

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Policy and Finance Committee – 26 October 2023
SUBJECT:	Littlehampton Seafront Project
LEAD OFFICER:	Philippa Dart – Interim Joint Chief Executive and Director of Environment and Communities Joe Russell-Wells – Group Head of Environment and Climate Change
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Matt Stanley
WARDS:	Beach, River

CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:

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.

DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:

The Littlehampton Levelling Up Fund project sits within the Directorate plan. Its design will take account of existing maintenance contracts and management strategies.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

The approved budget for the project is £7,305,501. The majority is being provided through an external grant of £7,234,201 from the Levelling Up Fund and also included separate funding of £71,300 for the inclusion of a Changing Places Toilet (CPT) facility. The CPT grant is expected to be withdrawn for this project (see 4.3), which reduces the available funding.

The total project budget breakdown is revised as follows:

Professional fees (LUF grant):	549,357
Public realm capital works, including contingencies (LUF grant):	6,684,844
Changing Places Toilet capital works (ADC contribution):	22,000
Changing Places Toilet project management (ADC contribution):	<u>9,300</u>
	7,265,501

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.

A review of the RIBA Stage 3 design against the cost plan is being undertaken to ensure the budget is not exceeded.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report provides an update on the Littlehampton seafront project.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 As this report is an information paper, there are no recommendations for the Committee to consider. This report is to be taken as read only with Members having the opportunity to ask questions at the meeting.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 This report provides an update on the Littlehampton seafront scheme, including funding and the preparation of the planning application.

4. DETAIL

4.1. 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.

A refreshed version of the scheme was published for public consultation in October 2022 and the results showed a good level of public support for the designs. Comments received as part of the consultation were collated for further review by the design and build contractor. An updated scheme was presented to Policy and Finance Committee on 11 July 2023 and endorsed by Members.

4.2 Scheme design and planning application

RIBA Stage 3 has focussed on checking the spatial arrangements of the design and the team have reviewed and adjusted layouts to account for operational needs. The scheme is diverse in scope and each element presents a range of challenges to be overcome. Material specifications have been looked at in more detail and their suitability for a coastal environment and graffiti resistance while also ensuring compliance with fire and building regulations.

Neilcott Construction has prepared drawings and documents required for the planning application, which was submitted on 2 October 2023.

4.3 Grant funding

The terms of the Changing Places funding require the new facility to be open by March 2024, however the construction programme is not able to support this due to the scale of the works involved in delivering the wider project. Mitigation options have been explored with the funding body, but these have not been deemed acceptable and the grant of £40,000 is expected to be withdrawn for this site. The provision of a Changing Places toilet at Littlehampton seafront is considered a priority and will still be included as part of the project. The council's funding contribution of £31,300 will remain allocated to the scheme and the shortfall will be met by project contingencies.

4.4 Project costs

A detailed cost review is being undertaken which will conclude RIBA Stage 3.

4.5 Construction phase

The project team are looking ahead to how the construction phase might be programmed, the location of the site compound and what temporary facilities will be required to minimise the impact on visitors to the seafront.

The impact of the Harvester fire is not yet known. While the overall design of the scheme is not expected to be affected, there may be minor changes to the car park layout adjacent to the Harvester site. It is possible that the construction phase will need to make adjustments depending on the timeframe for clearance of the Harvester site and future rebuild.

4.6 Communication

The public can find information about the project on the council's website. There are posters in notice boards on the seafront and in the town centre which display links to this. As the project moves closer to construction more details will be available on the programme and which areas of the seafront are likely to be affected by the construction works. Local stakeholders who will be directly impacted will be contacted by the project team / contractor.

4.6 Next steps

The project team will commence RIBA stage 4 which involves the preparation of construction details and tender packages so that a final cost for constructing the scheme can be obtained.

The following table summarises the expected project programme:

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 - Autumn 2023
RIBA 4: Technical design, construction tender process	Autumn 2023 - Winter 2023
RIBA 5: Construction phase	Early 2024 - Autumn 2024

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 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 were presented to Policy and Finance Committee on 13 December 2022.
- 5.2 Following the conclusion of the consultation the designs have been developed in more detail during RIBA Stage 3 and a planning application submitted, enabling further opportunity for public comment.

6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

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

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

- 7.1 The financial implications associated with this report have been included in the Council's approved capital programme. The report is not seeking any further funding.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

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

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

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

- 9.1 There are no Governance or legal implications.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

10.1 None.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

11.1 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.

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

12.1 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 being taken into account and discussions underway with relevant parties to mitigate for potential constraints.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

13.1 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 set out their social value proposals as part of their tender submission which include engagement with local schools, developing employment skills, creating opportunities for local businesses, and supporting community projects.

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1 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 a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain through new planting on the site.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1 Stakeholder engagement during RIBA Stage 3 with the community safety team has assessed potential issues and opportunities for mitigation.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1 It is not anticipated there will be any impact.

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

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

CONTACT OFFICER:

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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](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project – Policy & Finance Committee 13 December 2023, Item 529](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project – results of public consultation](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project – Policy & Finance Committee 7 March 2023, Item 755](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project – Policy & Finance Committee 11 July 2023, Item 126](#)