

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Policy and Finance Committee – 8 February 2024
SUBJECT:	Littlehampton Seafront Project
LEAD OFFICER:	Philippa Dart – 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 budget for the project is £7,265,501, of which £7,234,201 is funded by a Levelling Up Fund grant from DLUHC. The remaining funding of £31,300 is funded by Arun District Council, sitting within the Changing Places budget on Asset Management for the inclusion of a Changing Places Toilet (CPT) facility at Littlehampton seafront. An additional sum of £25k has been made available for PV panels.	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 This report provides an update on the Littlehampton seafront scheme, including planning approval, cost update and preparation for construction.

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 Planning application

The planning application was presented to the Planning Committee on 14 December 2023. The committee unanimously approved the application with a number of conditions to be met. Further details will need to be approved by planning officers on surface water drainage, an archaeological programme and the construction management plan. The scheme will also need to commit to protecting existing trees, increasing biodiversity on the site, planting and maintaining new trees and shrubs, providing cycle racks and electrical vehicle charging points.

4.3 Project costs and value engineering

A full cost review was undertaken of the RIBA Stage 3 design which concluded that a process of value engineering was required to make savings of £560k. Examples of where savings were identified included to seek alternative design details for some building features (i.e., roof construction) and alternative specifications of materials. By the end of Stage 3 a saving of £495k was agreed to be achievable with a further £146k to be revisited in Stage 4.

4.4 Commencement of RIBA Stage 4

While the value engineering undertaken in Stage 3 achieved a good level of cost certainty, some elements of the scheme need further discussion during the Stage 4 design process before a cost saving can be confirmed. The project team have been looking at options which exceed the savings required, should some proposed changes be deemed unacceptable. The team continue to be mindful of future operational and maintenance needs.

Once the Stage 4 design has concluded Neilcott will seek prices for delivering the scheme, with the costs for different packages agreed in phases. There is likely to be a need for early works orders (enabling work package) to be placed prior to a contract being signed for the main construction works. These are expected to relate to purchase of concession units, utilities connections, demolition of the toilet block and commencement of the car park works.

4.5 Construction phase

The construction programme takes account of the longer period taken to complete Stage 3 and work is now expected to commence on site in spring 2024.

The logistics of the construction phase are being reviewed and conversations with internal stakeholders are highlighting specific issues which need to be accommodated. Agreeing and co-ordinating the necessary mitigation will be complex in view of the site's location.

The phasing of the construction works aims to minimise the amount of time the contractor is on site but also considers the impact on visitors to the seafront. Early works will involve the demolition of the toilet block, installation of new utility services and improvements to the car park.

The contractor's compound is likely to start in West Green car park and will then relocate to Banjo Road.

As the works evolve the fenced off area is expected to be extensive which will enable the contractor to move around the site and make progress as quickly as possible. Locations for temporary toilets and access routes for the public are being considered.

4.6 Communication

Communication options are being discussed to co-ordinate messaging before and during the works. Information about the construction phasing and arrangements regarding temporary facilities will be made available for visitors and communicated to stakeholders.

4.7 Next steps

The project team will progress 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. Documents will be prepared to discharge pre-commencement planning conditions and logistics plans will be finalised.

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	Complete
RIBA 4: Technical design, construction tender process	Early 2024
RIBA 5: Construction phase	Spring 2024 - Winter 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 were developed further 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 A review of the RIBA Stage 3 design against the cost plan has been undertaken and procurement will be carried out in RIBA Stage 4 to ensure the scheme sits within the project budget. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

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 direct legal or governance implications arising from the updates presented within this report.

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. The design allows for accessibility within the scheme layout.
- Pregnancy and maternity – the design of the scheme will enable good accessibility for prams/pushchairs.
- 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](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project – Policy & Finance Committee 26 October 2023, Item 321](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project - Policy & Finance Committee 6 December 2023, Item 453](#)