

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Special Economy Committee – 20 November 2023
SUBJECT:	Review and update of the ongoing Littlehampton Beach Hut Project.
LEAD OFFICER:	Sam Horwill – Property, Estates, and Facilities Manager
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Roger Nash, Chair of the Economy Committee
WARDS:	Beach
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
<p>The provision of additional beach huts in the Arun District will support the Council's Vision in respect of fulfilling Arun's economic potential. Encouraging the development of the district as a key tourist destination, supporting and enabling improvements and activities to increase visitor spend.</p>	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>This report is produced by the Property, Estates, and Facilities Manager to give an update on the position associated with the budgeted Capital works. The project was originally approved to proceed by resolution of the Economy Committee at minute 785 in March 2022, and was further considered by an update report presented to the Economy Committee in November 2022 at minute 441.</p>	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
<p>A sum of £260k was included in the Council's capital budget for 2021/22. The planned additional beach huts were not provided during 2021/22. The allocated sum has been carried forward to 2023/24.</p> <p>The business case presented to the Economy Committee in March 2022 has been updated to take account of updated cost information and the inclusion of three accessible huts which has reduced the total number of beach huts to be installed by 4. The updated business case demonstrates that this project is estimated to break even in the 2037 financial year, 14 years after delivery, 5 years later than indicated in the business case presented to the Economy Committee in March 2022. The full business case is provided below.</p>	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To provide the Economy Committee with an update of the ongoing project to deliver 13 new beach huts at Littlehampton seafront.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that committee delegates authority to the Group Head of Technical Services to let the three accessible huts to local charities or groups as set out in paragraph 4.11.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1. To provide the Economy Committee with an update of the ongoing project to deliver 13 new beach huts at Littlehampton seafront.

4. DETAIL

- 4.1. Officers have been asked to report to the Economy Committee with an update on the ongoing project to deliver 13 new beach huts at Littlehampton Seafront. This report provides that update and follows from the Beach Hut Progress Report which was considered by the Economy Committee in November of 2022.
- 4.2. Since November, Officers have been working to deliver this project in line with the timeline described to the Economy Committee in November, which was as follows:
 - 4.2.1. To submit a planning application by end of December 2022.
 - 4.2.2. Subject to planning approval, to procure the manufacture and delivery of the huts, as well as the necessary ground works.
 - 4.2.3. To place orders with suppliers in good time for delivery and occupation ahead of the 2024 summer season, taking account of the lengthy anticipated lead in times.
 - 4.2.4. To identify tenants and prepare leases in good time for occupation and use ahead of the 2024 summer season.
- 4.3. Planning consent was granted 10 March 2023 under application [LU/404/22/PL](#).
- 4.4. Following receipt of the planning approval, Officers have been working to procure the manufacture and supply of the required beach huts. Advice has been sought from Hampshire County Council Procurement Services and a Project Information Notice has been published, identifying only one suitable supplier. Therefore, a waiver of standing orders is being prepared so that an order may be raised to the identified supplier.
- 4.5. Concurrently, Arun District Councils Legal Services are instructed to review the suppliers Terms and Conditions.
- 4.6. Procurement, and delivery of the necessary ground works is intended to be undertaken during the manufacturing lead in period of the huts. Design and specification of these works is currently being prepared.
- 4.7. Expenditure thus far (in addition to Officer time) is limited to the planning consultancy and application fee at a total of £1,600.00.
- 4.8. There are no ongoing contractual commitments at this stage.

- 4.9. Subject to the Committee's review of this report, and following due process, an order will be placed for manufacture and delivery of the 13 new huts. Concurrently officers will procure the preparatory groundworks so that this is completed ahead of delivery. The manufacturer has indicated that if an order is placed in November, then delivery can be expected around March. Lead times are only ever an estimate and are subject to change, the projected timeline for this project is tight and members are asked to recognise the risk of delay to delivery ahead of the 2024 season.
- 4.10. Once an order is confirmed, leases for the new huts will be prepared. The Council holds a waiting list for beach huts and officers will refer to this and offer the new standard huts to customers in turn.
- 4.11. All standard huts will be let using the same established lease format as resolved by the Economic Committee at minute 361 in October 2021. For administrative ease, any new leases will end on 31 March 2025 in line with the leases of existing huts.
- 4.12. It is proposed that officers explore interest with local charities and groups which provide support to physically disabled individuals, with the intention of leasing the three accessible huts to organisations that can then make regular use of these facilities, either directly or by sharing occupation for short bookable periods. This arrangement is intended as a trial initially, leasing to relevant organisations for a period of 12 months allowing the Council and the tenant organisations to consider the success (or otherwise) of this arrangement.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1. This is an information report and therefore no additional consultation was required. However, where new beach hut sites are identified as Public Open Space, public consultation will take place ahead of completing new leases in accordance with S123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 6.1. To request further information and/or an alternative approach to delivery of this project.

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

- 7.1. There is a sum of £260k available in the 2023/24 capital programme to fund the delivery of this project.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. The previous report on this project highlighted staffing capacity as a risk to successful delivery. A number of vacancies have been filled since November and this is no longer considered a risk.
- 8.2. Supply chain issues may also cause delay. Any delays to delivery and installation will delay the point from which revenue begins to be generated.

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

- 9.1. This report is for information. The terms of reference of this committee includes the power to carry out performance monitoring and this report provides committee with an opportunity to monitor progress of this project.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 10.1. No additional staffing resource is required to deliver this project.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

- 11.1. The project to instal additional huts will follow requirements of the construction, design and management regulations. Selection of suitable sites for these additional beach huts has taken account of health and safety risks.

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

- 12.1. The Property and Estates team are delivering this project. Once delivered, the ongoing management of these new assets will rest with the Property and Estates team.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

- 13.1. This scheme includes the delivery of three wheelchair accessible huts.

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

- 14.1. The identification of the thirteen locations for new huts was informed by ecological designations, and the stability of shingle which is impacted by climate change and coastal processes.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 15.1. The Safer Arun Partnership has not identified Beach huts as a source of crime and Disorder and there are no specific crime and disorder implications.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

- 16.1. Under The Human Rights Act 1998 it is unlawful for the Council to act in a way which is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. The aim of Human rights is the individual – it is about putting the individual centre stage. This will sometimes mean consulting individuals or groups of individuals before designing services. Individuals are then able to point out how a proposal would affect their dignity, freedom independence etc before the proposal is adopted. Committee will be aware that the project has been delayed in order to take into account equality considerations.

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1. There are no specific FOI or Data Protection implications.

CONTACT OFFICER:

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[Beach Hut Progress Report - Nov 2022](#)

[Planning Approval LU/404/22/PL](#)

[Installation of additional Beach Huts in Littlehampton, West Sussex Report - Mar 2022](#)

[Beach Hut Service Review Report - Oct 2021](#)