

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: Executive 13th June and Council 25th July 2017

Report of: Service Manager Community Safety & Enforcement

Title: Bridge Replacement and Repair

Is this a Key Decision?


No

* One that affects finances over £1m or significantly affects two or more wards. If this is a key decision then the item must be on the appropriate forward plan of key decisions.

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1.	What is the report about?
1.1	Seek approval and funding for the replacement of the Exeter City Council owned Kings Arms Bridge.
2.	Recommendations:
2.1	That Executive support the recommendation for Council to approve a budget of £160K to fabricate and install a replacement of the Kings Arms Bridge.
3.	Reasons for the recommendation:
3.1	The bridge was inspected in early 2016 and was found to be showing signs of structural damage. Regular monitoring revealed a rapid decline in the condition of the structure. The County Council's Bridge engineers conducted a detailed survey later in the year and concluded that repairing of the current structure was not an option and removal or replacement was recommended.
3.2	The bridge forms part of what has become a popular and established cycle and route for walkers. It also serves as a quiet route between St Leonards and St Thomas
4.	What are the resource implications including non-financial resources.
4.1	The cost of replacement will be £160k as estimated by the County Council Bridge Engineers. In addition there will be a considerable investment of officer time required to project manage the installation.
5.	Section 151 Officer comments:
	If approved, the budget will be added to the capital programme. The financial impact on the revenue account will be subtracted from the amount set aside to cover future capital programme financing.
6.	What are the legal aspects?
	None identified.
7.	Monitoring Officer's comments:
	This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer since the sole issue is whether Members agree to replace the bridge.

8.	Report details:
8.1	<p>The present bridge was constructed in 1972 using the then popular lamination technique. Whilst laminated beams continue to be used as a substitute for 'hewn timber'; in this application the adhesive was not as resilient to the effects of water as was originally believed.</p> <p>Not only did water de-laminate the fabric of the bridge but caused significant rotting of the structure.</p> 
8.2	<p>Records show that in 1996 plans were drawn up to replace large sections of the bridge. This suggests some early concerns about the longevity of the structure. Unfortunately none of those involved with that project remain with the council and we can only speculate why this plan was not executed. Our best guess is that the structure was strengthened and stabilised in order to slow the decay. It must have been considered that this, together with the re-decking, that took place at the time, was sufficient to extend the structure's life. Which indeed it was.</p>
8.3	<p>The recent report on the condition of the bridge shows extensive decay. As a temporary measure we have imposed a width restriction to limit the flow of traffic across the bridge and to channel the reduced load into the centre of the deck. Although this has caused some inconvenience to the public the only other option would be that of closure.</p>
8.4	<p>A temporary pedestrian bridge has been deployed to assist crossing at this point.</p>
8.5	<p>Fabrication of the new bridge is likely to take 10 – 12 months. Installation is likely to take 5 days, during which time the temporary pedestrian bridge will serve as the only crossing point in this location.</p>
9.	How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?
9.1	<p>The use of the bridge contributes to a valuable recreational asset and enhances health and wellbeing.</p>
10.	What risks are there and how can they be reduced?
10.1	<p>There is a reputational risk in us closing a popular recreational walking and cycling facility. There would also be an impact upon those local traders that utilise this asset.</p>
11.	What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?
11.1	<p>Health & Wellbeing: the bridge forms an important link to the walking and cycling route around the Canal and Quay.</p>
12.	Are there any other options?
12.1	<p>Closure. The nearest crossing downstream of the Basin would then be Salmonpool Bridge adding approx. 2.5km to the circuit</p>

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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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