

Project Summary – Five Year Plan Projects

Q4 2021/22 (Jan-March 2022)

1. Project

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

Status

AMBER

Update

At the end of March 2022 total expenditure on the project was £18,474,507. Of which Council expenditure was £10.78m, with external funding of £4.47m from the NLHF, £721k from KCC, ACE £589k, £513k from external fundraising and £1.4m of Getting Building Funding. The Getting Building Funding offsetting costs underwritten by the Council. Earlier in quarter 4 the contract for the Getting Building Funding had been signed. The ongoing budget pressures on the base build were highlighted to ASMOP and group Leaders in March prior to a report being drafted for April Cabinet to consider budget required to meet the requirements.

Practical completion was achieved by Factory Settings on 25 February 2022, with a number of outstanding items completed on 28 February and 1 March 2022. Works related to base build snagging, defects list, 'day 2' works and building control items continued to be addressed during the quarter and were

expected to continue up to the proposed opening date. The project team continue to proactively manage these impacts, redrafting the programmes to ensure any potential in programme delays do not impact on the opening. Focus has therefore been on works crucial to ensuring opening can be achieved as planned. It is now accepted that some minor works may need to be addressed post opening. Revisions to the schedule continue to be accommodated with no significant risks to the opening date. At the end of the quarter the opening of the Amelia to the general public remained on track.

The fundraising team have led tours around The Amelia Scott for potential sponsors and nurturing relationships with several businesses. While the longer-term impact of Covid-19 pandemic continues to prove challenging for fundraising, work has been ongoing to secure funding from Trusts and Foundations. A success being the Esmee Fairbairn collections fund Round One application. Ongoing work on fundraising opportunities has established a target of £200k target in year 1.

Preparation for delivery of services was well underway with the Collections redisplay ongoing. The Library recant was completed during the quarter with books on the shelves and the Adult Education fitout and recant in progress. Also in progress was the training for Amelia staff, while a draft of the Welcome pack had been prepared and circulated to KCC. The team in the quarter were working on the activity plan with a number of post-opening activities including:

- Working with Kent Adult Ed, TWBC Volunteers and local horticulture students to develop year plan of maintenance for the Courtyard Garden
- Family Half Term and Summer Holiday activities, including links to summer exhibition and family trail
- Digital Takeover Day planned for 1st July: Oakley and Oaks specialist college will work together to take over the social media accounts for the Amelia
- Launch event for teachers
- Outreach programme for schools
- Resources for self-guided visits

2. Project

Create a new Local Plan for the Borough.

Status

Green

Update

The Local Plan was submitted on 1st November 2021. The Examination started in February 2022. There are two stages to any Local Plan Examination: stage 1 relates to legal compliance and stage 2 relates to the soundness of the Plan. At the end of Stage 1 – for any Examination - the Inspector (appointed by the Secretary of State) has to consider whether a Council can move to Stage 2.

The Inspector requested an additional Hearing Session at Stage 1, in addition to those originally scheduled. Following this session he has confirmed that the Examination can progress to Stage 2.

This has resulted in an eight week delay to the Examination timetable – but still allows for the Inspector to issue his decision, and for Full Council to make a decision to adopt the Plan by the end of 2022/3.

Stage 2 of the Examination has commenced. The Inspector is rigorously assessing the soundness of the Plan, but there is no indication at this point at the Examination that the Inspector does not consider that the Plan is unsound.

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 has been undertaken with potential users of the proposed Hawkenbury site and considered as part of the Cabinet decision to extend the existing grounds maintenance contract to December 2024.

Site allocations associated with the provision of sports facilities are part of the part of the Local Plan submitted for Examination.

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. WKCCG has given us the specification of the facility in terms of size of building they need to deliver GP services from which will form the basis of the business case.

Work is underway on site to determine what the ground conditions are to confirm whether pad or pile foundations are needed. Once this work is complete a revised business case with updated costs based on inflation and public works loan board interest rates having increased can be approved.

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

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

Construction is now underway on the Paddock Wood Community Centre.

Final construction costs were agreed despite last minute inflation price rises. The additional costs have been covered by further funding that has been identified and the works are currently anticipated to complete in October 22.

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

Risks in the ground from high levels of ground water have mostly been mitigated by a very dry April, this has help to avoid significant extra costs from needing to pump large volumes of water away.

There are still risks with UKPN regarding utility provision of power as they are slow and costs remain unknown but Baxall are doing everything to mitigate this risk moving forward.

The town council has agreed to incorporate a charitable company to run the facility going forward and is likely to start marketing the pre-school element in the near future.