

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Policy and Finance Committee – 13 December 2022
SUBJECT:	Littlehampton Seafront Project
LEAD OFFICER:	Philippa Dart – Director of Environment and Communities and Joe Russell-Wells – Group Head of Environment and Climate Change
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Shaun Gunner
WARDS:	Beach Ward
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
<p>The Littlehampton Seafront project will implement parts of the Council's Vision by improving infrastructure that supports wellbeing and enabling improvements and activities to increase visitor spend. The project will also meet the town centre aspirations of the Council's Economic Development Strategy 2020-2025.</p>	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>The Littlehampton Levelling Up Fund project sits within the Directorate plan. Its design will take account of existing maintenance contracts and management strategies.</p>	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
<p>The approved budget for the project is £7,234,201 and is being provided through an external grant from the Levelling Up Fund. The budget breakdown allocates £549,357 to professional fees and £6,684,844 to capital works and contingencies.</p> <p>Additional external funding of £40,000 has been awarded towards the provision of a Changing Places toilet facility with a partnership contribution from ADC of £22,000 for capital works and £9,300 for project management. Authority for the expenditure of the grant was approved by the Economy Committee on 26 July 2022. This additional funding increases the total project budget to £7,305,501.</p> <p>The project costs were compiled for the Levelling Up Fund bid in June 2021. Since that time, a range of economic uncertainties have impacted construction industry costs which have risen considerably. The budget for the scheme needs to reflect the likely costs during the construction period and take expected inflation rates into account.</p> <p>Survey and site investigation information will refine the proposed design and more detailed costs will become available during RIBA Stage 2.</p>	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1. This report presents the results of the recent public consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.2. Members of the committee are asked to note the results of the public consultation which will be considered as part of the RIBA stage 3 design process.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. Proposals to enhance the Littlehampton seafront were published for public consultation in October 2022. This report provides a project update and presents the results of the consultation. It also highlights specific issues which are recommended for review as the designs are further developed.

3. DETAIL

3.1. Background

Arun District Council has been awarded a £7,234,201 grant from the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to enhance the seafront public realm in Littlehampton. The scheme, which received positive public support during consultation in 2016, will transform the seafront open space, attract more visitors, and boost economic regeneration in the town. The improvements will provide better opportunities to access culture, encourage outdoor activities that strengthen social connections and improve mental and physical health and well-being.

At recent meetings of the Policy and Finance Committee members were updated on the draft concept proposals, stakeholder engagement undertaken, the preparation for public consultation and the tendering process.

3.2. Stakeholder engagement

A range of local stakeholders were invited to attend stakeholder engagement meetings on 12 October 2022, including Arun District Council Members and Officers, Littlehampton Town Council and local businesses and organisations. A total of 73 stakeholders attended and were able to review the draft concept design in more detail and provide feedback to the project team. The comments received were broadly supportive of the proposals with some areas for further consideration highlighted, including:

- Car park capacity
- Lighting
- Future maintenance

3.3. Public consultation process and results

The concept proposals were published for public consultation between 21 October and 13 November 2022. The consultation was promoted through posters, banners, press release, letters, emails and social media. People were able to view the proposals on the Arun District Council website between these dates. There were also 3 opportunities to visit an exhibition of the plans and talk to staff about the scheme. These were attended by approximately 180 people.

The results of the consultation have been collated and these can be found in Appendix 1.

A total of 465 people completed surveys and included responses from all age categories, with the highest proportion above the age of 40. Most respondents were residents of Littlehampton although 126 lived further afield. The majority of people heard about the consultation via social media, but other forms of communication were also beneficial in raising awareness.

People were asked whether they supported different aspects of the scheme and whether they had additional comments. The outcomes are summarised below:

i. Car park proposals

77% agreed with the proposals to improve the car parking provision.

Comments received relating to this included:

- Proposals need to address flooding concerns
- Parking provision is likely to be insufficient
- Ensure good provision of electric vehicle charging points
- Inclusion of trees for shade and planting to break up visual impact
- Additional parking area will have negative visual impact

ii. Banjo Road and marketplace proposals

77% agreed with the proposals as shown in the consultation plans and 79% supported the inclusion of food or retail outlets.

Comments received included:

- New retail should not compete with existing local businesses
- Stage by the Sea is underused / suggestions for improvement
- Opposition to the concession units and market stalls
- Lease arrangements regarding hours of operation
- Support for the concession units and the need for more units

iii. Activity hub

83% agreed with the proposals for the activity hub (east) and 86% agreed with the proposals for the activity hub (west).

Comments received included:

- Provision of storage to accommodate Park Run equipment
- Opposition to activities to preserve seafront green
- Support for proposed activities
- Activities to be accessible for people with disabilities
- Ensure activity provision for teenagers
- Table tennis needs a more sheltered location

iv. Planting

94% agreed with the inclusion of sustainable planting.

Comments received included:

- Enhancing the natural landscape will be positive
- Commitment needed to maintain planting
- Ensure correct species are planted
- Include more planting to prevent flooding
- Allow plenty of green space for informal recreation

v. Replacement toilets

87% agreed with the proposals for a new toilet block.

Comments received included:

- Oppose provision of unisex toilets
- Toilet design to consider access to Windmill theatre
- Additional toilets should be included in other locations
- Retain some cubicles for gender specific use
- Support for improved toilet provision

vi. Choice of activities

People were asked to select which combination of activities they would like to see included in the design. The 4 activities which received the highest level of support were:

- Water play
- Outdoor gym equipment
- Climbing area – nets/wall
- Toddler play features

The final selection of activities will depend on the cost and available budget.

v. A range of other comments received about the scheme included:

- General positive and supportive comments
- Consideration to maintenance of the completed scheme
- Provision for more shelter
- Provision of additional litter bins / generation of more litter
- Ensure adequate seating is included

Separate correspondence was also received from Littlehampton Town Council which broadly welcomed investment in the seafront but identified some comments and suggestions which would complement the town centre. These are included in Appendix 1.

3.4. Public consultation conclusion

The RIBA stage 2 concept design received a good level of support at public consultation, and it is therefore proposed that this design is taken forward to RIBA stage 3. The comments received and the issues raised as a result of the consultation will be considered once the design and build contract is awarded. The contractor will develop the design further during RIBA stage 3, prior to approval at committee.

The areas for further consideration will be reviewed to see whether they can be incorporated within the design, whether they are operational matters for the council or whether they fall outside the scope of this project. The designs will continue to be balanced against the budget and adjusted as necessary.

3.5. Procurement

The project team is continuing to review the available procurement options. The programme for tendering has been adjusted to accommodate the challenges currently impacting the construction industry. It is anticipated that the tender for the procurement of a design and build contractor will be issued in early 2023.

3.6. Next steps

Following the appointment of a design and build contractor the designs will be developed to a greater level of detail during RIBA stage 3. The updated design will be presented to Policy and Finance committee prior to the submission of a planning application.

RIBA 1/2: Survey work, concept design, public consultation,	Complete
RIBA 3: Framework tender to procure design and build contractor, detailed design, planning application	Autumn 2022 – Spring 2023
RIBA 4: Technical design, construction tender process	Spring - Summer 2023
RIBA 5: Construction phase	Autumn 2023 - Summer 2024

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1. The original plans for the Littlehampton seafront were consulted on in 2017. The refreshed proposals for the scheme were shared with stakeholders and published for public consultation in October 2022. The consultation results are attached in Appendix 1 and summarised in 4.4.
- 4.2. Following the conclusion of the consultation the designs will be developed in more detail and a planning application prepared for submission in 2023.

5. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 5.1. The council is committed to delivering the scheme in accordance with the terms of the Levelling Up Fund grant award, therefore no alternative options are being considered.

6. COMMENTS BY THE INTERIM GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 6.1. The matters outlined in the Financial Summary have previously been considered and approved by Members. The capital programme presented to Members in February/March 2023 will align with the timeline at paragraph 4.6 above.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1. A project risk register will be maintained for the duration of the project. The highest risks to the project are currently identified as increasing costs, delivery within programme, buried services and covenants.

The risks will be regularly reviewed, and mitigation measures considered to reduce the risks.

8. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

- 8.1. There are no direct implications arising out of this report.

9. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 9.1. None.

10. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

- 10.1. Further consultation will be carried out with the corporate health and safety team to ensure any health and safety concerns identified through the consultation are addressed before the design is finalised. The design team will produce a designer's risk assessment, and the project will be delivered in accordance with The Construction, (Design and Management) Regulation 2015. Appropriate health and safety risk assessments and management regimes will also need to be established for any new activities, including play areas and water features.

11. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

- 11.1. The project will result in improvements to council assets as well as the potential for additional assets. These will impact on future planned maintenance budgets.

Covenants and lease arrangements are in the process of being reviewed and discussions underway with relevant parties to mitigate for potential constraints.

12. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

12.1. The EIA for the project identifies positive impacts to the following protected characteristics/groups:

- Age – new facilities and creation of social spaces will form part of the project.
- Disability - Changing Places facility is included as a result of successful grant funding.
- While not a protected characteristic the project will also benefit Socio economic disadvantaged groups through the provision of new, free facilities.

The appointed design and build contractor will be required to set out their social value proposals as part of the procurement process.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

13.1. The carbon footprint impact of the project will be considered as part of the design phase. Betterment will be looked for in terms of drainage and flooding mitigation. The project aims to achieve 10% Biodiversity Net Gain through new planting on the site.

14. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

14.1. Stakeholder engagement with the community safety and crime prevention teams will assess potential issues and opportunities for mitigation.

15. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

15.1. It is not anticipated there will be any impact.

16. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

16.1. Sensitive data will be handled in accordance with the GDPR.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: Rachel Alderson
Job Title: Principal Landscape and Project Officer
Contact Number: 01903 737946

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[Levelling Up Fund Bid Submission - Economic Committee 8 June 2021, Item 63](#)

[Levelling Up Fund Projects – Policy & Finance Committee 9 December 2021, Item 504](#)

[Levelling Up Fund Projects – Full Council 26 January 2022, Item 623](#)

[Levelling Up Fund Projects – Bid Submission](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project – Policy & Finance Committee 30 June 2022, Item 111](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project – Policy & Finance Committee 6 September 2022, Item 238](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project – Policy & Finance Committee – 20 October 2022 – Item 373](#)