Welshpool Town Council, The Vicarage Gardens, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7DD
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OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

1. **To approve the locations and types of street furniture, wayfinding, planting, lighting, bus stop signage, visitor information and other elements identified within the plans and Permissions Register.**
2. **To authorise the Town Clerk in consultation with the Project Board to approve the design, manufacturer and model of specific items; the procurement of contractors and other elements needed to deliver the project prior to the funding deadline, provided such decisions do not exceed the overall approved project finance.**
3. **To authorise the Town Clerk to progress and obtain all necessary highway, landowner and other permissions as required.**
4. **To authorise the Town Clerk to make amendments to the location, quantity or specification of approved items arising from procurement, site conditions or requirements imposed by permissions provided such changes do not exceed the overall approved project finance.**
5. **To note the urgent action taken by the Town Clerk, with the concurrence of the Mayor, to submit the application for advertisement consent for the proposed digital information screen adjacent to the Town Hall.**

1. Purpose

1. To update Members on progress with the Welshpool Town Centre Improvement Project following consideration of the proposed works by the Project Board.
2. To present the revised location plans and Permissions and Consents Register and seek the Committee's recommendation to Full Council for approval of the locations and types of interventions proposed.
3. To seek authority to continue detailed design, permissions, procurement and delivery of the project within the approved funding and delivery timetable.

4. To report urgent action taken by the Town Clerk, with the concurrence of the Mayor, to submit the necessary application for advertisement consent for the proposed digital information screen outside the Town Hall.

2. Background

1. Welshpool Town Council has secured £83,000 from the UK Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund, alongside Council match funding, to deliver a programme of capital improvements to Welshpool town centre.
2. The project seeks to improve the appearance, accessibility and visitor experience of the town through a coordinated programme of street furniture, planting, wayfinding, visitor information and other public realm improvements.
3. Council previously established the Welshpool Town Centre Improvement Project Board, comprising Cllrs Phil Pritchard, Phil Owen, Nick Howells, Estelle Bleivas and William Rowell, to oversee implementation of the project and make recommendations to Council as required.
4. The Project Board considered the emerging proposals and location plans on 17 August 2026. The Board supported the overall approach but made a number of changes before the proposals progressed further. These changes included:
    1. replacing the proposed trees within Hall Street with planters;
    2. removing the proposed large lettering from Vicarage Gardens;
    3. reviewing and increasing street furniture provision in the main town centre;
    4. retaining the proposed large visitor/photo chair at Vicarage Gardens;
    5. progressing measures to prevent vehicles damaging the grassed area at Union Street; and
    6. continuing detailed development of the Broad Street proposals with the Council's appointed landscape consultants.
5. Revised plans have subsequently been prepared and are appended to this report together with the project's Permissions and Consents Register.

3. Scheme

1. The proposals represent a series of relatively small but coordinated interventions across the town centre rather than one single public realm scheme.
2. The latest Permissions and Consents Register currently identifies 20 litter bins, 27 benches, 16 wayfinding installations, 15 planting interventions, 15 bus stop signs, lighting, bollards, cycle hoops, the visitor/photo chair and the digital information screen.
3. These figures remain working quantities. In particular, some references within the register cover more than one physical item, bollard numbers remain to be determined, and the detailed Broad Street proposals remain subject to design development and discussions with NMWTRA. The plans and Permissions and Consents Register should therefore be read together.
4. Severn Road and Ponthowell Gardens
    1. The proposals include replacement of the existing litter bin and two benches, two new pedestrian wayfinding totems and replacement of the existing wayfinding column at Ponthowell Gardens.
5. Berriew St and Severn St

1. The existing wayfinding column on Berriew Street is proposed to be replaced with a new wayfinding totem.
2. The Permissions and Consents Register also provides for replacement of two existing litter bins on Severn Street, retaining their existing emptying arrangements.

6. Church St Car Park and Canal
    1. The proposals around Church Street Car Park include replacement of existing wayfinding, benches and litter bins. On the opposite side of the Canal Wharf, the Council proposes a new wayfinding totem, two new benches on concrete pads and one new litter bin.
    2. The canal-side litter bin has previously been approved by the Town Council and would be emptied by WTC twice weekly. Consent is required from the Canal & River Trust for the canal-side installations.

7. Church St, Union St and Vicarage Gardens
    1. Outside Kings Barbers on Church Street, the proposal is for new seating and planting. The final arrangement may comprise a tree/planter with seating designed around it and will be subject to the requirements of NMWTRA.
    2. At Union Street, the proposals include low-level planters and seating positioned on concrete pads together with bollards to prevent vehicles from unlawfully parking on and damaging the grassed area. The grassed area sits above the culverted brook. For this reason, intrusive tree planting is not recommended and the proposed installations are intended to be as non-intrusive as practicable.
    3. At Vicarage Gardens, proposals include replacement and additional seating, replacement of the existing litter bin, planting, lighting and a large visitor/photo chair.

8. High St and Hall St
    1. The High Street proposals comprise replacement litter bins, seating and wayfinding together with an additional wayfinding installation.
    2. Within Hall Street, the Project Board decided that the previously considered tree planting should not proceed. The current proposal instead comprises low-level planters, three benches and overhead lighting, subject to the necessary highway and other permissions. A pavement licence has already been requested in relation to the proposed Hall Street furniture.

9. Raven Roundabout and Brook St
    1. Two new wayfinding installations are proposed: one around Raven Roundabout and a further installation on the grass verge at the Brook Street end of the town. These will require the approval of NMWTRA and Powys County Council.

10. Lower Powis Park
    1. The proposals include replacement of three existing benches and three existing litter bins, together with a new wayfinding totem adjacent to an existing bench. The installations require the consent of Powis Estates. The existing WTC litter-bin emptying arrangements would continue.

11. Bus Stop Signage
    1. The project includes 15 new or replacement signs at principal Service 88 bus stops. The signage is intended to provide a more consistent appearance and improve information for

residents and visitors using public transport. PCC Transport have agreed this in principle, pending further discussions on how we can work together.

12. Broad St
    1. Broad Street is the most significant and technically complex element of the public realm scheme because it forms part of the trunk road network. The current working schedule includes replacement of the six existing bins, severn existing benches, wayfinding replacement, new planting and/or street-trees, replacement cycle hoops and a digital visitor information screen near the Town Hall.
    2. The current Broad Street plan should, however, be regarded as a working design rather than the final construction layout.
    3. Lingard Farrow Styles has now provided its initial placemaking concept work. The Council has provided feedback asking the consultants to concentrate the next stage of their work particularly on Broad Street and to develop a coordinated and sufficiently detailed layout that can be considered by NMWTRA. NMWTRA has provided initial feedback to the Council. It has indicated that it is not particularly concerned with replacement street furniture installed in its existing position, but that new installations and excavations will need to proceed through its licensing process, identified by NMWTRA as Section 50.
    4. It is proposed that the Committee and Council approve the principle and current scope of the Broad Street interventions, with the Town Clerk authorised to agree minor and technical amendments arising from the consultant's detailed design and NMWTRA requirements.

4. Approvals

1. Members are not being asked to select individual products or manufacturers at this stage.
2. Approval relates to the locations and types of interventions identified on the accompanying plans and Permissions and Consents Register – for example, that a bench, bin, planter, wayfinding totem or other intervention should be provided at the identified location.
3. The final appearance, model, manufacturer, material and detailed specification of street furniture will be determined through the subsequent quotation/procurement process and approved by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Project Board.
4. This is important both to preserve competitive procurement and to allow the Council to respond to public feedback, technical requirements and conditions imposed by the relevant highway authorities and landowners.

5. Public Engagement

1. The Council has already received significant public feedback about the project following its announcement. Social media posts have helped show concept designs and comments have shaped the future proposals.

6. Permissions and Consents

1. A detailed Permissions and Consents Register has been prepared. The register identifies each proposed intervention, whether it is a new installation, replacement, relocation or removal, the relevant approving authority and the supporting location plan.
2. Permissions will continue to be progressed alongside detailed design and procurement. No installation will take place until the relevant consent has been obtained.

7. Digital Visitor Screen

1. The Project Board approved the proposed installation of a digital visitor information screen adjacent to the Town Hall.
2. An application for advertisement consent has now been submitted to Powys County Council. The application identifies the proposed site as the Broad Street/Hall Street elevation adjacent to the Market Hall entrance.
3. Ordinarily, the matter would have progressed to Full Council before submission of the application. However, given the fixed PiPIF delivery timetable and the lead time associated with determination of the application, waiting for the next Full Council meeting risked unnecessarily delaying the project.
4. The Town Clerk therefore considered the Urgent Matters provisions within the Council's Scheme of Delegation, which permit the Town Clerk, with the concurrence of the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, to act on behalf of Council where an urgent decision is required. The Town Clerk consulted the Mayor and considered whether the matter was sufficiently significant to justify calling a special meeting of Council. It was concluded that a special meeting would not be proportionate, particularly as submission of the application does not commit the Council to purchasing or installing the screen.
5. With the agreement of the Mayor, the Town Clerk therefore exercised delegated authority to submit the application in order to protect the project programme.
6. In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, this action is now reported to the Committee and will also be reported to the next available Full Council meeting.

8. Procurement and Installation

1. Procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and the applicable procurement requirements. The Council intends to procure the principal items of street furniture separately from the associated civil engineering and installation works.
2. A Request for Quotation is being issued for the civil engineering, installation and traffic-management element. This will cover matters including foundations, excavation, fixing, tree pits, reinstatement, underground-service detection and traffic/pedestrian management. Because permissions and final designs will become available at different times, installation is expected to proceed in phases.
3. Quotations are due to close on 10 September 2026, with appointment anticipated by the end of September approved by Full Council. All civil engineering and installation works are to achieve practical completion by 31 January 2027.

9. Ownership and Future Maintenance

1. Unless otherwise specifically agreed, assets purchased by Welshpool Town Council through the project will remain the property of the Town Council and be recorded on its Asset Register. WTC will consequently accept responsibility for their future inspection, maintenance, repair and eventual replacement.
2. Where an existing bin is currently emptied by Powys County Council, it is intended that PCC will continue to empty the replacement bin. Where a bin is currently emptied by Welshpool Town Council, WTC will continue to provide the service.
3. Welshpool Town Council will also accept responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of new planting, planters, trees and landscaping delivered through the project, subject to any conditions agreed with the relevant highway authority or landowner.
4. The new assets will create an ongoing revenue requirement beyond the capital project. A further report will therefore be presented as part of the 2027/28 budget-setting process, setting out the practical arrangements and anticipated costs of watering, planting, inspection,

maintenance, repair and eventual replacement.

10. Links to Strategic Objectives and Interim Strategic Plan

1. N/A

11. Resource & Legal Implications

1. The project has total available finance of £88,000, including £83,000 of Pride in Place Impact Fund support.
2. The latest working cost schedule within the Permissions and Consents Register currently identifies approximately £65,937 of estimated expenditure against the £88,000 overall project finance. Several elements are still subject to final design, permissions, quotations and confirmed quantities, particularly Broad Street, installation/civil engineering works and some planting.
3. Professional consultant fees are currently being treated separately. Powys County Council has advised that these are presently regarded as revenue expenditure but may potentially be eligible for capitalisation and consideration for reimbursement once the associated capital project has been completed.
4. Legal Comment - The project comprises a number of different interventions and therefore relies on different statutory powers depending upon the item and location. The principal powers identified during development of the project include:
    1. Section 1 and 3 of the Parish Councils Act 1957 (seating and lighting)
    2. Section 96 of the Highways Act 1980 (trees and platning)
    3. Section 115E of the Highwys Act 1980 (wayfinding)
    4. Section 5 of the Litter Act 1983 (bins)
    5. Section 72 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (bus stop signage)
5. The existence of a statutory power enabling WTC to provide or fund an item is separate from the requirement to obtain permission from the owner or highway authority, however most consents require that they not be unreasonably withheld.

12. Specific Implications

1. **Crime and Disorder** - the Council will engage with the Dyfed Powys Police Designing Out Crime Officer to enable open spaces to reduce crime e.g. Vicarage Gardens (Crime and Disorder Act 1998).
2. **Biodiversity** - the scheme will promote biodiversity by providing new planting and green corridors in town centre environments (Environment (Wales) Act 2016).
3. **Well-being** - N/A (Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015).
4. **Risk Management** - The principal project risk is the fixed delivery timetable. Delegating authority to the Town Clerk to make minor technical amendments will also avoid unnecessary delays where an approving body requires, for example, an item to move a short distance or a foundation/specification to be altered.

13. Recommendation

1. To approve the locations and types of street furniture, wayfinding, planting, lighting, bus stop signage, visitor information and other elements identified within the plans and Permissions Register.

2. To authorise the Town Clerk in consultation with the Project Board to approve the design, manufacturer and model of specific items; the procurement of contractors and other elements needed to deliver the project prior to the funding deadline, provided such decisions do not exceed the overall approved project finance.
3. To authorise the Town Clerk to progress and obtain all necessary highway, landowner and other permissions as required.
4. To authorise the Town Clerk to make amendments to the location, quantity or specification of approved items arising from procurement, site conditions or requirements imposed by permissions provided such changes do not exceed the overall approved project finance.
5. To note the urgent action taken by the Town Clerk, with the concurrence of the Mayor, to submit the application for advertisement consent for the proposed digital information screen adjacent to the Town Hall.

14. Decision

1. To resolve to adopt the recommendations as above.