

# Somerset West and Taunton Council

## Scrutiny Committee – 3rd June 2020

**Call-in, by Councillors Norman Cavill, Anthony Trollope-Bellew, Vivienne Stock-Williams and Libby Lisgo of the decision made by Executive Councillor Mike Rigby to approve an allocation of £91,518.06 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds to provide enhanced materials for the repaving of the forecourt at Taunton Railway Station which would align with the Council’s draft Public Realm- Design Guide for Taunton Garden Town guidance. The cost is the difference between using the standard materials for the paving in the original tender and the higher standard York Stone advised in the guidance.**

Executive Councillor Mike Rigby’s decision announced via a Decision Notice published on the Council’s website and circulated to all Councillors via email on 21 May 2020 was as follows:-

“In January 2015 a working group comprising TDBC, SCC, GWR and Network Rail submitted a strategic case to the Local Transport Board of the LEP and successfully secured funding towards the overall cost of the redevelopment of Taunton Station comprising the following elements:

- Ticket Office moved to south side of the station for improved access and orientation towards the town centre
- Transport interchange created - Improved capacity, efficiency and amenity for users facilitating more journeys
- Provision of a multi-storey car park - Additional parking spaces to facilitate modal switch and forecast increase in rail demand
- An environment for redevelopment of land around the station – efficient use of space, enhanced facilities and economic growth

The project includes the repaving of the entire station forecourt and adjoining areas. Since the time of going to tender for the work, Somerset West and Taunton’s Garden Town Design Guidance has been developed which identifies the forecourt area as a Core area where the Council should aim to achieve high standards in public realm. However, there is a difference of £91,518.06 in the cost of using the standard materials for the paving which were costed out in the original tender and the higher standard York Stone advised in the guidance.

The project is therefore requesting that £91,518.06 of CIL funds are made available to ensure that the highest standards of public realm can be achieved.

The proposed decision to provide enhanced materials for the station forecourt aligns with the Council’s draft Public Realm - Design Guide for Taunton Garden Town. This funding will ensure higher design standards are met in the identified ‘Core Area’ in the draft design guide, where the station is a key gateway to Taunton.

The proposed CIL allocation falls within the £500k CIL budget for Taunton town centre regeneration, approved by Full Council as part of the Capital Programme on 21/02/20. <https://democracy.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/documents/s7980/General%20Fund%20Revenue%20Budget%20and%20Capital%20Estimates%202020-21%20Report.pdf>”

Once the Scrutiny Committee has heard the full debate on this matter, it will have two options open to it:-

- (1) To support the challenge and refer the decision for further consideration**  
(stating the grounds for justifying that request) – where the matter will be considered again by Executive Councillor Rigby.
- (2) To decide to take no further action** – in which case the decision of the Executive Councillor Rigby of 21 May 2020 will stand.

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Appendix A – Decision Form signed and published 21/5/2020

Appendix B – Call-In Request Form submitted 29/5/2020

