

# Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Policy and Finance Committee - 7 March 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Alexandra Theatre, Bognor Regis - Progress Report</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Neil Taylor – Regeneration Officer</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Cllr Matt Stanley</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>Marine / Hotham</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b> Regeneration of key areas of the District and the promotion of leisure and tourism.	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b> Regeneration and renewal of key Council assets. Promotion of arts and cultural activities. Promotion of tourist activity and the attraction of visitor footfall to Bognor Regis.	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b> The project budget is £15.2M comprising £12.2M levelling up fund grant and £3m Council contribution.	

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update members on the progress of the project and to provide the key project milestones.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members note the content of the report.

## 3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 The Alexandra Theatre project was proposed as potential scheme funded by the government's Levelling up Fund. Arun District Council were successful in their bid and secured £12.2M. After the initial design phase, and significant changes to the UK inflation profile, ADC added a further £3M to the capital programme to help deliver the project.

- 3.2 The following key milestones have been reached: -

- RIBA design Stages 1-3.
- Purchase of the head lease from Whitbread.
- 2 public consultation exercises.
- Planning consent achieved.
- Procurement of a contractor.
- Resignation of the contractor
- Re-procurement of a new contractor.
- Managed exit of Arun Arts from the building
- Intrusive survey work in the building

- RIBA stage 4 design underway.
- 3.3 The project has lost considerable amounts of program time, for a number of reasons, but remains deliverable. The major obstacles have been overcome and we are looking forward to a successful build phase.

#### **4. DETAIL**

##### Alexandra Theatre - Programme / Progress

- 4.1 Planning Permission (with delegated powers) granted at committee 06/09/23. Drainage condition agreement reached, and planning approval decision notice now issued. As a minimum, fees and c.£180k of construction spend is forecast as attributable to ADC stipulated drainage works. We are looking to mitigate an element of this, if possible, through further evaluation of exact location and design via engagement with the new main contractor when appointed.
- 4.2 Design stage RIBA4 has been progressed as far as possible and will recommence following appointment of new main contractor.
- 4.3 Intrusive ground conditions surveys have completed on site in various locations around the external perimeter of the Regis Centre and internally, via boreholes and trial pits. Internally, the samples taken are showing asbestos content which is currently being tested. The pits have been temporarily capped in the interim and air quality tests completed and certified. Results will be used by the design team/contractor to refine foundation design (likely piled at additional cost) and any associated asbestos removal costs to the undersoil.
- 4.4 Further asbestos surveys have also recently been completed internally to both the Theatre and Brewers Fayre buildings and the results are currently being evaluated (air tests were clear following).
- 4.5 The latest draft cost plan continues to sit outside the original construction budget envelope but with contingencies still available. Ongoing design and specification rationalisation, and fees associated with it were forecast at £98k (essentially attributable to progressing early RIBA4/VE design work) and a decision has been taken to hold off on this work until a new main contractor is appointed. The design team will then reengage with the contractor on the VE process meaning a more informed and collaborative approach is achieved at that point and as part of the wider RIBA stage 4 process.
- 4.6 The re-tendering process via the PPF Framework has now completed. Tender returns have been received and reviewed/scored and a moderation meeting is scheduled for 13/02/24 to consider the three tender returns.
- 4.7 Ongoing work on further grant funding is being undertaken potentially to contribute to costs for both the main construction contract, non-construction related fit-out/furnishing (FF&E) items, and additional sustainability initiatives (PV etc - early order likely to be placed March 2024).

- 4.8 Utilising our project Comms & PR consultants DevComms and working with our in-house Comms team we have continued to manage a positive and proactive campaign, regularly and consistently engaging with stakeholders and the community. We have recently updated BR Regeneration Board & BID. A draft press release is also being prepared based upon an updated main contractor approach (as above).
- 4.9 AA have still to formalise a License agreement for us to occupy the building. ADC legal have given an undertaking to Wannops of £2k to pay their fees associated with this.
- 4.10 The next key activity is to formally appoint the contractor and that should take place in late February with demolition work expected to start in May 2024. Construction will follow the demolition work.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Two public consultation exercises have been undertaken in addition to the statutory consultation as part of the planning process.

## **6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 Not applicable

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

- 7.1 Finance have seen the report and have no comments.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 A comprehensive risk register is part of the project documentation.

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

- 9.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The progress of the legal process, as far as that can be discussed within this public report, are set out within the body of the report.

## **10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 10.1 Two temporary members of staff are working on the project on behalf of ADC, Neil Taylor and Max Whitehand. Both their costs are being capitalised and charged to the project.

## **11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

- 11.1 The health and safety impacts of the project are reviewed by the consultants at every stage.

**12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1 The Property, Estates, and Facilities (PEF) team continue to engage with the project team and are briefed of progress. PEF resource is committed in respect of property transactions and works that are required to enable the project. Current and future management of the site rests with PEF, including lease dealings and any retained maintenance liabilities etc.

**13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1 None at this stage

**14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1 The project is moving to more sustainable heating and cooling solutions as part of the new design.

**15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1 None

**16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1 None

**17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1 None

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**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Name: Neil Taylor

Job Title: Regeneration Consultant

Contact Number: 01903 737707

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:** None