

# CABINET

## Lancaster Square Routes 28 May 2013

### Report of Head of Regeneration and Planning

PURPOSE OF REPORT				
To report on further project implementation to improve key streets and spaces within the city centre and to include a decision on a centrepiece for Market Square				
Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Non-Key Decision		Referral from Cabinet Member
Date of notice of forthcoming key decision				28 May 2013
This report is public.				

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR HANSON

That Cabinet -

- (1) Accept the proposal for public realm works made in section 2.0 of this report and as described in the supporting appendices but defer to the meeting of Cabinet in June 2013 decisions on the detailed options for the centrepiece to Market Square.
- (2) Authorise the Head of Regeneration and Planning to proceed with all work to implement the proposal but as regards the centrepiece not to make any commitments pending Cabinet deciding on the detailed option.
- (3) Instruct the Head of Governance to invite all council members to attend an informal briefing on the options for a centrepiece and the theme embodied artwork should take so that members can be fully informed and then advise the Portfolio Holder of their views.

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report concerns the Lancaster Square Routes authorised programme of project work to improve public realm in the heart of Lancaster (Minute 95, 8 December 2009). Specifically it is about work proposed for implementation in calendar year 2014 and brought forward jointly by the city and county councils.
- 1.2 The council's General Fund Capital Programme for 2013/14 includes allocations for project works to implement the concept designs agreed for

Market Square and Horseshoe Corner and works to Cheapside and Penny Street.

- 1.3 The total of funding secured to date for the 2014 works is from the city council £346k, (including £6k in a balance of private funding) and from the Lancashire County Council £165k.
- 1.4 The council may match this with ERDF funding. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has approved £485,579 in European Funding (ERDF), with a condition that the council enters into a Funding Agreement by Friday 17 May.
- 1.5 This conditional offer is after a funding bid made in the summer of 2012 by council officers towards public realm works in the centres of both Lancaster and Morecambe. The outcome was subject of an exempt report to Cabinet in February 2013 (exempt to meet Government requirements not to disclose any funding offer pending its acceptance). In précis, the Lancaster element of this funding bid and the subject of this report proved successful, the Morecambe element not.
- 1.6 At the time of writing this report officers are considering the Funding Agreement and are authorised to complete it with DCLG if the terms are considered satisfactory (Minute 125 February 2013).
- 1.7 The Agreement if completed will make for a total of some £997k in funding available - effectively doubling the monies locally available. The financial implications section to this report contains the relevant details.

## **2.0 Proposal**

### In summary

- 2.1 The proposal is for the city council to complete the whole of the improvements proposed for Market Square as part of Lancaster Square Routes and deliver a comprehensive upgrade of the streetscape the length of Cheapside, Horseshoe Corner and Penny Street to a specification much higher than could normally be achieved. Works would start and complete in the first half of 2014.

### General works arrangement

- 2.2 The public realm works are to include:
  - new stone surfacing for the whole of the Market Square and the adjoining stretch of Market Street (up to but not including the rear of the City Museum) and for Cheapside, Horseshoe Corner and Penny Street,
  - new, high quality, better sited seating,
  - a new, fitting structural centrepiece to Market Square,
  - facilities for promoting arts and events- including a new arts information point and banners to the City Museum,
  - return of the horseshoe to Horseshoe Corner,
  - new and improved directional signage and information in a combination of new monolith wayfinding and interpretation points and existing cast iron signposts rationalised as appropriate,
  - new LED lighting to Cheapside and part Penny St and New Street (to complement that provided last year for Market Square and Market St, part

Penny St and Frances Passage,

- new and better sited street furniture including bins and bollards
  - highway signage rationalised and reduced. Public phone booths reduced in number or relocated,
  - Chancery Lane closed as a public thoroughfare (gated both ends).
- 2.3 Plans and / drawings for Market Square are provided in Appendix 1 to this report and for Cheapside, Horseshoe Corner and Penny Street in Appendix 2.
- 2.4 The works in the Square will fit to the first phase of works to Market Square completed early last year. These comprised laying out new surfacing in the central part and new LED street lighting and amenity lighting to the City Museum.
- 2.5 The proposal for new directional signage and interpretive information is to be part of a cross city centre approach to remedy the present dearth of information provision and ensure that this and directional signage as a whole better serves the needs of visitors and those others less sure of its geography and history. The wayfinding monoliths are a key element and are as deployed very successfully elsewhere in the country.
- 2.6 Facilities in Market Square for promoting arts and events and performances are a key element. The facility to hang banners to the City Museum and a new information point are to give the Dukes, the Grand and arts partners and organisations the ability to better promote events and performances within the city.
- 2.7 New and better sited seating would be a combination of high quality backed seats in Market Square and traditional flat benches for occasional seating.
- 2.8 Gating Chancery Lane is to address a longstanding concern of the Police in terms of anti-social behaviour and that can be reasonably achieved as part of this proposal.

#### Centrepiece to Market Square – design concept

- 2.9 To remind as to the background to this, the community engagement work undertaken in preparing the Lancaster Square Routes concept proposals (see section 3.0 below) elicited much support for a suitably designed platform or plinth like structure available for seating and performance.
- 2.10 Cabinet subsequently approved (Minute 95 8 December 2009) a design concept for a centrepiece to a rectilinear footprint, first and foremost a sought after place to sit (as was the former fountain) and secondary to this a place for performance.
- 2.11 This design concept was closely informed by operational considerations: that the centrepiece must fit to what is otherwise required for an efficient and attractive layout of stalls on market days and to other essential operational requirements including for traffic movements by emergency and refuse vehicles.
- 2.12 A centrepiece that seats many people will help make the central part of the Square active particularly when there is no market in operation - which is much of the time. This is to help sustain the Square as the heartbeat of city life and a place that people are drawn to, enjoy spending time in and feel safe and secure. The design concept is that the opportunity to sit should be in a form alternative to the more traditional seating otherwise available at the sides of the Square.

- 2.13 In addition, the centrepiece can be a facility for a wide range of performance, small and large, informal through to very formal - impromptu stand up, street theatre, bands, choral events and music and formal staged theatrical productions.
- 2.14 The works to Market Square completed last year removed the former fountain, formed the rectilinear footprint for a centrepiece with a temporary surface and installed electrical and water connections.

#### Centrepiece to Market Square – detailed structural design

- 2.15 Two options are presented for the centrepiece, both in hard wearing granite with mass concrete as the hidden core. These:
- fit to the rectilinear footprint identified for the structure as part of the works completed last year,
  - sit well otherwise within its surroundings and in particular in relation to the City Museum,
  - are quite simple in form and unfussy in appearance,
  - effectively double the seating capacity otherwise available to the sides of the Square and enable people to congregate and sit in a relaxed and informal manner in a choice of facing directions and on its top surface,
  - give ready access to the elevated surface.
- 2.16 The structure would be finished in a mix of granites. A wide range are available for use affording much scope for colour variation and in texture including for rough and polished surfaces. This to complement the granite and stone used in the first phase of surfacing works.
- 2.17 The mix of granites is to be attractive and the appearance further made pleasing and interesting with embodied artwork.
- 2.18 The artwork should be to a consistent theme. Members are asked to consider what this should be, mindful that officers' consider the theme should be appropriate to the city as a whole. Officers' suggestions are:
- Social heritage, the people, activities, work, industry and transport that shaped the city.
  - Civic heritage: Market Square as the centre of the county town of Lancashire.
  - Lore and Legends.
  - A timeline of the city's history.
  - A modern take – art that looks forward, not back.
- 2.19 The options are as otherwise detailed in section 4.0 of the report and Appendix 2.

#### Works procurements and other regulatory compliance

- 2.20 Subject to the decision of Cabinet, officers will prepare detailed specifications and contract documentation for tender. Officers will liaise closely with highways officers in this.
- 2.21 There will be one tender for the main streetworks - including for all surfacing. Delivery will also involve further smaller contracts including with utility providers and all in accordance with the council's financial regulations.
- 2.22 Changes and improvements to directional signage and information proposed should be to a city centre wide plan for this element informed by public and

private sector aspirations and factor for the prospective Castle and Canal Corridor North developments. Officers propose to work this up with the Lancashire County Council, the local Chamber, the BID Management Group, the Duchy and British Land.

- 2.23 This proposal makes for a first phase deliverable. Delivery of the bespoke monolith wayfinding and interpretation points will be via a supplier to be procured in accordance with the council's financial regulations. The structures would be pre-fabricated and installed either as part of the main streetworks contract or separately, again as to be determined by officers.
- 2.24 The pace of the further roll out (e.g. monoliths in more locations) would be subject to funding and other decisions by key partners including by the BID Group. This partnership approach serves to make the approach flexible and future proof.
- 2.25 Street lighting will be delivered via the Highway Authority in the established partnership arrangement whereby it does the design work and picks up all revenue costs after installation. City council officers will assist in acquiring all necessary third party consents – as for the works completed last year.
- 2.26 Subject to decisions of the Highway Authority changes to highway signage will tie in with the proposed new Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO)
- 2.27 The detail of street furniture and highway signage is to be agreed with the Community Safety Partnership, Environmental Services and the Highway Authority.
- 2.28 Gating Chancery Lane would be implemented after a Gating Order to be sought from the Highway Authority.
- 2.29 It is proposed that centrepiece delivery benefit from an artist commission. This follows the approach taken successfully in many aspects of the award-winning TERN project including the Flock of Words ("Poem Path"). The artist would be procured in accordance with the council's financial regulations. The commissioned artist would have craftsman skills and imbue the finished design with artistic quality and embodied art work. The artist commissioned would collate and interpret ideas for embodied artwork consistent with the agreed theme and translate these into the finished product in specifying how a range of granites be intermixed to give a pleasing finish and via appropriate inscriptions and potentially lighting.
- 2.30 The artist would inform design and delivery of the centrepiece and potentially manage aspects direct. Construction would most likely be part off site involving pre-fabrication and part on-site. Officers would determine these matters at the appropriate time and as part of this assure clear lines of responsibility and management, building these into contracts before the relevant procurements are made.

#### Works timetable

- 2.31 It is an ERDF programme requirement that all funded works are financially complete by December 2014 with an agreed target for practical completion by 30 June 2014.
- 2.32 The several months delay in the council receiving the offer of ERDF investment means a works start this year is no longer practicable. Officers now propose that the main contract works are over four months commencing in mid February 2014 (hopefully clear of the worst of winter weather). This

avoids the critical trading period up to and over Christmas and builds in some tolerance for any weather enforced or other reasonably anticipated delays.

- 2.33 Centrepiece delivery would integrate with that of the main streetworks and be timed for the late Spring/ early Summer of 2014. The content of the monoliths require the longest lead in design period and so installation would be in the early summer.
- 2.34 All works would be managed so that the build out is incremental with the minimum area taken out of public use at any one time. Detailed programming would involve close liaison with various operational stakeholders to minimise impacts on the Charter Market, refuse collections etc.

### **3.0 Details of Consultation**

- 3.1 Extensive community engagement work as part of preparing Lancaster Square Routes informed the agreed concept designs for Market Square and Horseshoe Corner. This work included direct engagement with the community in 2009 via exhibitions and consultation with many specific stakeholders including for the Chamber and the Police.
- 3.2 The proposal as a whole benefits from close working with a range of organisations. In particular, to get best value and maximise efficiencies in expenditure and it incorporates highways renewal works planned on Cheapside and Penny Street by the Highway Authority. This secures enhanced specifications and significant savings for both councils.
- 3.3 Subject to Cabinet's decision officers will further brief the Chamber and the BID group.
- 3.4 Officers will work closely with businesses to ensure that construction works are considerate to business needs and minimise adverse affects.

### **4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)**

- 4.1 The proposal made in this report follows extensive community engagement. It is based on design concepts approved by Cabinet, which the Council has made budgetary provision for in the General Fund Capital Programme.
- 4.2 The ERDF investment award is towards specific deliverables and to a whole programme of improvements. It cannot be drawn down if the scope of works is reduced significantly.
- 4.3 With this as the context, two options are presented. The difference between the two options concerns the centrepiece to Market Square. Option one includes a single elevated structure as the centrepiece. Option 2 for a twin or divided structure. The plans and drawings in appendices 1 and 2.refer.
- 4.4 The two options are very similar seating capacities and both can be used for impromptu and informal performances.

<b>Option 1</b>	<b>To implement the proposal set out in section 2.0 of the report with a centrepiece to Market Square comprising a single elevated structure (as per the option 1 drawings in Appendix 1).</b>
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<p><b>Advantages</b></p>	<p>A full renewal of the length of Cheapside, Horseshoe Corner and Penny Street can be achieved in 2013/14 to a much higher specification than the county council could otherwise afford.</p> <p>The Lancaster Square Routes concept proposal for Market Square can be delivered in full by September 2014, including part of Market Street.</p> <p>The option represents a large investment for the city council with upwards of £2 of external investment secured for every £1 invested by the city council. Investments of this magnitude are hard won and unlikely to be available again.</p> <p>The proposal will give a better environment for trading in the established commercial and retail centre of the city. This should help the competitiveness of Lancaster centre with other centres and drive footfall.</p> <p>It will complement the Castle and Canal Corridor North developments should these come on stream.</p> <p>Market Square itself will be better laid out to support an improving Charter market. On non market days the improvements will be convivial for quiet enjoyment and best designed to accommodate events and a range of performances. The effect should be that at many times the Square becomes a much more vibrant place,</p> <p>The proposal makes it possible for the city council and the Arts Partnership to grow Market Square as a venue of choice for certain types of performance and events.</p> <p><u>Specific re. the centrepiece</u></p> <p>Is wholly consistent with the agreed concept design for Market Square, with the first phase completed last year.</p> <p>Centrepiece is multi-purpose as it can be used as seating and as staging for performances. It also fits well with other uses for the Square including the Charter Market.</p> <p>The linear length of seating made available effectively doubles on provision otherwise available in the Square.</p> <p>Builds in the ability to use the structure for a wide range of performances. The dimensions are proportional to the setting and the potential size of the audience.</p> <p>Builds in steps to meet building regulation requirements for staged performances</p>
<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p>	<p><u>Specific re. the centrepiece</u></p> <p>It is more obstructive to pedestrian movement than option 2.</p> <p>Will not offer a sufficient depth of stage for certain larger bands.</p>

<b>Risks</b>	<p>The Castle and Canal Corridor developments may shift the centre of gravity of the centre in terms of pedestrian activity. In this context therefore it is important to do what is possible to make Market Square and Market Street attractive and so to support trading now and into the future.</p> <p>The delivery programme builds in tolerances to cover for financial and programming risks.</p> <p><u>Specific re. the centrepiece</u></p> <p>That the centrepiece does not find favour with people. This is a risk with any public design installation and no more so here in the very centre of the city. The agreed concept design follows extensive consultation, which elicited a generally positive response. The extensive design and community engagement work informing the proposal suggests the square does need a fitting and multi-purpose centrepiece.</p>

**Table 2**

<b>Option 2</b>	<p><b>To implement in full the proposal set out in section 2.0 of the report with a centrepiece comprising twin elevated structures (as per the option 2 drawings in Appendix 1) and also including for investing in demountable units.</b></p>
<b>Advantages</b>	<p>As per option 1.</p> <p><u>Specific to the centrepiece</u></p> <p>Is broadly consistent with the agreed concept design for Market Square.</p> <p>Centrepiece is multi-purpose, as seating and as a space for performance and fits well to other uses to be made of the Square including for the Charter Market.</p> <p>In the linear length of seating made available is comparable with that proposed in option 1.</p> <p>Gives better permeability for pedestrians than option 1.</p> <p>Makes it possible for people to sit facing one another.</p> <p>A stage area the same as that provided in the option 1 proposal is achievable via use of demountable units.</p>
<b>Disadvantages</b>	<p><u>Specific to the centrepiece</u></p> <p>Is a variant on and to some extent does depart on the agreed concept design for Market Square. This option will require officers</p>

	<p>to seek a discrete variation from DCLG in the ERDF investment concerning the form of the centrepiece.</p> <p>In many circumstances use as a stage will be dependent on installing the demountable units.</p> <p>Officer time involved in managing the design and placement of the demountable units. There will also be added officer time needed to plan and manage a system for storing and hiring these out. In turn any such system may have revenue costs for the council but that might be covered by charging.</p>
<b>Risks</b>	<p>As per option 1 - that the centrepiece does not find favour with many people.</p> <p>That the investment in demountable staging units proves not to give best value if 1) either the city council and its partners fail to drive and market use of the Square for performance and / or 2) demand to utilise the Square in ways requiring this prove limited.</p> <p>The risk of not securing the specific variation required in the ERDF investment offer is considered very low.</p>

## **5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)**

- 5.1 Both options deliver improvements consistent with corporate policy and makes full and best use of available finance including European funding. Both enable the city and county councils to bring together their investments and benefit from strong partnership working to deliver long sought after improvements.
- 5.2 Officers consider that both options presented for the centrepiece will prove fitting and beneficial and accordingly a preferred option is not suggested.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

- 6.1 The report sets out how the council might move forward and deliver much needed improvements to public realm within the city centre, the main economic driver within the city. It is about opportunity to deliver in ways and to time frames that minimises financing implications for the city council, takes maximum advantage of external funding available and thereby offers best value expenditure for both the city and county councils. It presents options for what officers consider to be a new fitting and beneficial centrepiece to Market Square.

## RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

Lancaster Square Routes is to help support and sustain the commercial centre of the city as per the corporate priorities for economic growth and the environment. It fulfils the corporate priorities as contained in the 2012-15 Corporate Plan - Economic Growth, Health and Wellbeing, Clean Green and Safe Places and Community Leadership. It contributes, in particular, to Economic Growth by helping sustain the attraction of commercial centres and so support trading and jobs.

The proposal is consistent with the Lancaster District Core Strategy and in particular Policy ER2.

The initiative is highly complementary to the activity of the Lancaster BID Partnership that is demonstrating a unity of purpose and collective commitment to town centre improvement.

## CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, HR, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

The proposal will have no adverse impacts. It will assist health and safety by improving street surfacing. Regarding community safety, the improvements will make streets and spaces more attractive places to spend time in will assist towards community safety objectives. The element to gate Chancery Lane is to address specific community safety concerns.

Impacts associated with the closely related proposal for an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order were considered by Cabinet last year.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal Services have been consulted and have no further comments to make.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

### Option 1

This fits to the agreed capital programme, taking account of the delegations approved at February Cabinet. It also fits the Funding Agreement as offered by DCLG for the ERDF investment. It utilises the maximum available ERDF investment (£485,579) towards the total £971,158 k of estimated expenditure. This is within the total budget allocation available of £996,579 i.e. giving a little headroom.

In summary the estimated costs are:

Contract preliminaries	£143,817
Physical works	£771,137
General fees (including items to meet ERDF funding requirements)	£56,204
<b>Total</b>	<b>£971,158</b>

The table below profiles the expenditures. This is ambitious taking account of the expected timing of works but various cost elements would be front loaded. Further, work on refining the profiling of spend would be undertaken as part of delivering the project and approval would be sought for any changes. It should be noted that the balance of risks is that spending would slip, rather than there being the need to bring funding forward.

	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	Total £'000

City Council	196	150	346
ERDF	336	150	486
County Council	165	0	165
Total	697	300	997

New street surfacing, lighting and highways signage will be highway assets and maintained by the county council. Amenity seating and wayfinding points will be city council assets and maintained within the scope of established arrangements.

Within this, the build cost of the centrepiece is estimated at £118k (which includes a provision for artworks). Any maintenance costs are expected to be very minor, and as such they would be met from existing budgets.

#### Option 2

The capital financing required for this option is in net terms the same as that for option 1 with some £10k in savings as estimated on the physical costs (because of the reduced build cost of the centrepiece) balanced by the same cost as estimated to construct the demountable units. The council would hire out these units and ultimately replace them when required. Ideally the costs of this would be met via charging third party users, with any system for charging being the subject of a subsequent Cabinet report, prior to implementation of this option. Storage would use existing resources.

#### **OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

**Human Resources:** The work required to deliver both options is built into work programmes as part of the Lancaster Square Routes initiative. Further, work required to fulfil the terms of the ERDF Funding Agreement including handling financial claims, audits, any contract variations and other financial aspects can be met from within existing staff resources (across relevant Services)

**Information Services:** None.

**Property:** The public realm works are to highways and thereby assets of the Lancashire County Council except for part of the centrepiece that is the footprint of the former fountain structure and that the city council takes responsibility.

**Open Spaces:** The proposal is to enhance public realm.

#### **SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The S151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

#### **MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

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