

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

RECORD OF OFFICER EXECUTIVE DECISION

Item	Outcome
Date Of Decision	9 January 2018
Decision Maker	John Hobbs, Director of Economy & Infrastructure
Brief Description Of Decision	<p>To consider the findings of the Working Group established to review options to reduce the risk to the public in using Musketts Way Footbridge, Redditch.</p> <p>The Group found there were no viable engineering options to significantly reduce any risk. I endorse that conclusion that there is no practicable step to take.</p>
Reason(s) For Decision	<p>Following a Notice of Motion to Council in July 2016, the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways undertook to set up a small multi-agency working group to look at options to reduce the risk to the public in using the Musketts Way Footbridge over the A448.</p> <p>This Group was convened under the Chairmanship of the Cabinet Member for Health and Well-being, and met several times, considering wider issues of suicide prevention as well as specific ones around the use of the footbridge. Members of the group included; Redditch Borough Councillors, officers from Highways at the County Council, officers from the District Council, and the Police. Since the start of 2017, Redditch Borough Council and County Council Public Health have worked together on suicide prevention, with a whole population approach, rather than one based at one particular site. A well-attended workshop took place and a local working group and action plan is now on-going.</p> <p>County Council officers prepared an initial report on options, and led discussions, but members of the Task and Finish Group asked for an independent report to be commissioned. The Group met in July 2017 to receive the external report.</p> <p>In summary, the structure of the footbridge cannot sustain any significant modification, meaning very limited engineering options are available. Either the bridge could support an increase of parapet height from 1.1m to 1.4m OR an installation of anti-climb mesh to the inside or the outside of the existing parapet. However, the bridge could not support both a height increase and</p>

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	<p>anti-climb mesh.</p> <p>The Group concluded that there was no engineering option that would make any significant reduction to risk.</p> <p>Complete closure of the bridge has been suggested, but this is a public right of way and therefore there would need to be public consultation about any proposed change. This was likely to be contentious and previous consultation with residents had found divided opinion. It was noted that public health advice would be to avoid any actions which would again draw attention to this bridge, and the deaths that have taken place there, and in all the circumstances it was not appropriate to pursue closure.</p> <p>The final meeting of the group drew attention to a small gap between the end of the wooden fence and the start of the parapet. It was agreed that closing this gap may reduce access to the outside face of the parapet.</p>
<p>Alternative Options Considered And Rejected</p>	<p>Options considered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caging / Extend existing parapets; • Replace existing parapets; • Netting; • CCTV; • Closure or removal of the bridge; • Preventing Access to the outside of the structure.
<p>Any Conflict of Interest declared by a consulted Cabinet Member/ any dispensation granted</p>	<p>None notified</p>