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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM: 8</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2020</b>	<b>CATEGORY: DELEGATED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>ALLISON THOMAS STRATEGIC DIRECTOR SERVICE DELIVERY</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>ROUNABOUT SPONSORSHIP</b>	
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: HCS10</b>

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## **1.0 Recommendations**

1.1 That the Committee approves a Sponsorship Scheme be implemented across the District for highway roundabouts and associated features.

## **2.0 Purpose of the Report**

2.1 To inform the Committee of the progress to date in developing a scheme for sponsored highway associated features in order to:

- Improve the visual appearance of the District
- Improve biodiversity
- Promote local businesses
- Generate income to reinvest in improving the environment.

2.2 To seek approval for the approach outlined.

## **3.0 Executive Summary**

3.1 Cultural Services has been investigating the opportunity to develop an integrated management approach to sponsorship opportunities on Derbyshire County Council (DCC) highway roundabouts and other traffic site features, comparable to similar schemes in many authorities throughout the United Kingdom. If approved, this approach should result in an improved visual amenity of many of the highway roundabouts in the District and promotion of local businesses whilst providing some income to the council to reinvest in improving the environment. Some other Council sites could be developed in a similar way as part of a further improvement as part of the Council's commercialisation ambitions outlined in the Corporate Plan.

## **4.0 Detail**

4.1 There are currently a number of highway roundabouts, roadside and other features which are either currently sponsored or have potential for sponsorship throughout the

District. (See site list Appendix A). For a roundabout to be available for such purposes the Council is required to obtain consent from the Highway Authority under Section 115e under the Highways Act 1980 to site an amenity object (signage) in the public highway. In addition, in order to create floral or planting features on such sites there is a requirement under the Highways Act 1980: section 142 to apply for consent to cultivate roundabouts and roadside verges. In order to progress the scheme, applying for these permissions would be the first step on all appropriate sites.

- 4.2 In addition, the Council is required to apply for consent to advertise on each roundabout through its own Planning Authority.
- 4.3 Currently eight roundabouts in Swadlincote and one in Hilton have historically had signage and are “cultivated” and are thus available for sponsorship, though records of permissions/consent are lacking.
- 4.4 Research indicates a further 14 roundabouts, and some highway infrastructure features in Swadlincote area plus nine roundabouts in Hilton have potential as sponsorship sites. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, there appeared to be a growing demand from local businesses for this type of sponsored advertising with a consequent opportunity to develop the commercial potential of these sites by applying for DCC consent. It is difficult to predict the effects of any pandemic related economic downturn on the demand for such advertising, but officers remain optimistic given a number of recent enquiries about the sponsorship opportunities available in the District.
- 4.5 Cultural Services is awaiting consent from Derbyshire County Council as the Highways Authority and an application for consent to install signage of the roundabouts and sites identified above has been submitted to the Council’s Planning Services. A decision is awaited.
- 4.6 The service ambition is to have an integrated approach to sponsorship with an online/ website presence which allows local businesses to apply for annual sponsorship of a roundabout and incorporate appropriate signage. The signage would be provided by the advertiser to the Council’s specification/size requirements etc. Opportunities for sponsorship will be sent out in the Economic Development Service newsletter and twitter pages. All sponsorship will follow the Council’s Sponsorship Guidance which was approved by the Council’s Finance and Management Committee in July 2020.

#### 4.7 Signage

Signs should generally comply with the following criteria:

The sign face;

- should not exceed 0.3 square metres in area, with a width to height ratio of between 2:1 and 3:1, however, in small areas of landscaping or on roundabouts of less than 15 metres in diameter it may be more appropriate to reduce the maximum size to 0.15 square metres in area;
- should have lettering not greater than 50mm in height;
- should not be illuminated;
- should not be made of reflective material;
- should not be fixed at an angle to the road such that any inherent reflectivity causes drivers to be dazzled by their own headlights or the headlights of other vehicles;
- should not be designed such that it could be confused with a legitimate traffic sign;
- should acknowledge the partnership between the sponsor and the local authority; and
- should be discreet and in harmony with its surroundings.

The sign should be mounted

- at low level, i.e. the top of the sign should be no greater than 600mm above ground level and less if it is to be mounted on a raised area;
- on a separate pole(s) from any traffic sign.

The sign should be located.

- where it does not obstruct sight lines to other signs or vehicles.
- where it will not be so distracting or confusing that it creates a hazard for road users who are taking reasonable care for their own and others' safety; and
- where it will not present a hazard for pedestrians.

4.8 Sponsors' signs must not be allowed to dominate the enhancement scheme. They should be as discreet and as few in number as possible. This is in line with the need to minimise the impact and proliferation of signs in general. If the scheme is for landscaping a roundabout, depending on the size of the roundabout, there should be no more than one sign visible on each approach to the site. However, for small roundabouts it may be necessary to reduce the number of signs to a maximum of two in total. Linear sites such as enhancement of a central reservation may justify more than one sign on a stretch of road, but their numbers should be limited.

4.9 The intention within the proposed scheme is to work with a framework of preferred suppliers of signage and fixings to ensure quality and consistency across the District.

4.10 The suggested approach to charging is for a formalised tiered structure of charges to sponsor a roundabout as is, along the following lines.

Major floral/ landscaped roundabouts	£1500 per annum
Busy non-landscaped roundabouts	£750 per annum
Medium roundabouts	£500 per annum
Minor roundabouts	£300 per annum

4.11 The predicted income per annum would likely be between £20-30,000 with full take-up of advertising on all sites. The income would be offset by costs of signage installation.

#### 4.12 Landscape Improvements

There is a real opportunity to improve the visual appearance of the Swadlincote and Hilton areas and simultaneously improve biodiversity through good design and planting of each site. Wildflower planting, or naturalistic perennial planting schemes could signal the Council's commitment to the environment, including the ecological impact of declining habitats, pollinating insects etc. In addition, the more attractive the roundabout, the higher the potential income.

4.13 Where sponsors wish to see improvements such as establishing a planted display or biodiversity scheme the costs for year one will be negotiated and in future years the tiered charges will apply.

4.14 All works will be undertaken by the Council's Operational Services. Any costs above the existing maintenance costs will be met from the sponsorship.

4.15 Should the roundabout sponsorship scheme prove successful then there is potential to expand the principles and seek sponsorship of different features within Council parks and open spaces and verges. This would be subject to a separate report.

### **5.0 Financial Implications**

5.1 An expanded roundabout scheme will generate an annual income, though there will be some start-up and ongoing costs to be absorbed which can be met from within existing budgets

### **6.0 Corporate Implications**

#### **Employment Implications**

6.1 Responsibility for the implementation and management of the roundabout sponsorship scheme is identified as a specific duty and responsibility within one of the job roles in the review of Culture and Community Services.

#### **Legal Implications**

6.2 Appropriate consents are required from Derbyshire County Council and the Council's Planning Service and will be in place prior to the commencement of the scheme.

#### **Corporate Plan Implications**

The scheme will contribute significantly to the following Corporate Priorities and Key aims

##### **Our Future**

- a. Support economic growth and infrastructure
  - i. Influence the improvement of infrastructure to meet the demands of growth
- b. Transforming the Council

- i. Provide modern ways of working that support the Council to deliver services to meet changing needs

#### Our People

- c. Supporting and safeguarding the most vulnerable
  - i. Promote health and wellbeing across the district
- d. Deliver excellent services

#### Our Environment

- e. Improve the environment of the District
  - i. Enhance biodiversity across the District
- f. Tackle Climate Change
  - i. Strive to make South Derbyshire District Council carbon neutral by 2030
- g. Enhance the attractiveness of South Derbyshire
  - i. Enhance the appeal of Swadlincote town centre as a place to visit
  - ii. Improve public spaces to create an environment for people to enjoy

### **Risk Impact**

- 6.3 The COVID-19 pandemic may mean some businesses that were previously interested in the sponsorship scheme have reduced financial circumstances and are no longer able to find budget for sponsorship. This risk is balanced by the likelihood that other businesses will come forward who see marketing and promoting their services in order to minimize the impact of Covid-19.

## **7.0 Community Impact**

### **Consultation**

- Internal - Strategic Directors and Heads of Service
- External - Derbyshire County Council

### **Equality and Diversity Impact**

- 7.1 None known.

### **Social Value Impact**

Opportunities to advertise locally can promote local businesses.

Working closely with sponsors and community groups in planting to enhance and beautify neighbourhoods

Working closely with partners to enable the enhancement of biodiversity across all tenures to meet Biodiversity Action Plan targets

### **Environmental Sustainability**

- 7.2 Enhanced biodiversity and community involvement

## **8.0 Conclusions**

- 8.1 The proposed roundabout scheme will

- Improve the visual appearance of the District
- Improve biodiversity
- Promote local businesses
- Generate income to reinvest in improving the environment.

## 9.0 Background Papers

None