

Project Summary – Five Year Plan Projects

Q1 2021/22 (Apr-Jun 2021)

1. Project

Provide a new Cultural and Learning Hub in Royal Tunbridge Wells (the Amelia Scott).

Status

AMBER

Update

The construction contract has progressed significantly and the site has remained open despite issues with the pandemic. The project has been impacted by both the weather and Covid-19 which have affected the overall construction programme.

As the building starts to become wind and water-tight work moves inside which has implications in managing a significant number of trades in a Covid-19 secure way. A number of significant challenges remain on site from the heritage plaster in the Adult Education Centre to the design detail of the Infill building roof.

The Council and the contractor entered into a deed of variation during the quarter. While financial challenges remain given the nature of the building and the construction delays, to date the contractor has worked extremely hard to complete the base build which we believe will be substantially complete by the

5 August and that any residual works should be manageable to allow the Fit-out contract to commence from 23 August achieving a completion of the capital works by the end of this year.

The fit out for the Amelia Scott is currently on programme, with authority to enter into contracts with Factory Settings being agreed in June 2021.

Procurement of the proposed Café supplier was finalised in June 2021 with a standstill period completing by the end of June. The Council expects to enter into contract during the second quarter of the year.

We remain on track for the Amelia being open to the general public in April 2022 to align with Adult Education term time as planned.

Cabinet on the 11 March 2021 approved an additional budget of £1.26m which brought the control total for the whole project up to £20.6m. Of the updated control total £11.26m is from the Council, £4.97m from the National Heritage Lottery Fund, £886k from the Arts Council England, £1.7m from KCC and £1.79m from fundraising and other opportunities.

In addition to the core contribution by the Council, the Council is underwriting the fundraising, grants and other opportunities. As reported in the last quarter, significant bids of £1.22m were confirmed which reduced the Councils exposure and in this quarter. Additional bids have also been secured reducing the Council underwritten commitment to £1.25m.

Fundraising work continues with The Amelia Scott Cultural Trust and support from specialist fundraisers, Counter Culture. The trust has recently made applications for smaller funds which have recently been submitted. The longer term impact of Covid-19 pandemic continues to prove challenging for fundraising with a number of funders turning their attention to supporting existing organisations hit by the pandemic and the economic recovery or, delaying accepting applications until later in the year.

At the end of July 2021 total expenditure on the project was £14,790,834. Of which the Council has spent £10.49m, with external funding of £3.149m from the NLHF, £633k from KCC and £512k from external fundraising.

2. Project

Create a new Local Plan for the Borough.

Status

GREEN

(against Local Development Scheme February 2021, which has the up-to-date timetable)

Update

The Local Plan has been subject to a Planning Inspectorate advisory visit, which identified that there were no apparent fundamental issues with the plan.

On 4th February 2021 Full Council agreed for the next consultation stage of the Local Plan, to take place 26 March – 6 June 2021, followed by submission. This is in line with the timetable in the adopted Local Development Scheme.

The consultation was undertaken in line with these dates. Officers are reviewing the representations to identify the main issues.

Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) are being agreed with key consultees, and have already with Historic England. Further sensitivity testing has been undertaken on highways impact, at the request of Kent County Council Highways & Transport and Highways England to inform the SoCG with both consultees.

SoCG have already been agreed with Maidstone, Rother, Wealden and Ashford borough/district Councils, and confirmation is being sought that the context hasn't changed and these do not need to be updated. Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council have agreed a SoCG. There will be ongoing discussions with Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council regarding Tudeley and Paddock Wood (including land in east Capel). Discussions and work are ongoing regarding a SoCG with Sevenoaks District Council.

There has been a need for further sensitivity testing

Subject to the continued progression of the SoCG and review of the representations, it is still expected that submission will occur in summer 2021, albeit slightly later than July as scheduled in the Local Development Scheme). A previous application to the High Court for judicial review failed. Risks

remain around legal and other challenges to the plan's progression, but these are being managed. Hence at this time the rating is Green.

There are significant negative consequences associated with delay to the Local Plan, and accordingly positive continued progress is paramount.

3. Project

Create new sports facilities for the Borough.

Status

GREEN

Update

Hawkenbury site - all site surveys have been completed and a pre planning application submission made to Local Planning Authority (TWBC) and KCC. A formal response has been received and some initial work has been undertaken to establish the extent of mitigation required for noise, ecology and transport issues.

Outline planning consent has been renewed for the sites at Hawkenbury (21/00300/FULL) and Rusthall (21/00068/FULL).

An initial review of business case for the project has been carried out.

A proposal to obtain a more detailed understanding of the extent of mitigation required for noise, ecology and transport issues together with updates to the capital values included in the business cases is to be prepared. The outputs from this further work will be taken into account in a review of the business case.

An engagement plan with local football clubs is to be produced.

4. Project

Support the development of community centres in the borough: Cranbrook

Status

AMBER

Update

The project has been and continues to wait to hear from the NHS for a strategic lead which has delayed the project for a number of months due to Covid however progress is being made and the NHS team is coming together.

The transfer and the gifting of the land has been complete and the parish is now in full ownership of the titles in order to deliver the project.

KCC has given the parish written confirmation that they are keen to see the project progress and that they would support the library moving in and that they will consult with KCC Corporate Landlord to determine what degree of investment can be allowed for.

VAT report has concluded that there is a c£560k hit on the capital costs of the building and or a hit on the leasehold income to the council and or a revenue impact to the NHS. The project can still stack up despite these additional costs however the payback period goes beyond the 25 years initially desired by the Council.

Specification has been drafted along with the TPM scope of works and is currently being consulted on/agreed.

5. Project

Support the development of community centres in the borough: Paddock Wood

Status

AMBER

Update

Baxall are delivering the PCSA and revised designs for RIBA stage 3 are complete and have been signed off by the Town Council and are currently awaiting a planning outcome.

Planning expected in June/July 21 and Sport England have objected meaning the application will be called in by the Secretary of State. If approved by TWBC then it will then be referred on to the Secretary of State who has 20 working days to decide whether to pull it in or not for consideration after which the contract can be signed.

The delay in planning is helping the cash flow in terms of draw down on S106 funding, however it also means construction now potentially starting during winter which might push costs up, allowances have been made for this. The most recent election(s) have resulted in the council still having a majority in favour of the scheme.

RIBA stage 4 is now also mostly complete, with start on site desirable in October 2021 and completion in early 2022.