

Report to: Cabinet
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Subject: Additional works - Maer Road Car Park

Purpose of report: This report sets out a solution to an issue that has arisen during ongoing capital project works at Maer Road car park in Exmouth. Upon commence of works it became apparent the car park construction was substantially poorer beneath the surface that had previously been assumed and now more extensive works comprising both new sub base and tarmac finish are required to complete the projects satisfactorily. The lowest "whole life" option for the works is recommended

Recommendation: **The Cabinet approve**

- (i) Option 3 being taken forwards, as it is the lowest whole life cost option for maintaining the car park, results in least disruption to the car parks users, maximises the availability of the car park and its income generating potential, and**
- (ii) an exemption to Contract Standing Orders in relation to the additional costs.**

Reason for recommendation: To ensure this car park is fit for purpose and will provide a convenient and useful facility for car, coach and motorhome parking in the town this summer and will continue to do so into the future.

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Financial implications: As stated the original budget approved was £75,240 to move the entrance and £47,000 for part resurfacing of the car park. The entrance work costs are now estimated to have increased to £96,000 and a request is being made to an enhanced resurfacing scheme at £178,000. This is an increase in the total overall budget of £151,760, the reasons for which are set out in the report. If approved this will be accommodated within the capital program and funded accordingly.

Legal implications: It is permissible for Cabinet to approve an exemption to contract standing orders under Rule 3.1 and the logic seems sound in this instance. Given the urgent nature of this decision, it is also possible for Cabinet to approve the budgetary spend in accordance with Rule 4 of the Budget and Policy Framework Rules. Parking Services should ensure that instructions are given to Legal Services to advise on the terms of the additional contract works and to consider any existing rights that exist in relation to the land, in good time, if the recommendation contained in this report is approved.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: There is a risk that these engineering works will be considered to be an inappropriate and disproportionate expense by some people. However the project has already been approved through the Council's capital programme and although these additional unforeseen costs are significant, they are necessary to enable us to complete the project properly. There are obvious risks to our reputation associated with the additional expenditure, but these should be weighed against the risk of delivering car park improvements that would require expensive remedial works again in a very short time,

Links to background information:

Link to Council Plan: Continuously improving to be an outstanding Council

Report in full

1 Background

- 1.1 There are two capital projects at Maer Road Car Park, one to relocate the entrance to allow for larger vehicles, and a second to resurface the worst area of the car park and reline it, with a budget of £75,240 and £47,000 respectively.
- 1.2 The relocated entranceway has resulted in an income of £125,000 from the adjacent developer for access across the car park.
- 1.3 The costs of the works to relocate the entrance have risen, predominantly due to costs associated with lowering an electricity main and BT cable across the new entrance location which weren't initially identified in that location.
- 1.4 This means that the forecast costs for completion of the entrance works are now at £96,000.
- 1.5 In addition, on further investigation with the entranceway works currently ongoing, we have found that the construction of the existing surface in the vicinity of the new entrance appears to be made up of compacted stone with a thin veneer of tar and chip over the surface. Given the limited depth of construction, and surface condition, it is likely that the car park would deteriorate very rapidly once larger vehicles are allowed onto it.
- 1.6 The poor surface also presents an issue for relining the car park to allocate spaces for coaches, and allow circulation of vehicles from the new entrance. With lining companies advising that they would be unable to remove the existing lines without creating ruts and holes in the surface. Again this issue was not anticipated at the time of the capital bid for resurfacing.

2 Options

- 2.1 3 options for the car park have been put forwards
 - 2.1.1 Option 1 - Do minimum to operate the new car park layout over the summer
 - 2.1.2 Option 2 - Do something to last until next financial year
 - 2.1.3 Option 3 - Resurface the car park to provide a good surface and base layer for 20 years
- 2.2 Option 1 to do the minimum, would be to black over some of the existing lining, with patching of some of the worst areas of the surface, to allow circulation of coaches and marking of some coach bays, whilst leaving the car parking largely unchanged. However, it is likely that further works would

be needed this autumn to continue to operate the site, as a minimum that would be reblacking of lines, and substantial areas of patching. The initial works would be within the existing capital budget, but with this option it is anticipated that there would be an increase revenue costs of circa £10-15k in the short term, and longer term capital costs.

- 2.3 Option 2 to do something until next financial year, would involve patching, surface dressing (tar and chip) the car park and relining. There would be a period during which we'd need to leave the car park unlined for the surface dress to settle, and surface dressing isn't ideal on car parks where there are lots of low speed turning movements. There is likely to be a delay of 6-8 weeks for these works, as surface dressing companies are busy with highways works this time of year. This would not address the underlying structural issues with the car parks construction but would likely hold together the surface for the next 6-12 months, and would increase current capital costs approximately £67,000, with additional capital costs in 9 months' time.
- 2.4 Option 3 provides a more comprehensive solution. This would be to lay a full depth car park construction (80mm binder course, 40mm surface course) across the areas of poor construction, overlay the remaining areas with 40mm stone mastic asphalt (SMA) surface course, and reline. This would provide a design life of 20 years depending on traffic levels, and the cost of these works has been estimated by our contractor to amount to around £178,000.
- 2.5 In terms of timing, it made sense to enable the car park to be fully available for the planned beach rugby event at the end of June, then carry out option 3 works around the beginning of July thereby ensuring that works can be completed in two phases maintaining half of the car park available throughout, with completion prior the main summer holiday season in mid to late-July.
- 2.6 It makes sense to procure these additional works as part of the main project already underway and that contractor has already obtained estimates from suitably qualified and experienced sub-contractors who have confirmed that they are able to complete the works within the agreed budget and timescale. Given the benefit of using the existing contractor, it is necessary for Cabinet to authorise an exemption to contract standing orders on this basis, although noting that the contractor themselves have obtained a number of estimates to seek to ensure best value.
- 2.7 For reference, the reasons for upgrading the specification of this car park to accommodate coaches and heavy motorhome links back to the development of Rolle College playing fields (where the car park will now provide access to the paying pitches and changing / club facilities), the redevelopment of Queens Drive long stay car park resulting in the loss of all twelve coach parking bays that used to be available and the Exmouth motorhome and campervan pilot where it was agreed with Devon County Council and Exmouth Town Council that EDDC would offer off-street overnight campervan and motorhome facilities here to encourage customers to remain in the town following prohibition of overnight parking of these vehicles on-street along the seafront in 2018.
- 2.8 Finally, with Exmouth regeneration underway and Queens Drive long stay car park now providing just 23 (instead of 198) car parking spaces we see this car park as becoming more strategically important for the town and in consequences, becoming a valuable car parking asset capable of generating significant revenue in future years following implementation of phase 2 and phase 3 regeneration projects.

3. Urgency

- 3.1 This decision requires capital spend outside of the existing budget. Normally this would necessitate approval by Council. Given the urgency of now getting these works authorised and completed before the holiday season starts, it is not practicable to convene a Full Council meeting in time. Accordingly under Rule 4 of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules Cabinet are asked to approve this decision in lieu.