

Project Summary – Five Year Plan Projects

Q2 2021/22 (Jul-Sept 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 during the quarter and despite issues with the pandemic the site has remained open. The project has been impacted by national issues experienced during the quarter exemplified by material shortages, supply delays and fuel shortages. This has had an impact on the base build construction timetable and in managing the costs of this phase of the build.

The building is now wind and water-tight with the focus on completing the internal works and managing the subsequent handover prior to fit out works commencing. Due to material failures and delays in replacement materials, the main floors have been a significant drag on the construction programme and have impacted the programme. The project team have proactively managed these impacts, redrafting the programmes numerous times and ensuring the delays have not significantly impacted the overall costs. As a

result the overall programme remains on schedule and it is expected that the fit-out timescale will be accommodated with no significant risks to the opening date.

The legal aspects of the proposed Café supplier procurement is being finalised.

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.

At the end of September 2021 total expenditure on the project was £16,745,472. Of which the Council has spent £11.825m including cashflow funding, with external funding of £3.776m from the NLHF, £633k from KCC and £512k from external fundraising. Wider grant funding is in areas which means the Council is managing the cashflow aspects of the project. At the end of September cashflow funding was £643k.

The Amelia Scott has been invited by SELEP to submit a full business case for a £1.4m grant under the Getting Building Fund. The Amelia is second on the pipeline list of projects. An existing SELEP project has been delayed and there is a risk it will not deliver. A decision will not be taken until 19 November 2021 on whether the current project is replaced however the Council has committed to delivering the full business case in case the budget becomes available.

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. As a result in addition to the core contribution by the Council, the Council is underwriting the fundraising, grants and other opportunities. If approved the SELEP funding would address the budgetary gap and financial challenges underwritten by the Council.

2. Project

Create a new Local Plan for the Borough.

Status

GREEN

(The project would be AMBER against Local Development Scheme February 2021, which has the previous timetable).

Update

The Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination.

There has been a delay to the timescale set out in the Local Development Scheme dated February 2021 as a result of the length of time it has taken to review representations, to agree statements of common ground and for sensitivity testing (as requested by Highways England and Kent County Council Highways and Transportation) to be completed.

An updated timescale has been agreed (October 2021).

Now the Local Plan has been submitted – which is a major milestone – the timetable for the Examination is likely to be agreed with the Planning Inspectorate in the next month. It is expected that the Examination will take place in March and April 2022, with adoption of the Plan in January 2023.

Areas of risk at the Examination have been identified.

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.

Consultation with potential users of the proposed Hawkenbury site will be undertaken in October and November.

4. Project

Support the development of community centres in the borough: Cranbrook

Status

AMBER

Update

The project has now received confirmation from the NHS that the GPs are on board with the project and ready to lead the delivery of the new facility.

We now await agreement from WKCCG on the specification of the facility in terms of size of building they need to deliver GP services from. WKCCG and GPs are working on this together and once received the business case will be updated.

Subject to the above stacking up financially given the increase in construction costs, project can go out to tender for TPM, QS and subject to procurement a PCSA or a multi dis architect.

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.

5. Project

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

Status

AMBER

Update

Secretary of State call in on the planning application expired on 18 October 2022. A call in is not anticipated but we await confirmation to validate the planning.

Construction costs have been rising exponentially and we await revised costs from Baxall end of October which are likely to make and or break the project.

Confirmation of the S106 funding required for the delivery of the tennis courts and the hard ball cricket wicket is awaited from TWBC following SoS call in expiring.

Start on site has been pushed back to April 22 due to long lead in times of 26 weeks on some items. There is potential additional costs from inflation given the current market conditions but the market is stabilising and the project is now avoiding being in the ground when the winter hits and the water table is high in Paddock Wood.

A further c£100k grant has been secured towards solar panels and air source heat pumps but funds must be spent by March 22 or handed back. We are seeking an extension. An application is also being made to the land fill grant process.