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| Key Decision Required: | NO | In the Forward Plan: | NO |
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CABINET

10 NOVEMBER 2017

REFERENCE FROM COUNCIL

A.1 PETITION: “SAY NO TO PLANS FOR MILLENIUM SQUARE – SAVE OUR TREES & £90,000”

(Report prepared by Lisa Hastings, Monitoring Officer)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To place before Cabinet, a Petition reported at the meeting of the Council held on 5th September 2017.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report places before Cabinet a Petition, which was reported at the meeting of Council held on 5th September 2017, relating to the Plans for Millenium Square, Walton High Road at a cost of £90,000 and which has been referred to Cabinet for consideration in accordance with the provisions of the Council’s approved scheme for dealing with petitions.

Cabinet can determine what action they wish to take having regard to the Petition, which will be presented by the lead Petitioner at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet determines what action they wish to take having regard to the Petition.

PART 2 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

At the meeting of Council held on 5th September 2017, the Chief Executive verbally reported the receipt of a petition submitted by Mr Brian Green from Walton-on-the-Naze. The petition is signed by 75 residents of the district and states:

“Say no to plans for Millennium Square – Save our trees & save the £90,000”.

In a covering letter, the lead Petitioner refers to the recent decision to alter the configuration of the Millennium Square in Walton High road at a cost of £90,000. The letter states that the scheme necessitates the destruction of two mature horse chestnut trees (with Tree Preservation Orders on them) and the loss of 10 parking spaces in the area that desperately needs parking provision in order to bring more trade to the shops in

the High Street. Reference is made to a lack of consultation with the effected residents.

In accordance with the Council's scheme this matter would be reported and presented to the Cabinet on the basis that it had contained between 30 and 249 signatures. Mr Green, as the lead petitioner, is invited to address the Cabinet, present the petition and outline the action that the petitioners wanted the Council to take. Subsequently, Cabinet will discuss the petition and decide what action, if any, should be taken. Mr Green will be informed, in writing, of the Cabinet's decision and the decision would also be published on the Council's website.

At its meeting on 14th July 2017, Cabinet received a report by the former Portfolio Holder for Commercialisation, Seafronts and Parking (Report A.7), which sought Cabinet's approvals for public realm improvements to the Millennium Square, Walton-on-the-Naze, including funding from the Regeneration and Growth Budget.

Cabinet recalled that the Millennium Square located within the High Street Car Park, Walton-on-the-Naze had been conceived and developed in order to provide a meeting place for visitors to the town centre and a focal point for events. The original design and concept had created a shared area of public space used primarily for car parking, but which could also be used for local events on an ad hoc basis but the reality had been that the result had compromised both and did not perfectly meet either of the Council's ambitions.

Cabinet was informed that the current proposal to address was:

- An enhanced and more attractive public area designed to encourage increased use of high quality public realm in the heart of the town centre; and
- To provide options for year round outdoor market pitches or other uses of the public area that would also provide more effective year round use of the car parking area.
- The specifications for construction, the preferred design and mood board of materials were attached to the report as Appendix A for Cabinet's consideration.

It was reported that the estimated cost for delivering this project was £90,000. Project costs could be reduced if required, or met as outlined in the financial section of the report.

Having considered the information submitted and the advice of Officers contained within the report, it was **RESOLVED** that Cabinet notes the contents of the report and:

- a) approves the principle of public realm improvements to the Millennium Square Walton on-the-Naze, as outlined in Appendix A to item A.7 of the Report of the Portfolio Holder for Commercialisation, Seafronts and Parking;
- b) authorises the seeking of statutory or other consents and agreements as may be required;
- c) authorises a contribution of £50,000 towards delivery of the proposed scheme to be funded from the Regeneration and Growth budget;.
- d) requests that the Head of Public Realm completes the design and costing of the project; and

e) authorises the Corporate Director (Operational Services), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Commercialisation, Seafronts and Parking and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration, to invite tenders, enter into contracts or commission works by the Engineering Services Team in order to complete the project within the budget and approvals.

AVAILABLE COURSE OF ACTION

There are several course of action available to Cabinet, including:

- No action (with reasons as to why no action is proposed)
- Taking the action requested in the petition
- Undertaking research into the matters raised (this could include referring the matter to the relevant Portfolio Holder, or officer of the Council) and holding a meeting with the petitioners
- Referring the petition to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Holding a public meeting

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

- Petition and covering letter submitted by Mr Brian Green, Walton-on-the-Naze; and
- Report to and minute (no. 76) of Cabinet held on 14th July 2017