

## Agenda item 4

### For decision – King Street access only proposal

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#### Summary

This report sets out the outcome of a consultation with residents and businesses on a proposal to make King Street access only. The initiative is designed to support social distancing and give shoppers who are walking and cycling a safer experience in a street with narrow pavements. It was felt that this would help to give shoppers confidence to come back into the town centre following the easing of lockdown. Following the rejection of the proposal by a majority of respondents, the report recommends that the access only arrangement in King Street is not reinstated.

#### Background

When the Market Place was closed to through traffic through the summer, an access only arrangement was put in place in King Street and Palmer Street. This was designed to encourage active travel and social distancing. The restriction was introduced followed consultation with town centre residents and businesses. That restriction was lifted when the Market Place was re-opened to through traffic at the beginning of October in order to encourage the town centre to get back to normal after a period of disruption.

#### Consultation exercise

Some councillors expressed concern that the environment for pedestrians and cyclists in King Street had worsened as a result of the road re-opening to through traffic. They were also concerned that it may be difficult to observe social distancing especially in view of the narrow pavements in King Street and Church Street. Through an email ballot, a majority of councillors voted in favour of consultation on the reinstatement of the access only arrangement in King Street.

Residents and businesses in King Street, Eagle Lane and Church Street were invited to take part. 100 separate households/businesses were contacted by post and email and were encouraged to participate in an online survey using Survey Monkey.

The following questions were asked:

1. To enable social distancing, do you support the temporary closure of King Street to through traffic? (allowing for access)
2. If we go ahead who should have vehicular access? (Check all that apply):
  - Residents
  - Deliveries
  - Disabled badge holders
3. For how long should these measures be introduced?

- 6 weeks
- 12 weeks
- Until further consultation has taken place
- Other (please specify)

The consultation started on Thursday 26 November and, initially, a deadline of Monday 30 November was set. The proposal was that the access only arrangement would be reinstated on 2 December when the second lockdown ended if a majority of respondents supported the measure. Initially, there was a poor response and we decided to extend the consultation until Thursday 3 December at 9 am.

At the close of the survey, 25 responses had been received and 60% of respondents indicated that they did not support the reinstatement of the temporary closure of King Street to through traffic allowing for access.

#### Recommendation

Not to reinstate the temporary closure of King Street to through traffic allowing for access.