South.

11. Procurement of Contractor

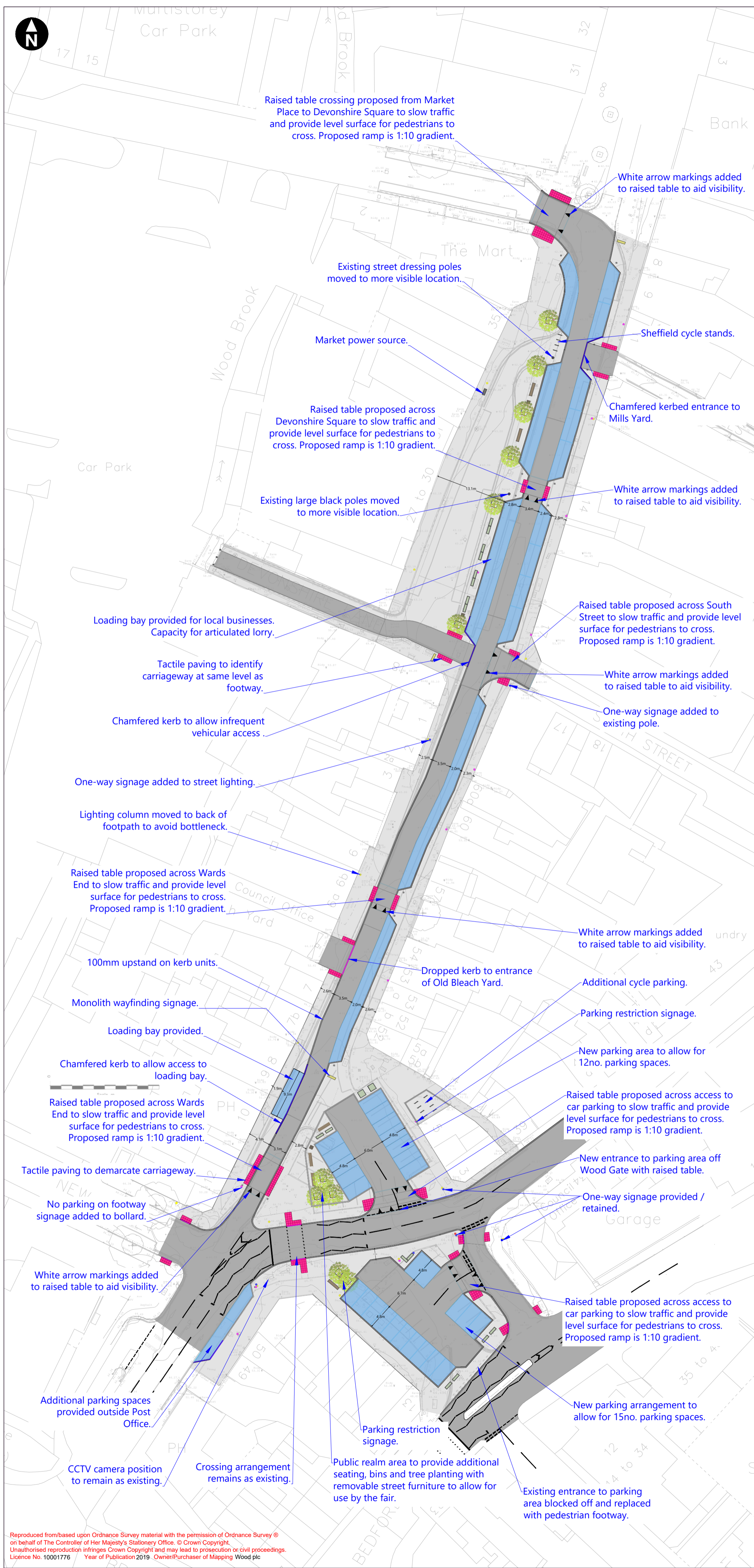
- 11.1 The Borough Council is required to take the lead in procuring an external contractor to undertake the street works that will deliver the public realm improvements. The construction phase of the project is programmed to start in October 2020, although the actual street works will commence in January 2021 in order to avoid the Christmas/New Year period.
- 11.2 Members will note, the Council has been advised by its appointed consultants, Wood, together with Leicestershire County Council, that the best practice approach would be to consider procuring the services of a contractor in advance of the start of the construction phase and before the final drawings and specification have been signed off. This would provide an opportunity for the contractor to contribute to the finalisation of the scheme design that they will be required to deliver. For example, early contractor involvement can bring design buildability, sequencing and cost efficiencies to the pre-construction phase. Early contractor involvement can be enabled by a two-stage tender process, used in the first stage to procure contractor involvement in the final stages of the design process and in the second stage to procure construction of the works.

12. Position Statement

- 12.1 It is too early to determine the extent to which the current restrictions imposed in response to the Coronavirus pandemic will impact on the project plan delivery programme. To date, the impact of the current restrictions has been minimal.
- 12.2 At the present time, the remaining elements of the project plan programme are as follows:
- Borough Council to submit final drawings to Highway Authority for approval (May to July 2020)
 - Traffic Regulation Orders and statutory consultations (June to August 2020)
 - Contractor to begin site preparatory works (October 2020)
 - Contractor commence street works (January 2021)
 - Completion of street works (October 2021)
- 12.3 Fortunately, the business and public engagement exercises were able to be completed in March before the lockdown rules were introduced by the Government. Similarly, the first stage of the Road Safety Audit and the Mobility Audit were completed in March along with consultation with most utilities' companies. This has enabled the Council's design consultants to revise the scheme design in response to the above.
- 12.4 Moving forward, there is a degree of uncertainty at the present time when the final responses from utilities companies will be received and the second stage of the Road Safety Audit can be completed, due to current restrictions on on-site survey work. This may have an impact on when the detailed designs can be finalised and submitted to the County Highway Authority. In anticipation of some modest delays, a small modification in the project plan programme has

already been made. In the same way, the current restrictions may also impact on the timescale within which County Highway Authority is able to approve the submitted designs and when Traffic Regulation Orders can be amended. This situation is being closely monitored and discussions with the County Council are on-going.

- 12.5 Members will note a degree of flexibility was built into the project plan programme in the period between the completion of the design phase and the commencement of street works in January 2021. This was in part due to a desire to hold off the start of construction work until after the Christmas and New Year period. As a result, any potential short term disruption to the remaining aspects of the design phase caused by the current lockdown will be able to be accommodated within the current project timetable without impacting on the start of the construction phase in January 2021. Similarly, site preparatory works are programmed to start in October 2020, but there is also some flexibility that would enable this to be moved into November or early December, if required. This situation is being actively monitored and, of course, the degree of impact on the programme will be dependent on the ultimate length of the lockdown period.
- 12.6 In terms of the early procurement of a contractor, the preferred route is to procure the services of the County Council to undertake this work, through approved procurement routes. An approach was made to identify the capacity of the County Council to undertake the public realm improvement works within the project plan programme. Unfortunately, the lockdown imposed in response to the current pandemic has caused significant disruption to the County Council's current construction programmes and uncertainty over its capacity to undertake additional highways construction work in the short to medium term. If this procurement route is not possible, an alternative contractor will be procured through approved Framework agreements, including the ESPO Framework and the Crown Commercial Services Framework. Nevertheless, similar challenges are being faced across the whole construction sector and it is too early to assess the extent to which this may impact on the ability to procure construction of the works if the County Council does not have the capacity to undertake the works in the required timeframe.



Date of 1st Issue	Description	Drawn by	Checked by
	FIRST ISSUE	FORDL	PRECA

REVISIONS				
Mark	Revision	Drawn	Date	Chkd
.1	Reverting loading bay to parking bays outside PO	AP	14/4/20	AP

- KEY:**
- EXISTING
 - PROPOSED
 - DROPPED KERB
 - CHAMFERED KERB
 - FOOTWAY
 - CARRIAGEWAY
 - TACTILE PAVING
 - VEHICLE PARKING
 - CYCLE PARKING STANDS
 - PARKING SIGNAGE
 - ONE-WAY SIGNAGE
 - NO ENTRY SIGNAGE
 - MONOLITH WAYFINDER SIGNAGE
 - LITTER BIN
 - MARKET POWER SOURCE
 - STREET DRESSING POLE
 - BENCHES
 - LIGHTING COLUMN
 - PROPOSED TREES IN REMOVABLE PLANTERS
 - PROPOSED PLANTERS

- NOTES:**
- BASED ON TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY DATA DRAWING REFERENCE 15035-15-02 PRODUCED BY SV SURVEYING DATED 12/11/19
 - ROAD MARKINGS HAVE BEEN DESIGNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH TSRGD 2016
 - THE DESIGN SHOWN HAS BEEN DESIGNED USING PRINCIPLES FROM THE DESIGN MANUAL FOR ROADS AND BRIDGES (DMRB) & MANUAL FOR STREETS (MfS) WHERE APPLICABLE
 - ALL DIMENSIONS ARE GIVEN IN METRES UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED
 - THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS
 - FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE SEE THE RELEVANT DRAWING SERIES AS PRESCRIBED IN THE MANUAL OF CONTRACT DOCUMENTS FOR HIGHWAYS WORKS
 - COLOURS USED WITHIN THIS DRAWING ARE INDICATIVE AND DO NOT REFLECT THE COLOURS TO BE USED IN CONSTRUCTION

A2 SCALE
1:500

Drawing Title
BEDFORD SQUARE GATEWAY, LOUGHBOROUGH
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN

Drawing Status
DETAILED DESIGN

LEAMINGTON SPA
NICHOLL'S HOUSE, HOMER CLOSE,
LEAMINGTON SPA,
WARWICKSHIRE CV34 6TT
01926 439000

Drawing Number	Revision
42288-WOOD-101-A-DR-OT-0001_A_P01	.1

Reproduced from/based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey © on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Licence No. 10001776 Year of Publication 2019. Owner/Purchaser of Mapping Wood plc

Charnwood Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment 'Knowing the needs of your customers and employees'

Background

An Equality Impact Assessment is an improvement tool. It will assist you in ensuring that you have thought about the needs and impacts of your service/policy/function in relation to the protected characteristics. It enables a systematic approach to identifying and recording gaps and actions.

Legislation- Equality Duty

As a local authority that provides services to the public, Charnwood Borough Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that we can demonstrate having paid due regard to the need to:

- ✓ Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- ✓ Advance Equality of Opportunity
- ✓ Foster good relations

For the following protected characteristics:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race
7. Religion and belief
8. Sex (Gender)
9. Sexual orientation

What is prohibited?

1. Direct Discrimination
2. Indirect Discrimination
3. Harassment
4. Victimisation
5. Discrimination by association
6. Discrimination by perception
7. Pregnancy and maternity discrimination
8. Discrimination arising from disability
9. Failing to make reasonable adjustments

Note: Complete the action plan as you go through the questions

Step 1 – Introductory information

Title of the project	Bedford Square Gateway Project
Name of lead officer and others undertaking this assessment	Steve Dibnah
Date EIA started	October 2019
Date EIA completed	March 2020

Step 2 – Overview of the project being assessed:

Outline: What is the purpose of this project? (Specify aims and objectives)
<p>The Bedford Square Gateway Project is seeking to improve pedestrian safety and comfort as well as the commercial appeal and business prospects of Bedford Square, Wards End and Devonshire Square in Loughborough town centre. The continued viability of the Bedford Square/Wards End/Devonshire Square area is dependent on the creation of a new role and function for this part of the town centre. A concept design for the public realm improvement scheme was produced in 2016 and this was subjected to public consultation. The Borough Council has appointed specialist highways consultants to prepare a detailed design for the scheme, which seeks to address the responses received during the consultation and enable the improvements to be carried out.</p> <p>The overarching aim of the project is to help sustain Loughborough as a vital and vibrant town centre and play a role in achieving the 2018 Town Centre Masterplan’s objective to deliver an enhanced “experiential” offer in the town centre by improving the public realm, connectivity and supporting infrastructure. The project will achieve this by making the Bedford Square/Wards End/Devonshire Square area a more attractive destination for shoppers through widening pavements, providing road crossing points, providing larger parking bays and making public areas more attractive and safer, thereby combating declining footfall, persistent shop vacancies and challenging trading conditions.</p> <p>In seeking to move the project forward, the key objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve comfort and safety for pedestrians. • To improve connectivity between the pedestrianised core of the town (Market Place), the Granby Street Car Park (and Queen’s Park) and the community resident to the south of the “Gateway.” • To balance the existing and future needs of all users of the public realm space. • To retain as much “authorised” on street parking as possible. • To ensure adequate provision for the servicing of businesses. • To include only features of interest that will not attract anti-social behaviour.
What specific group/s is the project designed to affect/impact and what is the intended change or outcome for them?
The project is intended to benefit the whole community including local residents, visitors, general public, landowners and local retailers operating in this part of the town centre.
Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the project?
The general public and stakeholders (including local landowners, shops, businesses and business organisations including the ‘Love Loughborough’ BID) were consulted in 2016 on a concept design for the project. This included a series of workshops with key stakeholders and local people and a public exhibition. In September 2016 a 6 week public consultation was also held. An analysis of the responses received during this consultation period identified the key elements of

the concept design that should be incorporated into a final design, addressing the key concerns raised.

The project was put on hold while a review of the Town Centre Masterplan was undertaken in 2018. The review of the Masterplan include a public consultation exercise and as part of this exercise it also revisited this project and re-affirmed the objectives of this project.

Work on this project restarted in July 2019. A Task & Finish Group of the Loughborough Town Team was established to provide a focus for on-going stakeholder consultation. Consultants were appointed by the Borough Council to prepare a detailed design for the scheme. This work has been informed by the results of the 2016 consultation. A revised concept design was produced in December 2019 and endorsed by both the Loughborough Town Team and its Task & Finish Group. The concept design was also presented to the Loughborough Area Committee in January 2020.

A draft detailed design was produced in February 2020. A business engagement exercise was conducted in February and March 2020 to present the designs to local shops and businesses located within the project area and receive comments. A public exhibition was held on 6 and 7 March 2020 to enable the general public to view the proposed designs and make comments. Details of the design have also been provided on the Council's website and information on the scheme posted on the Council's Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts.

Step 3 – What we already know and where there are gaps

List any existing information/data do you have/monitor about different diverse groups in relation to this project? Such as in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation etc.

Data/information such as:

- Consultation
- Previous Equality Impact Assessments
- Demographic information
- Anecdotal and other evidence

Public Consultation

A concept design for public realm improvements along Bedford Square, Wards End and Devonshire Square was produced in 2016 This was subjected to public consultation for 6 weeks in in September and October 2016. Branded as the “Bedford Square Gateway” the public consultation period was launched on 14 September 2016 and concluded on 26 October 2016. The scheme received prominent coverage in the Loughborough Echo (14 September) and was the subject of a meeting with local businesses held in John Storer House on that same evening. That event was promoted among all businesses located within the scheme area with the assistance of Love Loughborough Bid and attracted an audience representing approximately 30 businesses. An A0 sized poster illustrating the scheme was displayed within a permanent display case positioned in Bedford Square and a dedicated page was provided on the Council's web site. All publicity media directed prospective respondents to submit comment in writing or on line. One week before the closure of the consultation window a press release was issued inviting final submissions, which once again attracted prominent coverage through the Loughborough Echo.

A draft detailed design was presented to local shops and businesses and the general public during February and March 2020. The detailed design received prominent coverage in the Loughborough Echo and on BBC East Midlands Today, as well as through a dedicated page on the Council's website and Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts. A 3D animation of the proposed scheme was also produced and shown to businesses and the general public and

uploaded on to the Council's website. These events were promoted among all businesses located within the scheme area with the assistance of Love Loughborough Bid. Exhibition Boards were also produced and displayed during the public exhibition. All publicity media directed prospective respondents to submit comments.

Demographic Information

Demographic information (based on Census 2011) is available which provides information on a range of the protected characteristics, in particular, age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex.

- Race – The White British population accounted for some 85% of the population. The largest ethnic groups are Indian 6% (10,225 people), Other White 2.5% (4,147 people) and Pakistani 1 % (2,022 people) (Charnwood Borough Council Demographic Profile document 2013).
- Religion - Some 56% of the population of Charnwood are Christian with some 29% having no religion. Hindus and Muslims are the next largest group with at 5% and 2% respectively. Buddhists, Jews and Sikhs combined make up just over 1% of the Charnwood population.
- Gender – The 2011 census records that the total population is some 166,100 split broadly 49.9% males (82,900) and 50.1% female (83,200) - although there are significantly more males than females within the 15 – 19 and 20 - 24 age brackets.
- Age - the Borough contains a large proportion of 20 to 24 year olds (especially males). The 25 to 29 years age group contains the lowest proportions. 14.9% of the population are aged 14 years or under (census 2011). 16.4% of the population are over 65.
- Disability. In Charnwood, it is estimated that there are 10,540 (6.4%) physically disabled people between the ages of 16-64 with a moderate or serious mobility disability. In Charnwood it is estimated that there are 21,675 adults with mild to moderate hearing loss and 5,100 people with sight impairment. It is estimated that 1 in 5 people will be affected by mental health issues at some time in their life. Anxiety and depression is the most common mental disorder in the UK. In Charnwood this equates to 33,220 people.
- Sexual Orientation. There are no accurate statistics available regarding the profile of the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) population within Charnwood or the UK as a whole. Sexuality is not incorporated into the census or other official statistics; however it is acknowledged that approximately 6-10% of any population will be LBG. In Charnwood this would be between 9,960 and 16,610 people.
- Gender Reassignment. There are no accurate statistics available regarding the profile of the transgendered population within Charnwood or the UK as a whole. Gender identity is not incorporated into the census or other official statistics.
- Marriage and Civil Partnership. Within Charnwood 64,729 people (46.9%) are married and 271 people (0.2%) are in a registered same- sex civil partnership

Road Safety Audit

A Road Safety Audit (Stages I and II) has been undertaken as part of the design process. The RSA checks the road safety implications of the proposed public realm improvement scheme in order to minimise future road collision occurrence and severity once the scheme has been completed. The RSA takes into account all road users, particularly vulnerable users such as pedestrians and pedal cyclists. Those practical recommendations for improvement that have arisen out of the RSA have been addressed by further revisions to the scheme design..

Non-Motorised User (NMU) Audit

A Non-Motorised User (NMU) Audit has been carried out as part of the design process to consider how the proposed scheme design affects pedestrians, cyclists and disabled users. Revisions to the design have been undertaken to address the findings of the audit.

What does this information / data tell you about diverse group? If you do not hold or have access to any data/information on diverse groups, what do you need to begin collating / monitoring? (Please list)

2016 Consultation

The 2016 consultation attracted a total of 79 responses. 58 (73%) were from individual members of the public, 17 (8%) from businesses, 2 (2.5%) from landlords and one each from “leading consultees”, namely Love Loughborough BID and Leicestershire County Council Highways Authority.

No responses were received during the consultation period from any specific interest groups representing disadvantaged individuals, groups or communities.

An analysis of the consultation responses revealed 63% of respondents supported the principle of intervention in some form to improve the quality of the public realm, although they expressed a range of priorities and preferences. This included 19% who expressed overall support for the scheme and 44% who expressed qualified support. 19% opposed the scheme, while 7.5% remained neutral.

Looking at the detailed proposals, 35% supported the proposition of widening the pavements, particularly within Wards End and, to a lesser extent, within Devonshire Square. 24% opposed the loss of on street parking in Bedford Square, particularly because that parking provided the ability to “drop in” for short stay visits to the nearby shops. Those opposed were individual members of the public and local businesses. Local businesses also criticised the concept design for its failure to make adequate provision for loading and unloading on Wards End.

The consultation did result in a number of concerns being submitted by the Highways Authority on safety grounds concerning the proposed road alignment of the main vehicular entry point to Wards End and the reversing out of vehicles from the proposed ‘herringbone’ parking in Bedford Square and Devonshire Square.

It was anticipated that the proposal to narrow the carriageway along Wards End, which will require the prohibition of the existing ability for Blue Badge holders to park on the yellow lines along the west side of the road, would generate a number of objections during the consultation. However, no such objections were received. In fact, there was significant support registered for the removal of the ability for Blue Badge holders to park on the yellow lines on the grounds of safety, constraining pedestrian flows, causing an obstruction to other road traffic and contributing to the overall perception of congestion in the area. 14% of respondents believed this matter required attention, including enforcing TROs more rigorously and extending controls to restrict the ability of Blue Badge holders to park on the yellow lines along Wards End. Others said there was a plentiful supply of alternative disabled parking spaces nearby. Only one respondent, a local trader, highlighted the value of spending by those with a Blue Badge, implicitly supporting the current ability to park on the yellow lines.

Anecdotally, it is apparent that the current ability for Blue Badge holders to park on the double yellow lines on the west side of Wards End is viewed as a convenient facility by some with a Blue Badge. The needs of Blue Badge holders will be considered and the loss of the ability to park on the yellow lines along Wards End will be addressed as part of the project.

2020 Business Engagement and Public Exhibition

A full report on the business engagement and public exhibition exercises has been produced. A summary of the key findings is outlined below:

1. Public Exhibition, 6 & 7 March 2020, John Storer House:
 - 116 people attended the exhibition

- Overwhelming majority in favour of the proposals
 - Only four people overly negative about the proposals
2. One-to-One Meetings with local shops and businesses in Devonshire Square, Ward's End and Bedford Square (24 February – 16 March 2020):
 - 24 face-to-face meetings
 - 21 shops supportive of whole scheme
 - 3 shops with concerns over reduction in parking in Devonshire Square
 3. Business Engagement Event, 27 February 2020, John Storer House:
 - 15 businesses from project area represented
 - Small number spoke out in favour of the proposals and a small number with concerns
 - Acknowledgement the Borough Council has listened and changed the designs where possible.
 4. Meeting with Market Traders (16 March 2020)
 - A meeting with representatives of market traders provided an opportunity to present the detailed designs for the scheme and this was unanimously approved by those represented at the meeting.

The revised concept design for the scheme will be submitted to the Highways Authority (Leicestershire County Council) for approval. As part of this process, changes will be made to Traffic Regulation Orders. The proposed changes to TROs will be advertised, allowing stakeholders and the general public to have a further opportunity to comment on the proposed public realm improvement works.

Demographic Information

The demographic information available confirms that Charnwood is a diverse borough with a range of differing needs from individuals and community groups, which will be considered and addressed as part of the project.

Step 4 – Do we need to seek the views of others? If so, who?

In light of the answers you have given in Step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues? If not please explain why.

There is no need to consult further with specific groups to identify needs and issues, beyond that already planned.

Widespread consultation was undertaken both in 2016 and 2020 regarding the original 2016 concept design and the 2020 detailed design for the scheme, allowing input from local shops and businesses, stakeholder groups and individuals. The responses from the 2016 consultation informed the 2020 detailed design. The responses from the 2020 engagement have been analysed and a number of changes to the detailed design have been made as a result.

A Task and Finish Group reporting to the Loughborough Town Team has been established and provides a mechanism for detailed engagement and consultation on this project with key local stakeholders. The revised concept design for the scheme will be submitted to the Highways Authority (Leicestershire County Council) for approval. As part of this process, changes will be made to Traffic Regulation Orders. The proposed changes to TROs will be advertised, allowing stakeholders and the general public to have a further opportunity to comment on the proposed public realm improvement works.

Step 5 – Assessing the impact

In light of any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge and awareness, please identify whether the project has a positive or negative impact on the individual or community groups (including what barriers these individuals or groups may face) who identify with any 'protected characteristics' and provide an explanation for your decision (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

	Comments
Age	<p>Positive - Design of the public realm can impact on the ability of older people to use it as they are more likely to experience long-term ill health and physical impairments such as mobility difficulties and impaired vision and hearing. The proposed public realm improvements, in particular the widening of pavements, level surfaces and provision of road crossing points, will assist in their use of this key area of the town centre. Improvements to the pavements and lighting along Devonshire Lane will improve safety for those exiting on foot from the Granby Street car park.</p> <p>The RSA and NMU audits have considered the needs and priorities of this group and changes have been made to the scheme design to address areas identified where improvements have been recommended.</p> <p>The changes to the movement network and parking will also assist accessibility to the town centre for older people improving the services and facilities available to them.</p>
Disability (Physical, visual, hearing, learning disabilities, mental health)	<p>Positive –</p> <p>The RSA and NMU audits have considered the needs and priorities of this group and changes have been made to the scheme design to address areas identified where improvements have been recommended.</p> <p>The proposed public realm improvements will assist those with disabilities in their use of this part of the town centre and the access to services and facilities. This includes the proposals to widen pavements, create level surfaces and provision of road crossing points, will assist in their use of this key area of the town centre. Tactile paving and dropped curbs will be used to signify safer crossing points to assist people with impaired sight. Any adverse impact on those people who would benefit from a smooth surface are outweighed on balance by the prevention of more serious impacts for people with sight impairments than those with mobility difficulties.</p> <p>Some of the proposed changes to the movement network and parking will also assist accessibility to the town centre for those with a disability, improving the services and facilities available to them.</p>

	<p>Negative – the proposed narrowing of the carriageway along Wards End will result in Blue Badge holders no longer being permitted to park on double yellow lines on the west side of Ward’s End. This could impact on some Blue Badge holders who are seeking to park immediately in front of a specific shop they wish to visit. In response, the scheme design has ensured all authorised parking spaces are larger than those current in the area and are suitable for use by Blue Badge holders.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment (Transgender)</p>	<p>Positive - Personal safety in public spaces may be an issue for this group and the improvements to the public realm and the small interventions proposed will create a vibrant, inclusive environment making users feel safer and less intimidated.</p>
<p>Race</p>	<p>No significant positive or negative impacts.</p>
<p>Religion or Belief (Includes no belief)</p>	<p>No significant positive or negative impacts.</p>
<p>Sex (Gender)</p>	<p>No significant positive or negative impacts.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>Positive – Personal safety in public spaces may be an issue for this group and the improvements to the public realm and the small interventions proposed will create a vibrant, inclusive environment making users feel safer and less intimidated.</p>
<p>Other protected groups (Pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership)</p>	<p>Positive – Improving the public realm will help those with pushchairs and small children or who are pregnant gain better access to services and facilities in this part of the town centre.</p> <p>The RSA and NMU audits have considered the needs and priorities of key elements within this group and changes have been made to the scheme design to address areas identified where improvements have been recommended.</p> <p>The changes to the movement network and parking would also assist accessibility to the town centre for those with pushchairs and small children or who are pregnant, improving the services and facilities available to them.</p>
<p>Other socially excluded groups (carers, low literacy, priority neighbourhoods, health inequalities, rural isolation, asylum seeker and refugee communities etc.)</p>	<p>No significant positive or negative impacts.</p>

Where there are potential barriers, negative impacts identified and/ or barriers or impacts are

unknown, please outline how you propose to minimise all negative impact or discrimination.

Please note:

- a) If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.
- b) Additionally, if you have identified adverse impact that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people.

The proposal to widen the pavements along Ward's End will mean the carriageway is no longer wide enough to accommodate informal parking by Blue Badge holders on the double yellow lines along Ward's End. As a result, parking by Blue Badge holders will not be permitted on the double yellow lines once the scheme has been completed. While the current ability of Blue Badge holders to be able to park on the double yellow lines along Ward's End is perceived benefit for these users, the overwhelming consensus from the 2016 public consultation and subsequent reports is that this practice causes serious problems on the grounds of pedestrian and road safety, constraining pedestrian flows and causing an obstruction to other road traffic. It also contributes to the overall perception of congestion in the area.

As a result of the proposed rationalisation of the carriageway and creation of an enlarged public open space in Devonshire Square, four parking spaces designated for Blue Badge holders will be lost. There will still be 9 Blue badge spaces provided in Devonshire Square.

In response to these negative impacts, the scheme design has ensured all the authorised parking spaces in the project area are to be larger than the size of the current parking bays in the area. This means effectively that all of the parking bays are effectively of a size normally suitable for Blue Badge users. This means that Blue Badge holders will have the ability to use all non-designated spaces in the project area as well as those specifically designated for Blue Badge holders. Furthermore, as part of the design process a survey of parking usage was undertaken. It is clear that at most times there are vacant Blue Badge spaces in both the Granby Street car park and the Bee Hive Lane car park. As part of the scheme design improvements to Devonshire Lane will improve disabled access from the Granby Street car park to the shops on Devonshire Square and Ward's End.

The 2016 concept design attracted some concerns over potentially increasing anti-social behaviour through the provision of a water fountain feature in Bedford Square. These concerns were taken on board and the 2019 detailed design does not include a water fountain feature.

Summarise your findings and give an overview as to whether the policy will meet Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

The project will benefit the community as a whole by contributing towards improving the town centre, with particular groups experiencing a positive impact through a more inviting public realm, improved accessibility to services and facilities, improved movement networks and improved designated parking and loading/unloading.

Step 6- Monitoring, evaluation and review

Are there processes in place to review the findings of this Assessment and make appropriate changes? In particular, how will you monitor potential barriers and any positive/ negative impact?

A Project Plan has been produced to deliver the various aspects of the public realm improvement scheme. The Project Plan is regularly monitored by the Task and Finish Group established by the Loughborough Town Team. This will provide a framework for regular monitoring the impact of this

project and the resolution of potential barriers / adverse impacts.

How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes?

e.g. policy reviews, annual plans and use of performance management systems.

The Bedford Square Gateway Project is already factored into the service plan and performance management frameworks.

Step 7- Action Plan

Please include any identified concerns/actions/issues in this action plan:


The issues identified should inform your Service Plan and, if appropriate, your Consultation Plan

Reference Number	Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date
1	Undertake Road Safety Audit and make any recommended changes to the scheme design	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020
2	Undertake a Non-Motorised Users Audit and make any recommended changes to the scheme design	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020
3	Wards End - Width of carriageway – 3.0m considered too narrow with 2.0m parking bays – we have widened this to 3.5m	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020
4	Addition of raised table on South Street to slow traffic – a raised table has been added across South Street entrance to slow traffic and provide a step free crossing for pedestrians	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020
5	Addition of bollards with reflective banding should be installed at all build outs on Ward's End/ narrowed crossing points	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020
6	'Road humps ahead' warning sign to be installed prior to Wards End and the on/off ramp gradient be reduced in line with DfT guidance for traffic calming features	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020
7	Junction of Bedford Sq with Wood Gate & Southfields Road, add dropped kerb crossing points with tactile paving to allow pedestrian to cross Bedford Square	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020
8	Addition of textured warning paving (tramline tactiles in granite material) across Bleach Yard & Mills Yard accesses, to highlight the transition of pedestrians to shared space at access points	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020
9	Addition of tactile paving at New Street	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020
10	Addition of pedestrian table at Granby Street end of Devonshire Square	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020
11	Changing barrier at end of Devonshire Lane for removable bollards	Steve Dibnah	9 April 2020

Step 8- Who needs to know about the outcomes of this assessment and how will they be informed?

	Who needs to know (Please tick)	How they will be informed (we have a legal duty to publish EIA's)
Employees	Yes	Published report
Service users	Yes	Published report
Partners and stakeholders	Yes	Published report
Others		
To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs/concerns are there?		

Step 9- Conclusion (to be completed and signed by the [Service Head](#))

Please delete as appropriate
I agree / disagree with this assessment / action plan
If <i>disagree</i>, state action/s required, reasons and details of who is to carry them out with timescales:

Signed (Service Head):
Date: 15 April 2020

[Please send completed & signed assessment to Suzanne Kinder for publishing.](#)

CABINET - 7TH MAY 2020

Report of the Head of Strategic Support Lead Member: Councillor Poland

Part A

ITEM 7 INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Purpose of Report

To consider extending the Council's current long term agreement for insurance for a further year.

Recommendation

That the Council extends its existing long term agreement (LTA) for insurance for a further year (ie. From 1st June 2020 to 31st May 2021), and that delegated authority be given to the Head of Strategic Support to finalise and agree the detailed terms of the extension.

Reason

To ensure that the Council has appropriate insurance cover in place.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

At its meeting on 15th February 2018 Cabinet agreed (minute reference 95) that the Council should become a founder member of the Local Government Mutual (LGM), and agreed to note that a further report with a business case for utilising the LGM would come back to Cabinet when the Council's current long term agreement for insurance cover comes to an end.

The long term agreement for the current insurance cover comes to an end on 31st May 2020, although there is an option to extend that agreement for up a further 2 years.

There is therefore now an opportunity to either join the LGM, or to extend the current long term agreement.

As a founder member of the LGM, the Council has a liability of £100 in the event of the organisation being wound-up.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

If Cabinet agree the recommendations in this report, insurance cover will be arranged to come into effect from 1st June 2020.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

There is an existing budget for insurance cover, which amounts to £478,400 for 2020/21/

Risk Management

The risks associated with the decision Cabinet is asked to make and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Risk Management Actions Planned
The costs of extending the LTA may exceed the available budget.	Unlikely (2)	Significant (2)	Low (4)	Insurance costs are to some extent outside the Council's direct control (ie. General insurance market factors), however officers aim to work with our brokers to keep costs to a minimum.

Key Decision:

Yes

Background Papers:

None

Officerto contact:

Adrian Ward
Head of Strategic Support
(01509) 634573
adrian.ward@charnwood.gov.uk

Part B

Background

1. The Council had been working with the Local Government Mutual (LGM) to provide an alternative option for insurance cover for 2020/21. However, there had been delays in the LGM being able to provide pricings.
2. There would also have been risks associated with joining the LGM, as they are a new provider in the insurance market and as such their claims handling processes and business model are somewhat untried and untested.
3. Given this, and also condering the current significant uncertainties associated with the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, it is felt that it would be more prudent to extend the current LTA for a further year.
4. The renewal process is already well underway, and it will be possible to agree renewal terms in advance of the renewal date of 1st June 2020.
5. The extension of the existing LTA will be for one year, and there will therefore be a further opportunity to consider joining the LGM for the 2021/22 policy year.