



**Policy, Finance and
Development
Committee**

**Tuesday, 02 February
2016**

Matter for Decision

Title: Public Realm Works Within The Borough

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1. Introduction

- 1.1.** The Council has successfully worked in partnership with Leicestershire County Council to regenerate the public realm within Oadby and Wigston town centres.
- 1.2.** This report seeks Member approval to spend some of the remaining £16,000 left in the Council's Public Realm Reserve on specific projects to further enhance the public realm in the Borough's town centres.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1.** It is recommended that Members:

Approve the spending of approximately £11,000-£13,500 on public realm improvements to Wigston town centre and the installation of a digital display screen in South Wigston town centre as detailed in this report to be funded from the remaining money in the Council's Public Realm Reserve.

3. Information

- 3.1.** As part of the public realm scheme on Bell Street in Wigston The Wigston Civic Society played a key role in creating the 'pocket park' by providing the granite stone and plaque which forms the centrepiece of the park and which commemorates the fountain that was erected in that location in 1897 to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. The Wigston Civic Society also contributed towards creating a 'Wigston timeline' which has been carved into the plinth upon which the memorial is set.
- 3.2.** The Wigston Civic Society has since suggested that the pocket park could be further enhanced by the preparation and installation of an interpretation board adjacent to the pocket park that explains more about the history of the area and the important contribution that it has played to the town.
- 3.3.** The area, which has also been known in the past as 'the square' and 'the bank' was dominated by a large Elm tree and it has also been suggested that an additional planter could be provided in the vicinity of the pocket park in which a new tree could be planted. It is likely that the tree would however not be an Elm tree due to their size and susceptibility to disease.
- 3.4.** The cost of supplying and installing an interpretation panel, planter and appropriate tree is likely to be in the region of £3,000-£3,500.

- 3.5.** The digital display screens in Oadby and Wigston town centres have proved very successful. The screens have been displaying a number of Council and community advertisements. Leicestershire Police, Oadby and Wigston Lions Club, Oadby Town Centre Association, Pride of the Borough, Wigston Business Group, South Wigston Chamber of Trade and Brocks Hill have all advertised on the screens. So far there have been 59 posters that have been put up/taken down since May and currently 16 that are being displayed, proving that they are being well used.
- 3.6.** The first commercial advert was placed on the digital display screens in October 2016 and to date income for 2015/16 has reached £940 with £1,200 worth of advertising space already booked for 2016/17.
- 3.7.** Given the success of the digital display screens and the fact that they are generating an income for the Council, it is suggested that an additional digital display screen is purchased and installed in South Wigston town centre. The cost of supplying and installing a digital display screen is likely to be in the region of £8,000-£10,000 (this is more than the cost in Oadby and Wigston town centres where significant efficiencies were achieved by installing them as part of the public realm works).
- 3.8.** If approved, consideration will be given to a suitable location to install the digital display screen, permission sought from the landowner and advertisement consent sought prior to the screen being ordered from the supplier.

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Implications	
Financial	The necessary funding is available within the Council's Public Realm Reserve.
Legal	No direct implications.
Risk	No direct risks.
Equalities	The schemes will have a positive impact on community equality and access to key services and will help celebrate the Borough's history and cultural diversity history.