

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Policy and Finance Committee – 24 October 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:	Councillor Martin Lury
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 £7,346,501, of which £7,234,201 is funded by a Levelling Up Fund grant from DLUHC. The remaining funding comprises: £31,300 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. £25k has been made available for PV panels from Council's Climate Change budget. £56k has been received from the Levelling Up Fund as a capacity and capability grant payment and is being specifically used to fund design guardians.	

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 the commencement of the construction phase.

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 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.

The results of public consultation undertaken in October 2022 showed a good level of public support for the designs. Comments received 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.

A planning application was submitted in October 2023 was approved with conditions in December 2023. During 2024 technical designs were prepared to enable a cost for the scheme to be obtained, following which a process of value engineering was required to ensure the delivery cost was within budget.

4.2 Planning update

A number of planning conditions were attached to the approval granted in December 2023, including three pre-commencement conditions relating to surface water drainage, the archaeological programme and construction management plan. The wording of the drainage condition was varied via a Non-Material Amendment application (NMA) to enable demolition work to commence, while final drainage details were being agreed. Two pre-commencement conditions have been discharged with the surface water drainage nearing sign-off. Tree protection fencing was also in place ahead of work commencing.

Other conditions for biodiversity enhancement, a landscape and ecological management plan, electrical vehicle charging points, landscape planting and cycle parking need to be signed off during the construction phase.

Changes to the approved design following the value engineering process will require a further NMA application to be submitted.

4.3 Construction phase

A final cost to deliver the improvement work, within the allocated budget, was agreed with Neilcott Construction in August and a letter of intent has been issued, to enable early work to be secured in accordance with the programme. Details of the construction contract are being agreed between the parties prior to signing. During the mobilisation phase Neilcott arranged for the delivery of temporary public toilets and storage for the Foreshore team and land train, in preparation for the main work commencing in September.

Following site set up initial work has involved activities associated with utility service disconnections, connections and diversions, the removal of asbestos and demolition of the toilet building.

Phasing plans are displayed on the project webpage and updates will be provided on parking availability as the contractor reviews their progress.

The site cabins and welfare units are located in Banjo Road which is where most deliveries will be received. Some site traffic is using a section of West Green car park to facilitate the demolition work. Coaches are being diverted to drop off in Sea Road for the duration of the construction phase.

In the coming weeks Neilcott Construction will be undertaking clearance at Banjo Road and be commencing work on the car park overflow area as well as foundations for the new toilet block and Foreshore building and sub-bases for footpaths. Specialists will be on site to monitor the potential for archaeological finds.

4.4 Communication

Prior to work starting on site a 'Meet the Contractor' event was held at the Windmill Entrainment Centre on 14 August and was attended by 50-60 stakeholders. Residents and businesses were positive about being able to view phasing plans and discuss concerns. People wanted to know about the impact on car parking and coach parking, how businesses would be affected in terms of utility work, noise and deliveries and to also ask general questions about the design.

Residents and businesses adjacent to the site have also received a letter to advise how they should contact the contractor with concerns about site security, public safety or noise disturbance. A contact number is displayed on the site fencing should a member of public need to report something urgently.

News updates have been published on the project webpage and social media to keep people informed and these will be issued regularly during the construction phase. Members will continue to receive updates via the newsletter. An information point on the seafront will encourage people to check the website for details about project progress.

4.5 Programme

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government has been kept informed of the impact of the value engineering on the programme.

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	Complete
RIBA 5: Construction phase	Autumn 2024 – Spring/Summer 2025

These dates are subject to change and assume there are no unforeseen events during the construction phase.

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 The project is monitored regularly with no current financial implications outside of allocated budgets.

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 unforeseen costs during construction, delivery programme, buried services and statutory authority connections.

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 This report is for noting and therefore within the report there are no governance or legal implications.

9.2 Throughout the project delivery internal and external legal advice will be sought on the procedures and powers the Council can use to implement the scheme.

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 in the final design. The design team have produced 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. Consultation and communication with other interfacing council services will also be maintained to ensure that any additional risks that result from the works are suitably managed.

Contact numbers for the project manager have been published to enable the public to report and safety concerns and contact details have been circulated to key internal stakeholders.

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 revenue and 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 has been 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 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:

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](#)

[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](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project - Policy & Finance Committee 8 February 2024, Item 615](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project – Policy & Finance Committee 7 March 2024, Item 684](#)

[Littlehampton Seafront Project – Policy & Finance Committee 9 July 2024, Item 97](#)