

St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council

Report #10.3

Surfacing of Cowbridge permissive path

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 This is a position paper to inform the Council of the latest progress on this major project and obtain agreement on next steps needed ahead of final a decision.

2. Background

- 2.1 Most Councillors will be aware of the history of this work. An s106 agreement associated with the Cowbridge development to upgrade the footpath between the site and Malmesbury led to the negotiated lease of the railway embankment as a permissive path. By the time this was completed there was insufficient of the s106 contribution remaining to complete the project as planned.
- 2.2 The CIL from the Aldi supermarket development will allow the Council to complete the project by surfacing the path to provide a level, all weather link to enable pedestrians, cyclists, pushchairs, wheelchair and mobility scooter users, to travel safely and sustainably between Cowbridge and Malmesbury.
- 2.3 Two quotes have been received for this work, both proposing a crushed stone surface, 3 metres wide, with sufficient camber to minimise water damage. There is a not inconsequential difference between the two quotes and work continues to identify if this difference can be explained by experience and expertise in this type of work, and therefore knowledge of the actual overrun cost. Additionally other stakeholders' agreements are required around the different project methodologies proposed by the two companies and this is also being pursued.
- 2.4 Attempts have been made to secure a third quote, in line with this Council's Financial Regulations, but to date have not been successful. Our regulations do allow for only two quotes where a third has not proved possible. Continued efforts to obtain a third may extend the tendering period with the potential threat of losing a 'slot' in at least one of the possible contractors' work programme. It is the intention of the working group to bring a detailed proposal to the Council's November meeting.

3. Next steps

- 3.1 To continue to pursue a timely third quotation
- 3.2 To work with the two companies to clarify their quotes to ensure a like-for-like comparison
- 3.3 To work with stakeholders to obtain any necessary permissions
- 3.4 To bring a decision report to the November Council

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from agreeing the outlined next steps, however a financial decision will be required when the November report is presented.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 The Council is asked to support the steps outlined in 3 above.