

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: Executive 12 June and Council 24 July 2018

Report of: Service Manager Community Safety & Enforcement

Title: Additional Funding for 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	To seek approval for additional 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 an additional budget of £250K to fabricate and install a replacement of the Kings Arms Bridge to meet all current safety standards.
3.	Reasons for the recommendation:
3.1	The bridge was inspected in early 2016 and was found to be showing signs of structural fatigue & ageing. 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 its defects were irreparable 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
3.3	Council approved a £160k budget for this work on 25 July 2017. However, the initial estimate provided by Devon County Council Bridge Engineers to inform that report has proven to be vast under-estimate owing to many factors / requirements.

4.	What are the resource implications including non-financial resources.
4.1	The revised cost of replacement will be £410k as re-calculated by the County Council Bridge Design Engineers. In addition there will be a considerable investment of officer time required to project manage the installation.
5.	Section 151 Officer comments:
5.1	The additional cost, if approved, will be funded by borrowing and add approximately £11,000 a year to the savings target for 2018-19.
6.	What are the legal aspects?
	Please see Monitoring officer comments below.
7.	Monitoring Officer's comments:
	Whilst the recommendation to replace the bridge raises no issues for the monitoring officer, the substantial increase in cost does raise the importance of having clarity of contract in terms of cost and scope of the work to be completed. As a result, a formal contract needs to be agreed and completed by Legal Services before the works are commenced.
8.	Report details:
8.1	The initial estimate provided by Devon County Council was originally based on a 'like for like' replacement basis, but failed to fully recognise all the technical aspects which would need consideration and the necessary change in the way the swing bridge is supported.
8.2	It has now become apparent that a 'like for like' replacement is not possible due to changes in safety factors affecting both design standards and unknown weight bearing capacity thresholds since the construction and installation of the current bridge in 1972. The existing bridge is a wooden structure (laminated construction) which is not ideal in such a watery location. Therefore the new replacement bridge will be of metal construction having a far longer sustainable lifespan and less demand on maintenance. Its appearance will however be similar with some timber cladding & historic ironwork retained in acknowledgement of the Canal's Heritage.
8.3	Revised costs for the project are:- Bridge fabrication and installation £290k Ground investigations, piles and foundations £47k Design, supervision and project management £43k Contingency sum £20k Providing temporary bridge £10k

8.4	If approval is given for the additional funding then it is anticipated that the pre-fabricated bridge will be installed over 4 days during April 2019. Other preparatory works such as piling and concreting, masonry works would however need to precede beforehand.
9.	How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?
9.1	The use of the bridge contributes to a valuable recreational asset and enhances health and wellbeing. It is vital link into the Riverside Valley Park from the Basin area and is part of a busy cycle commuter route into the City.
10.	What risks are there and how can they be reduced?
10.1	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 whose customers utilise this asset.
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	Health & Wellbeing: the bridge forms an important link to the walking and cycling route around the Canal and Quay.

12.	Are there any other options?
12.1	<p>Closure. The nearest crossing downstream of the Basin would then be Salmonpool Bridge which allows vehicular access, adding approx. 2.5km to the circuit. A temporary static bridge is due to be installed for at least 6 months whilst the old one is removed. This could be retained but would restrict navigational access into the Quayside from the Canal. This would result in the cruise businesses having to utilise the Canal Basin in the future. The cost of purchasing this bridge is estimated to cost £60-£70k. The permanent narrowing of public access would however create more congestion & conflict of users, leading to criticism & potential loss of reputation.</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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