

Cabinet
Council

13 December 2022
17 January 2023

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change – Councillor J O’Boyle

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Transportation and Highways

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Public Realm ‘Phase 6’

Is this a key decision?

Yes expenditure is in excess of £1m

Executive Summary:

In March 2018, Cabinet and Council gave approval to proceed with an ambitious Coventry City Centre Public Realm Phase 5 programme. Following a successful bid and a funding award of £44m from the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), the council has transformed the city centre by improving and enhancing the main shopping precincts, the Bull Yard, Pepper Lane and Hertford St as well as improving signs and lighting around the city centre.

The public realm 5 project was undertaken from October 2019 and completed in time for UK City of Culture 2021, additionally it was delivered in unprecedented times throughout the Covid 19 pandemic in which the importance of our public spaces was thrust to the forefront of everyone’s minds. In order to continue to build on the legacy which the public realm 5 project has left the project team have identified areas for further enhancement which were not part of the original project scope but will further improve the city centre areas.

A review of the works delivered have identified a public realm 6 programme of works that will focus on improving security and lighting and refreshing some of the areas surrounding Broadgate, The Precinct, Priory Place and the Cathedral. The schemes will deliver high quality improvements to strategic areas of the city and also enhance the setting of the key events venues and visitor attractions.

The key projects to be completed are:

- Retail Quarter Phase 2 – this will focus on upgrading some of the structures and facades around Broadgate, The Precinct, Market Way and Barracks Way tunnel

- Public Realm Refresh – there are some areas like Priory Place which have damaged water features and areas around the cathedral which need lighting upgrades.
- City Centre security which forms the largest part of the budget. This includes applying security measures to the area around the Cathedral, the University to create a safe events space and The Wave.

The Public Realm Phase 6 programme will be delivered in a co-ordinated way with businesses, Coventry BID and council partners to ensure any disruption is kept to a minimum.

Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Agree the revised scheme list and delegate authority to the Director of Transportation and Highways following consultation with Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change, to agree the detailed works for schemes in Coventry City Centre Public Realm Phase 6
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Transportation and Highways, following consultation with Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change and the Chief Operating Officer to agree the detailed works and budgets for additional Public Realm Phase 6 funding.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Transportation and Highways following consultation with Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change, alongside Procurement Board to agree the most appropriate procurement route for the works to be delivered

Cabinet is requested to recommend that Council:

1. Approve the addition of £1.8m of corporate resources to the 5 year capital programme to deliver the Public Realm 6 programme, funded from capital receipts

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List of Appendices included:

Appendix A – Public Realm Phase 6 scheme descriptions

Background Papers:

None

Other Useful Documents:

1. Coventry City Centre Public Realm Phase 1 – Council report of 28th January 2011
2. Coventry City Centre Public Realm Phase 2 – Council Report of 23rd October 2012
3. Coventry City Centre Public Realm Phase 2 Update – Council Report of 23rd July 2013
4. The Coventry Warwickshire First Wave Growth Deal – Council report of 9th September 2014
5. Coventry City Centre Public Realm Phase 3 – Council Report of 7th October 2014

6. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Open Call for Extension to Projects – Council report of 17th March 2015
7. Public Realm 3a – Council Report of 17th March 2015
8. Local Growth Deal - Public Realm Phase 4 & Infrastructure Projects – Council Report of 11th October 2016
9. Coventry Station Masterplan Update – Council Report of 24th January 2017
10. Connecting Coventry Strategic Transport Investment Programme – Council Report of 24th January 2017
11. Connecting Coventry – Strategic Transport Investment Programme Update – Council Report of 13th March 2018
12. 2018/19 Transportation and Highway Maintenance Capital Report – Cabinet Report 6th March 2018
13. Public Realm Phase 5 – Council Report of 13th March 2018

All of the above documents are available via the Council's website:

<https://edemocracy.coventry.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

Yes – 17th January 2023

Report title: Public Realm 6

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1. The Public Realm programme has been extremely successful to date, with the team so far secured over £80m of additional public sector funding which have been used to deliver public realm improvements in the city centre, enhancing the walking routes and making the city greener and more pleasant.
- 1.2. A series of additional public realm improvements are proposed in this report to be delivered as part of a new Public Realm Phase 6 programme, at a cost of £1.8m. The proposed schemes will deliver enhancements to key strategic parts of the city and also enhance the setting of the key events venues and visitor attractions, both in terms of appearance and security.
- 1.3. The proposed programme, with further detail regarding costs and deliverables, can be found in Appendix A.
- 1.4. The key projects to be completed are:
 - Retail Quarter Phase 2 – this will focus on upgrading some of the structures and facades around Broadgate, The Precinct, Market Way and Barracks Way tunnel
 - Public Realm Refresh – there are some areas like Priory Place which have damaged water features and areas around the cathedral which need lighting upgrades.
 - City Centre security which forms the largest part of the budget. This includes applying security measures to the area around the Cathedral, the University to create a safe events space and The Wave.
- 1.5. It is proposed that £1.8m of corporate capital resources to be funded from capital receipts are made available to fund these projects.
- 1.6. It is important that the programme of Public Realm Phase 6 works is delivered in a carefully planned way to minimise impact on the city. All businesses will remain open during construction, and provision will be made to cater for events.
- 1.7. There is a robust governance in place to manage the Public Realm programme. The delivery team are very experienced, having delivered over £80m city centre public realm improvements to date.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1. **Option 1 – (Preferred) The City Council approves delivering the Public Realm Phase 6**
 - 2.1.1. The Council has a proven track record of delivering transformational public realm improvements in the city centre and has acted as lead applicant or accountable body for many capital funded projects. In essence it means the council being previously responsible for monitoring spend, submitting grant claims for eligible expenditure and demonstrating that the grant has been spent in achieving the outputs of the project, alongside the successful and timely delivery of the project.
 - 2.1.2. Using the resource available, the capital funds identified, and giving the council the ability to finish off the full programme of public realm and infrastructure improvements, ensuring the council are maximising impact and building on PR5 legacy. This will continue the work

of transforming the city centre, supporting businesses in the city, creating a city in which residents are proud of and encouraging investment into the city centre. By improving further the recent changes to the retail area in the city and upgrading the areas of the city which have not benefited from recent investment we can continue to ensure the growth of the city centre. Additionally, by enhancing our security further we will continue to ensure our city centre remains safe and protected, it will also allow for events to be held in spaces where previously funds had been needed to protect those spaces.

- 2.1.3. It is recommended this option is approved in order to maximise current funds available to deliver the full programme of public realm and security improvements and finish the overall city centre changes before 31st March 2024.

2.2. **Option 2 – Not recommended**

- 2.2.1. This option would leave areas of the city unfinished and not allow the council to complete the high-quality, high security additions that the city centre needs to complement the PR5 legacy.

2.3. **Recommended Proposal**

- 2.3.1. It is recommended that cabinet moves forward with the recommended Option 1 and agrees the programme of works which will be delivered at the same time to minimise disruption across the city and allow works to begin at pace.
- 2.3.2. Council are recommended to agree the £1.8m of corporate capital resources to be funded from capital receipts are made available to fund these projects.

3. **Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1. Consultation was undertaken for the Public Realm 5 works; this project is building on the results of those conversations and by listening to business and residents' feedback throughout the PR 5 project. These conversations will continue for Public Realm Phase 6.
- 3.2. Consultation with Access Groups and City Centre stakeholders has been ongoing throughout the delivery of Public Realm schemes and will continue for the development of Phase 6.

4. **Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1. The project is expected to be completed by 31 March 2024.

5. **Comments of the Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer**

5.1. **Financial implications**

- 5.1.1. The recommendations in the report seek approval to invest £1.8m of corporate resources to deliver a public realm 'phase 6' programme, to complete a number of improvements within the city, is outlined below in table 5.1:

Table 5.1: Public Realm 6 Programme

| PUBLIC REALM 6 PROGRAMME | £'m |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Retail Quarter Phase 2 | 0.8m |
| Security | 0.8m |
| Public Realm Refresh | 0.2m |
| TOTAL FUNDING | 1.8m |

- 5.1.2. One of the biggest current financial challenges to capital projects is the risk of rapidly rising inflation. Whilst this is a serious concern for all construction projects with estimates of increases in costs of up to 25%, the project team's commercial team has used benchmark rates of inflation to ensure sufficient contingency budgets are built into the scheme estimated costs.
- 5.1.3. In the event that unavoidable pressures do materialise, it should be noted that the works to be delivered are scalable, with the governance of the project being overseen by the Transport Capital Programme Board to ensure works are delivered within the £1.8m funding envelope.
- 5.1.4. The project costs are of a one off nature, and are not expected to create any ongoing cost liabilities

5.2 Legal implications

- 5.2.1 The public realm and infrastructure schemes will be delivered under the Council's general highway improvement/traffic management powers under the Highways Act 1980 except in relation to any new or amended formal pedestrian crossings/traffic regulation orders/traffic-calming measures which will be implemented following a separate statutory notice/objection process under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- 5.2.2 Any works undertaken on properties belonging to others will be with their full collaboration and associated legal permission will be sought

5.3 Procurement

- 5.3.1 A mix of construction contracts would be used to maximise resource and capacity to ensure delivery in time for April 2024. The DLO would potentially carry out some of the schemes, with existing construction frameworks and/or competitive tender processes to be utilised for others (where applicable). The procurement strategy will be agreed by the Director of Transport and Highways, following consultation with the Cabinet Members and is subject to approval at Procurement Board.

6. Other implications

- 6.1. **How will this contribute to the Council's Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?**
- 6.1.1. The Public Realm Phase 6 programme will continue to provide jobs across the city and sub-region. The PR 6 works support the Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 which aims to create a strong & resilient economy, where inclusive growth is promoted and delivered, businesses are enabled to innovate and grow, and new local jobs are

created. It also supports the aspirations of the plan to realise the City Centre schemes in full.

6.1.2. The schemes also support the City Centre Area Action Plan and Local Plan, which identifies the importance of public realm and these key areas for development.

6.1.3. The projects will also support the aspirations of the draft One Coventry Plan. The projects are aligned to a number of statements in the draft Plan including continuing to improve the city and marketing Coventry as an attractive place (priority – increasing the economic prosperity of the city and region). Crime prevention is also referenced in the draft Plan (priority – improving outcomes and tackling inequalities within our communities).

6.2. **How is risk being managed?**

6.2.1. There is a robust governance structure in place for the public realm programme whereby risks are managed at a project team level and reported to project board. Regular risk workshops are undertaken on all projects to ensure active monitoring and management.

6.2.2. The programme manager for the works is responsible for managing compliance with the finance requirements such as reporting and budgetary management. The highly experienced Transport & Highways division who have already successfully delivered previous phases of public realm improvements will continue to implement the public realm schemes by working closely with their finance partners.

6.2.3. As stated above, inflation risk has been accommodated within the budget, and will be continually monitored throughout the delivery of the project to ensure delivery within budget.

6.3. **What is the impact on the organisation?**

HR Implications

6.3.1. Staff are already in place from the previous public realm projects and can continue to carry out this function and take on the new projects. Agency staff may also be required to support the programme delivery team as required.

6.4. **Equalities / EIA**

6.4.1. Discussions with the Access Groups and representative organisations are underway and will continue through project development, to ensure that the design of all schemes to be developed properly reflects access needs. There have been regular meetings with the Access Development Groups. In particular, the Council has worked closely with the Guide Dogs Association providing funding to help the re-training of guide dogs in the new city centre. The lines of communication will be used to ensure that the needs of all users are considered when developing the projects

6.5. **Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

6.5.1. The projects will continue to put sustainable outcomes and greening of the city at the heart of the proposals. However, these projects are mainly small changes rather than whole scale transformations so opportunity to make large environmental impacts are limited.

6.6. **Implications for partner organisations?**

- 6.6.1. The City Council will need to work closely with other stakeholders and businesses in the delivery of the works programme.
- 6.6.2. The public realm activities at The Precinct will need to be coordinated with works to be undertaken to the retail infrastructure by Ellandi (formally Shearer Property Group contract).
- 6.6.3. The Council will be required to work with Coventry University, West Midlands Police, West Midlands Fire Service and Coventry Cathedral when installing security measures.

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This report is published on the council's website:

www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

APPENDIX A – Public Realm Phase 6 Overview

PR 6 Programme

| Project | Budget | Timescale | Contractor |
|--|----------------------|------------------|--|
| Retail Quarter Phase 2 - Facades - Barracks Way Tunnel - Stone column repairs - Canopy repairs | £772,743.70 | 2023-2024 | Property contractors and skilled stonemasons |
| Public Realm Refresh - Lighting St Michaels Ave - Priory Gardens - Priory Place fountain - Structure repairs | £196,812.00 | 2023-2024 | DLO, lighting and fountain contractors |
| City Centre Security - Security bollards | £818,433.00 | 2023-2024 | Specialist security contractors |
| Total | £1,787,988.70 | | |