

North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 06 September 2023

Subject of Report: Independent review of Clevedon Seafront Scheme

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Cllr Hannah Young, Executive Member for Highways and transport

Key Decision: No

Reason: No decisions arising

Recommendations

That Executive note the outcomes of the review of the Clevedon Seafront Scheme by Audit West and endorse the approach to monitoring these.

1. Summary of Report

The Internal Audit Service (Audit West) were requested to complete an independent review of the life of the Clevedon Seafront / Hill Road scheme.

The report is presented here to enable transparency and provide assurance to the Executive that lessons can be learned and implemented into future practice. The report recommends that time should be allowed for the scheme to bed in and for technical reviews to be undertaken before any retrospective changes to the scheme are considered.

2. Policy

This report supports our corporate plan priority to be an open and enabling organisation and to:

- Engage with and empower our communities
- Empower our staff and encourage continuous improvement and innovation
- Manage our resources and invest wisely
- Provide professional, efficient and effective services

3. Details

As a result of resident feedback of the Clevedon Seafront scheme, the Executive requested a review and lesson learned.

The Internal Audit Service (Audit West) were requested to complete an independent review of the life of the Clevedon Seafront / Hill Road scheme. The purpose of the review was to understand whether there are any areas that North Somerset Council (NSC) can learn from when planning and undertaking similar work in the future.

The report is presented here to enable transparency and provide assurance to the Executive that lessons can be learned and implemented into future practice; it is presented in terms of “What went well” and “What could have been improved”.

The report recommends that time should be allowed for the scheme to bed in and for technical reviews to be undertaken before any retrospective changes to the scheme are considered.

Monitoring

The findings of this report will be developed into a detailed action plan which will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Executive member for Highways and Transport.

This report does not make conclusions on the other aspects of the scheme review, the outcome of which will be made available in due course. These are:

- Active Travel England compliance inspection.
- North Somerset Council have commissioned independent experts (AECOM) to review changes made to Hill Road and The Beach.
- A Stage-Three Post-Implementation Safety Audit has been completed by independent engineers.

4. Consultation

The scope of the review by Audit West was developed with the Leader of the Council, the Executive member for Highways and Transport, the Chief Executive and the Council’s corporate leadership team.

The outcomes and lessons learned will be shared with affected staff who will then have opportunity to feed into the detailed action plan.

5. Financial Implications

None arising directly from this report.

The report concludes that, whilst the Clevedon Seafront scheme was funded by government grants for active travel and local transport planning, there are opportunities to improve the robustness of financial planning and monitoring. It is anticipated that this work will be delivered from existing council resources.

Financial planning and management specifics are contained within the report.

Costs

There are no additional costs associated with the commissioning of this review because there is capacity within the internal audit contract to undertake ad hoc work.

The costs of the scheme itself are included within appendix 1.

Funding

The review work is being funded from within existing budgets.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

This report was commissioned by the council’s Director of Corporate Services/ section 151 officer as the post holder with responsibility for the internal audit function.

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

None arising directly from this report.

8. Risk Management

There are no risks related to the publication of this report which would score as high following mitigation measures, the report outlines several opportunities for improvement in terms of:

- Financial risk
- Governance and decision making
- Reputational risk

And highlights that a new risk management strategy and toolkit have been rolled out within the last year.

9. Equality Implications

No

10. Corporate Implications

The findings of this report will be developed into a detailed action plan which will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Executive member for Highways and Transport. The action plan will affect multiple departments within the council and will therefore need to be considered as part of the overall work plan.

11. Options Considered

Not applicable to this review

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Clevedon Seafront Review

Background Papers:

DP281 20/21 COVID 19 Review of Integrated Transport Programme Budgets

DP236 21/22 Clevedon Public Realm Improvements – Seafront, The Beach and Hill Road

DP197 22/23 Movement of Budgets within LTP capital Programme