

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Economy Committee – 13 June 2023
SUBJECT:	Pier Road, Littlehampton - Proposed Closure
LEAD OFFICER:	Miriam Nicholls, Business Development Manager
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Roger Nash
WARDS:	River Ward
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
<p>This recommendation supports:</p> <p>Fulfilling Arun’s economic potential - working closely with our towns and other organisations on strategies which support vibrant and attractive town centres. Positive and focused promotion of Arun’s tourist destinations as more than a ‘day trip’.</p>	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>Improving the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of the District along with those who live, work and play within it.</p>	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
<p>There are no costs arising directly and immediately from this report. It is expected that, if West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) agree to place this project into their programme, it will also be funded by them. However, depending on which scheme Members prefer there may be costs over and above those WSSCC are prepared to accept. There is no budget requirement this year or next (24/25) based on the length of time for the project to proceed through its formal stages. However, a bid for funding which is likely to under £10,000 will be put forward for consideration as part of the Medium-Term Financial Planning process.</p>	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1. The report follows a meeting of the Economy Committee in November 2022 at which the following was agreed: The Committee:

- Supports the principle of permanently closing Pier Road to through-traffic.
- Authorises officers to engage with West Sussex County Council as Highway Authority in order to appraise the feasibility, process, legal requirements, costs (both capital and revenue), timescales, and necessary agreements to deliver the preferred option of a permanent closure.
- Authorises officers to explore the opportunity of increasing the length of the proposed closure area to include the area of highway as far north as the Gravy Boat restaurant; and
- Requests that officers provide a report to a future meeting of the Committee setting out officers’ findings and conclusions in respect of recommendation 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

- 1.2 Officers have now undertaken the required work and this report provides the Committee with details of that work and a recommended way forward.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.2. The Committee agrees for a bid to be submitted to WSCC Community Highway Scheme programme.
- 1.3. A further report be brought to the Committee detailing the full costs of the scheme to Arun District Council, should the bid be successful, and there be costs that WSCC are unable to meet.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. In November 2022 the Economy Committee asked Officer to engage with WSCC Highways Team to establish a way forward with a project to close Pier Road in Littlehampton to motorised traffic. This report advises Members of the outcome of that work and requests Members to agree which scheme should go forward to WSCC.

3. THE SCHEMES

- 3.1. As noted above, in November 2022 the Economy Committee “Authorises officers to engage with WSCC as Highway Authority in order to appraise the feasibility, process, legal requirements, costs (both capital and revenue), timescales, and necessary agreements to deliver the preferred option of a permanent closure”. The work has now been undertaken and two schemes have been worked to a basic design stage, costed and had a Road Safety Audit undertaken. Both schemes are a permanent closure to all motorised traffic. A third, basic scheme, has also been costed.
- 3.2. **Scheme A** removes the existing kerbs on both east and west sides, levels the carriageway and replace the current surfaces with a resin bound surface in a buff colour to match the existing footway on the western side of Pier Road. It also includes significant drainage works to incorporate a central drainage channel. A cycle path would be differentiated by a contrast-coloured resin surface. Cycle racks, timber faced concrete planters and bench style tables placed at suitable points. Disabled parking spaces would be provided at the southern end of the scheme. At the northern end the footway would be built out to reduce the carriageway width and dropped kerbs and tactile paving laid. The cost of this scheme is currently estimated at £625,000 including the current inflation rate. Members should note that this cost is at time of the report being written and is subject to change as the cost of materials fluctuates significantly. This cost excludes seating.
- 3.3. **Scheme B** leaves the existing footways, kerbs and surfaces in place and build up the existing carriageway deck to provide a uniform height surface kerb to kerb. The eastern footway currently has a tarmac surface whilst the western footway is a resin bound finish. A central drainage channel would be

incorporated and cycle racks, timber faced concrete planters and bench style tables placed at suitable points. Disabled parking spaces would be provided at the southern end of the scheme. At the northern end the footway would be built out to reduce the carriageway width and dropped kerbs and tactile paving laid. There would be no specifically designated cycle lane but the area would be signposted as a shared surface. The current estimated cost of Scheme B is £550,000 – including inflation.

- 3.4. **Scheme C** is the most basic and simply provides a closed road with a coloured finish to the carriageway surface. No kerbs would be removed, no drainage works would be required. The street furniture would be as Options A and B. This is costed at £175,000 – including inflation.
- 3.5. At the November 2022 meeting Members asked that the possibility of extending the scheme north to the 'Gravy Boat' was considered. This has been looked at but WSCC Highways has advised against this due to issues with traffic being able to turn if the road were closed that far north. With Schemes A and B, above, smaller vehicles can leave the area via Clifton Road without the need to perform a three-point turn. The possibility of purchasing some additional land to accommodate a turning circle has been considered but the landowners are reluctant to lose what is currently their car park.
- 3.6. Attached as Appendix A & B are drawings of both schemes. The decision was taken, at this stage, not to obtain 3D drawings due to the significant costs of doing so. These were quoted at £1600 per drawing. There is no drawing for Scheme C as it would be the same as both A & B in terms of area and closure but with no alternations to layout.

5. TIMESCALES

- 5.1 Whichever scheme is decided by this Committee will be placed before WSCC Community Highways Panel as a Local Transport Improvement Project. The Panel sits in July. Advice from WSCC Officers is that for the scheme to be taken forward there needs to be a compelling case with robust evidence the scheme is required. If the scheme passes that point the following timelines are expected.

Feasibility and detailed design – 2024/2025
Build - 2025/2026

It is possible that this timeline may slip by at least one year as the Pier Road closure project will be competing for funds with projects such as by-passes and equally large projects. This is due to the value of the project.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1. Public consultation was undertaken in summer 2022 and was reported to the Economy Committee in November 2022.

- 6.2 The banning of motorised traffic requires a Traffic Regulation Order and that process includes statutory consultation which may raise objections that will need resolving. If WSCC receives more than five objections it will be the Cabinet Member for Highways that makes the decision regarding the implementation.

7. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 7.1. No other options have been considered as this report is as a result of the Economy Committee requesting a further report and associated costs.

8. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF CORPORATE SUPPORT/SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 8.1 There are no costs arising directly and immediately from this report. It is expected that, if West Sussex County Council (WSCC) agree to place this project into their programme, it will also be funded by them. However, depending on which scheme Members prefer there may be costs over and above those WSCC are prepared to accept. There is no budget requirement this year or next (24/25) based on the length of time for the project to proceed through its formal stages. However, a bid for funding which is likely to under £10,000 will be put forward for consideration as part of the Medium-Term Financial Planning process.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1. A Risk Register will be created if the project proceeds.

10. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

- 10.1. This report is about making application to WSCC to close Pier Road in accordance with the *WSCC Community Highway Scheme* programme using its traffic regulation powers. WSCC is the Highway Authority and also the Local Traffic Authority. The relevant legislation relating to Traffic Regulation Orders is the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended. If the ADC application does not meet the criteria set out in the Act, WSCC may not be able to grant the application or if granted it may be open to challenge. It is essential therefore that the application is able to address the statutory criteria as well as the WSCC scheme criteria. The WSCC scheme criteria is on their website.
- 10.2. Section 1(1) of the 1984 Act allows WSCC to make permanent orders for the following purposes only:
- a) To avoid danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or to prevent the likelihood of any such danger arising;
 - b) To prevent damage to the road or to any building on or near the road;
 - c) To facilitate the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians);

- d) To prevent the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property;
- e) To preserve the character of the road in a case where it is specially suitable for use by persons on horseback or on foot;
- f) To preserve or improve the amenities of the area through which the road runs; or
- g) To preserve or improve local air quality.

10.3. Section 2 of the 1984 Act states that Orders may be used for almost anything prohibiting, restricting or regulating the use of a road by traffic – which includes motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians:

10.4. Having regard to the earlier report to committee in November 2022, the statutory purposes which this application needs to meet appears to be purposes (a), (c), (f) and (g).

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

11.1. There is no Human Resources impact.

12. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

12.1. The project is subject to a Stage One Road Safety Audit. The outcome of which will be reported to the Committee verbally.

13. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

13.1. No Property & Estates implications have been identified at this time.

14. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

14.1. The recommendations in this report do not affect disproportionately one or more of the nine characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010

15. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

15.1 The support and promotion of good local businesses and local destinations encourages less travel contributing towards less carbon emissions on a local level.

16. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

16.1 There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

17.HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

17.1. There are no relevant implications arising from this proposal that will affect or potentially affect any individual.

18.FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

18.1. There are no specific FOI or data protection issues arising from the proposals in the report.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[Report to Economy Committee November 2022](#)