

St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council

Report #10.2

Footpath 17 resurfacing

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To enable Council to select a contractor for the resurfacing of 41 metres of this footpath, from the weir at Cowbridge to the permissive path.

2. Background

- 2.1 In September 2020 this stretch of footpath, which links the Cowbridge estate to the permissive path into Malmesbury, was surfaced using 'as dug hoggin'. The work was managed by Wiltshire Highways but paid for by this council. This particular surface was selected by the Countryside Access Officer in consultation with the landowner.
- 2.2 In dry weather the material used provides a firm surface that enables a 'clean' through route for pedestrians and cyclists; identified as a requirement during the planning and consent process of the Cowbridge estate. However, in wet weather the surface deteriorates significantly to the extent that it becomes a wet, soggy morass that presents a serious disincentive for pedestrians and cyclists to use this route into town. Cllr Stephens and the Clerk have received complaints from residents.
- 2.3 Discussions this year with the landowner, the Environment Agency and the Wiltshire Council (WC) Countryside Access Officer have identified a significant change in the landowner's farming operation that now permit the resurfacing of this short stretch in a more effective manner; with similar materials and appearance to the permissive path. The work would be paid for, managed and maintained by this council. WC, having already designated the original surfacing proposal as a Highways' project, has confirmed there will not be a need for planning permission.
- 2.4 Tenders have been sought from potential contractors and two have been received. One quotation was £5250 and the second £4320, please see the appendix to this report with more detail of the quotations which has been forwarded separately to ensure commercial confidentiality. It has proved difficult to find a third company to quote despite five others being approached - see addendum to this report

3. Options

- 3.1 To require further attempts to acquire a third quote
- 3.2 To select a preferred provider from the two received

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The quotations are set out in the appendix and the selected quotation will be funded from CIL contributions

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 The Council is recommended to support Option 3.2

Addendum

In connection with Report #10.2 of agenda item 9 and following consultation with the Finance Committee, it is proposed to ask the council to resolve to invoke Finance Standing Order 15.2 in order to allow the council to consider two quotation instead of the normal three.

The reasons for this are:

1. it has proved extremely difficult to find a third contractor with the necessary level of skill and experience to provide a quotation for the work required
2. in all five contractors, considered to have the necessary level of skill and experience, were invited to express an interest in the work but only two responded positively
3. of the two quotations received only one is marginally over the threshold for the requirement for three quotations
4. the risks to the council by only obtaining two quotations are considered minimal considering the overall amount involved