

Report to:	Licensing and Regulatory Committee	Date of Meeting:	Monday 5 September 2022
Subject:	Southport Town Deal, Market Street, King Street, Eastbank Street and Chapel Street Improvements, Southport		
Report of:	Assistant Director of Place (Highways and Public Protection)	Wards Affected:	Dukes;
Portfolio:	Locality Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To seek Members' approval for the implementation of the proposed improvements on Market Street, King Street, Eastbank Street and Chapel Street and to advise Members of proposed changes to Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) associated with the improvements.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that the Assistant Director of Place (Highways and Public Protection) be authorised to implement the following modifications to the highway:

- (1) Installation of new, high quality paving, new lighting, seating, planting and improvements to street furniture on Market Street
- (2) Widening of the footway and installation of high quality paving, lighting, planting and improvements to street furniture on King Street
- (3) Installation of improved pedestrian crossing facilities, widening of a section of the footway and installation of high quality paving, planting and improvements to street furniture on Eastbank Street
- (4) Removal of 'street clutter' and improvements to street furniture on Chapel Street

It is recommended that the Committee note that authorisation to advertise the required changes to the TROs will be sought from Cabinet Member – Locality Services once detailed plans have been finalised. Any objections arising from this process will be brought back to L&R Committee for consideration.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

Licensing and Regulatory Committee have powers to consider the details of improvements to highways and can approve the scheme as proposed or with minor amendments but otherwise must refer the scheme to the Cabinet Member.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

The measures proposed form key elements of Phase 1 of the *Les Transformations de Southport* scheme, which is part of the Southport Town Deal proposals. The first phase of the project will be funded through the Town Deal. Different parts of the town centre and the connections to the Marine Lake area were included in the overall Town Deal project. This area was identified as the first phase of the project because of the need to enhance Chapel Street and the links with the refurbished market and the proposed Enterprise Arcade (another of the Town Deal projects). The other areas of the town within the *Les Transformations* project will be brought forward but the resources available and the timescales of other developments in the town favoured this area being delivered as the first phase of the project.

Alternative layout options were considered as part of the design process. The proposals presented in this report were considered to provide the best layout and were provided as part of the public consultation in February/March 2022. Options for a paving only or for including ornamental planting on Market Street were presented as part of the consultation and people were invited to comment on the options.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

There are no additional direct revenue costs associated with the recommendations within this report.

(B) Capital Costs

The cost of the proposals will be met from the Southport Town Deal funding allocation for the *Les Transformations de Southport* scheme (£2.5m), together with a contribution of £0.25m from the Council's annual transportation capital programme, in line with the business case approved by Cabinet in March 2022.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):

The capital cost of the proposals will be met from the Southport Town Deal funding together with a contribution from the Council's annual transportation capital programme.

There are no additional direct revenue costs associated with the recommendations within this report.

Legal Implications:

None

Equality Implications:

An equalities assessment was carried out as part of the business case process, using the template provided for Town Deal projects. Overall, there is expected to be a net positive impact on equalities resulting from the changes to the street environment that will improve conditions for people with mobility difficulties.

Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will

	Have a positive impact	Y	
	Have a neutral impact	N	
	Have a negative impact	N	
	The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y	

The proposed improvements are intended to support sustainable travel modes, particularly walking, and to provide a high quality pedestrian facilities in Market Street, King Street and Eastbank Street. Providing suitable infrastructure and public spaces that enable people to travel on foot or by bicycle help to reduce emissions from vehicular travel and contribute to the Council’s climate emergency commitments.

The new lighting will be more energy efficient than the existing lighting arrangements.

There are emissions associated with the sourcing of paving materials for the improvements, but it is expected that the longer term benefit of providing an enhanced pedestrian environment will outweigh the short term impacts of sourcing the new paving materials.

Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: Not applicable
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Improves conditions for pedestrians in Southport and supports town centre businesses.
Commission, broker and provide core services: Not applicable

Place – leadership and influencer: Enhances the local environment by providing high quality public spaces and promoting alternative modes of travel.
Drivers of change and reform: Not applicable
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: The route improves the pedestrian links around the refurbished Southport Market and the connections to the proposed Enterprise Arcade on Eastbank Street and the railway station on Chapel Street.
Greater income for social investment: Not applicable
Cleaner Greener : Supports sustainable travel, particularly walking.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6909/22.) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 5109/22) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Consultation on the *Les Transformations de Southport* proposals was carried out in February and March 2022. An on-line questionnaire was available on the Your Sefton Your Say website as part of the Future Southport platform. The consultation was publicised through the Council's website and social media. In addition, letters were sent to businesses and residents likely to be affected by the proposals to advise them of the consultation. Specific engagement was carried out with representative groups such as Southport BID, Marketing Southport and Southport Access for Everyone. Schools were also invited to take part in the consultation and a school resource pack and feedback form was distributed through the Southport Learning Trust.

Once the details have been confirmed, the proposed changes to the TROs will be subject to consultation and this will be reported to L&R Committee if any objections are received.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

Background Papers:

Report to Cabinet, Transformations de Southport - Business Case, 10 March 2022.

1.0 Introduction / Background

- 1.1 Following the successful submission of Southport's Town Investment Plan (TIP), under the government's Town Deal funding programme, Southport was allocated £37.5m for a range of projects. All the project funding allocations through the Town Deal have been developed with the agreement and support of the Town Deal Board and in line with the Town Deal Programme Heads of Terms.
- 1.2 One of the projects included in the TIP was *Les Transformations de Southport*. The provision of infrastructure to underpin economic growth was one of the three themes of the Town Investment Plan for Southport and this project provides the transport and public realm infrastructure needed to support the ambition of the Town Fund and the changing patterns of travel demand and movement around the town. The overall project is expected to cost approximately £12.75m and £2.5m of funding has been allocated from the Town Deal to enable the delivery of the first phase of the project. Additional funding will be sought for the further stages of the project.
- 1.3 The project aims to improve the atmosphere, prosperity and health of the town by providing better access and connections across the town centre, linking all the Town Deal projects and making it easier, safer and more enjoyable for people to get about the town. This means that all the parts of the town are better connected with each other, that people enjoy the town more and stay longer and that the town's businesses are able to grow and develop and attract new investment into the town.
- 1.4 In practice, the project will consist of access, connectivity and public realm improvements on key routes connecting the major development proposals (Marine Lake Events Centre, Enterprise Arcade and Southport Market) with the railway station, together with a new comprehensive signing and wayfinding system.
- 1.5 The business case for the Council's delivery of the project was approved by Cabinet in March 2022. The business case sets out the rationale for the whole project and provides more detail about the planned delivery of the first phase of the project that will be funded through Town Deal. The business case was submitted to the Government (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities). DLUHC confirmed acceptance of the business case in June 2022, which will enable the release of the £2.5m Town Deal funding for the first phase of the project.
- 1.6 The next steps in the *Les Transformations de Southport* project are the delivery of the Phase 1 proposals and the development of the concept designs for the further phases of the project. This report focusses on the changes to Market Street, King Street, Eastbank Street and Chapel Street proposed in Phase 1 of the *Les Transformations de Southport* project.

2.0 Project Overview

2.1 The vision for the *Les Transformations* project is to create accessible and well-connected high quality public spaces, providing priority for people walking and cycling and those with limited mobility in support of clean growth. This will support businesses in attracting and retaining customers, improve the health and wellbeing of communities, encourage people to stay longer or return more frequently and thereby reinforce the vision for the town.

2.2 Key objectives of the project are:

- Define a consistent and high quality look and feel for street design in Southport
- Develop a framework street design that will deliver natural wayfinding between key destinations within the town centre
- Support the natural wayfinding with a high quality, effective and modern physical and digital wayfinding system
- Redress the balance between place and movement on key streets to reduce traffic domination and create the conditions across the town centre where walking and cycling is safe, simple and attractive
- Improve the accessibility of the town for everyone by reducing or removing barriers and severance, especially for people with limited mobility
- Improve pedestrian and cycling routes both in the town centre and waterfront and between the town centre and the waterfront
- Create a town centre environment that promotes enhanced public health and wellbeing
- Increase footfall, dwell time and expenditure within the town centre

2.3 The first phase of the project will focus on Market Street, King Street, Eastbank Street and Chapel Street. The reasoning for the choice of these areas as the first phase is provided below.

- Evidence of need: The condition and appearance of Chapel Street and the railway station entrance is regularly raised by the public and their representatives as needing attention and improvement. More than 4 million entries and exits take place at the station every year so the station serves as a key gateway to the town and the existing look and feel of the station entrance create a disappointing impression of the town. A volunteer led Station Improvement Group has been formed specifically to seek improvements to the station. The existing direction signs across the town are variable in form and quality and the totem signs with direction maps on are in poor condition and require updating.
- Recommendation from previous studies: The Southport Investment Framework (2016) recommended improvements to the Market area and included a specific recommendation, "Public realm improvements to King Street and Market Street will enable activities associated with the Market Hall to utilise this outdoor space for large scale outdoor markets, events and other uses associated with a revitalised market hall." This idea was also identified in the Town Centre Access and Connectivity study (2018) which proposed that "King Street and Market Street are upgraded from Local Streets to Destination

Streets. To achieve this transformation some interventions will be required to help improve the ‘place’ function whilst maintaining the existing ‘movement’ function on these streets.”

- Building on success: The refurbishment of Southport Market in 2020, using advance funding from the Town Deal has proved very successful, with tens of thousands of customers, more than 600,000 products sold and turnover of more than £2.7m in its first twelve months. There have also been very successful Sunday markets, with more than 50 stalls, held inside and alongside the Market. Three new businesses on Market Street and two on King Street have opened since the Market re-opened.
- Support for Town Deal priorities and investments: One of the other Town Deal projects that is being planned for early delivery in the Town Deal process is the Enterprise Arcade, located on Eastbank Street. This will provide a new business incubator premises, focussing on the arts, creative and digital businesses emerging in the town. Its location on Eastbank Street means that it is ideally located for access to the railway station and is linked with the growing Market quarter.

2.4 It is proposed to deliver the first phase of the *Les Transformations* project with the £2.5m allocation from the Town Deal, together with a contribution of £0.25m from the Council’s annual transportation capital programme. While that element of the project is being delivered, the business case will be used to make the case for further funding to deliver the later phases of the project.

3.0 Market Street

3.1 The proposals for Market Street are shown in Figure 1 below. This plan was used for the public consultation and provides an indicative layout of the street. These initial designs will be developed further as part of the detailed design stage of the project.

3.2 The refurbishment of Southport Market has proved very successful and many people are enjoying the new facilities there. This project proposes changes to the streets around the Market, providing more public space and restricting traffic, so that more people can enjoy the market and its surroundings, creating opportunities for new and existing businesses to develop and expand in that area. These proposals were included in the public consultation carried out in February/March 2022 and were generally well supported by people responding to the consultation.

3.3 It is proposed to create a traffic free section on Market Street alongside the market, providing a new street environment that will provide additional space for pedestrians. The traffic free section will also provide space for businesses to make use of the street environment throughout the year and scope for events to be held there. This will require converting the existing carriageway to a new paved surface that will provide level access for pedestrians across the full width of the street but which can still be used for service and delivery vehicles at certain times.

3.4 Visualisations of the street were prepared for the public consultation. The preferred option was one that included some formal planting and this is included

as Figure 2. In addition to the formal planting, it is proposed to provide some new tree planting and seating along the street and both these elements were strongly supported in the public consultation. New street lighting will be provided and the existing drainage along that section of Market Street will also be assessed and improvements incorporated if required.

- 3.5 The traffic free section is proposed to extend from the junction of King Street alongside the Market, as far as the service access to the Market. The section of the Street from the Market service entrance to the junction with Princes Street will remain open to traffic. However, Market Street is currently one-way towards Princes Street. It is proposed to change the section of Market Street between the Market service access and Princes Street to two way traffic to provide access to the Market and to properties along that section. This will require the removal of up to 6 parking spaces to provide sufficient width for two way traffic. These will form part of the proposed changes to TROs.

4.0 King Street

- 4.1 The proposals for King Street are shown in Figure 3 below. This plan was used for the public consultation and provides an indicative layout of the street. These initial designs will be developed further as part of the detailed design stage of the project.
- 4.2 It is proposed to introduce a new one way traffic flow arrangement on King Street, between Eastbank Street and Market Street (with traffic permitted to travel from Eastbank Street). The road is relatively narrow in this section so a one way arrangement would improve safety and also provide an opportunity to widen the pavement alongside the Market, providing an improved environment for pedestrians.
- 4.3 A new, wider paved surface will be provided along the eastern side of King Street, connecting to the traffic free section of Market Street and providing a high quality pedestrian route between the Market and Eastbank Street. Widening the pavement will require the removal of eight pay and display parking spaces on the eastern side of the street. The existing loading bay and disabled parking provision on the western side of the street will be retained.
- 4.4 In addition it is proposed to provide some new tree planting and seating on the section of widened pavement. New street lighting will be provided and the existing drainage along that section of King Street will also be assessed and improvements incorporated if required.

5.0 Eastbank Street

- 5.1 The proposals for Eastbank Street are shown in Figure 4 below. This plan was used for the public consultation and provides an indicative layout of the street. These initial designs will be developed further as part of the detailed design of the

project. They are focused on providing better facilities for pedestrians and improving safety.

- 5.2 Eastbank Street is a key gateway and arrival point for people entering the town centre from the east. It is an important route for vehicles, including public transport, but is also a very busy pedestrian route. To enhance the sense of arrival it is proposed to install a new gateway feature, including appropriate signage, on the approach to the railway bridge from the east. This location is not included in the area covered in Figure 4. In addition, to improve the safety of all road users it is proposed to introduce a 20mph speed limit on Eastbank Street, from the roundabout junction with St James Street and Virginia Street to the junction with Lord Street.
- 5.3 It is proposed to provide additional and enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities on Eastbank Street to improve the connections between the Market area and the Enterprise Arcade and Chapel Street. It is proposed to re-position the existing signalised pedestrian crossing slightly towards King Street to reflect pedestrian desire lines between Chapel Street and King Street and improve the link towards the Market area. Two additional uncontrolled pedestrian crossing locations on raised tables on Eastbank Street are also proposed to improve the connections between the Market area and the Enterprise Arcade and Chapel Street. To ensure the safety of those using the new crossings, it is also proposed to install pre-formed speed cushions on the approach to each of the two new raised tables to reduce traffic speeds approaching the crossing points. The position of one of the proposed crossing points requires the relocation of one bus stop (by a few metres only) on the northern side of the street.
- 5.4 It is proposed to provide a new, wider paved surface along a section of the southern side of Eastbank Street, from the existing disabled parking bays to the junction with King Street. It is also proposed to provide a new, wider paved surface along a section of the northern side of Eastbank Street. The wider pavement on both sides of Eastbank Street will be linked with the pedestrian crossing facilities and provide a high quality pedestrian route along that section of Eastbank Street.
- 5.5 The existing disabled parking provision on the southern side of the street will be retained but slightly relocated to accommodate one of the pedestrian crossing points. The section of Eastbank Street alongside the Atkinson appears to be regularly used by blue badge holders who park on the double yellow line section. It is proposed to investigate whether this parking can be formalised by the provision of parking bays for the use of blue badge holders in this section.
- 5.6 Raised planters are proposed, which will enhance the street environment and also direct pedestrians to the new crossing points. Some new planting is also proposed on the section of widened pavement to enhance the street environment.

6.0 Chapel Street

- 6.1 The proposals for Chapel Street do not include any modifications to the public highway, but will include potential changes to the street furniture. Where redundant street furniture exists, it will be removed. Modifications to the existing

benches will be considered to make them more comfortable and to prevent litter accumulating under them. Some of the existing street furniture close to the station entrance may be removed, so that there is more open space around the station entrance, creating a plaza style effect. Opportunities to improve the lighting will also be investigated.

- 6.2 Separate discussions are ongoing with the owners of the station entrance about potential improvements to their property, with the aim of creating a more attractive and welcoming environment around the station.

7.0 Traffic Regulation Orders

- 7.1 The proposals for Market Street, King Street and Eastbank Street will require changes to the existing Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs). Each road in the Borough has one TRO relating to all of the parking restrictions along the full length of that particular road. For the improvements proposed in Phase 1 of the *Les Transformations* project, the existing TROs for Market Street, King Street and Eastbank Street will need to be revoked and new TROs made.
- 7.2 For one-way arrangements, there is a single TRO covering the whole Borough, identifying all the one-way streets in the Borough and this will need to be updated to include King Street. For the proposed traffic free section on Market Street, a 'Prohibition of Driving' TRO, incorporating 'No Waiting between certain times' will be required. A TRO will also be required to introduce the 20mph speed limit on Eastbank Street.
- 7.3 Authorisation to advertise all of the required changes to the TROs will be sought from Cabinet Member – Locality Services once detailed plans have been finalised. The proposed changes to the TROs will be advertised and any objections arising from this process will be brought back to L&R Committee for consideration.

8.0 Next Steps

- 8.1 Engagement with the owners and occupiers on Market Street, King Street, Eastbank Street and Chapel Street will be carried out in autumn/winter 2022. For the properties on Market Street and King Street, the requirements for deliveries and servicing will be identified so that provisions can be made within the design of the scheme and incorporated into the TROs.
- 8.2 The scheme design for each of the streets in Phase 1 of the project will be finalised and the contract procurement process, will take place in the autumn/winter 2022. This will include identifying whether there is a requirement for the diversion of statutory undertakers' equipment. The need for stats diversions would significantly affect the delivery programme. Subject to the decision of L&R Committee and the completion of the design, works will be commissioned before the end of 2022 or early in 2023. A detailed programme of works will be developed with the aim of minimising disruption to businesses and avoiding the main summer season. It may be possible to carry out some elements of the works early in 2023 (such as stats diversions) and then complete the main works in the autumn of 2023 after the summer season.

8.3 Details of the changes to TROs will be prepared and the proposed changes are expected to be advertised in the autumn/winter 2022.

9.0 Recommendation(s):

9.1 It is recommended that the Assistant Director of Place (Highways and Public Protection) be authorised to implement the following modifications to the highway:

- (a) Installation of new, high quality paving, new lighting, seating, planting and improvements to street furniture on Market Street
- (b) Widening of the footway and installation of high quality paving, lighting, planting and improvements to street furniture on King Street
- (c) Installation of improved pedestrian crossing facilities, widening of a section of the footway and installation of high quality paving, planting and improvements to street furniture on Eastbank Street
- (d) Removal of 'street clutter' and improvements to street furniture on Chapel Street

9.2 It is recommended that the Committee note that authorisation to advertise all of the required changes to the TROs will be sought from Cabinet Member – Locality Services once detailed plans have been finalised. Any objections arising from this process will be brought back to L&R Committee for consideration.