

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 16 March 2020

Title: Bandstand and Promenade Improvements

Report of: Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning

Cabinet member: Councillor Margaret Bannister, Cabinet member for tourism and leisure services

Ward(s): Meads

Purpose of report: For Cabinet to note initial repairs and maintenance costs for works to the Bandstand and adjacent promenade and agree that £3million be earmarked from the capital programme to support priority improvement works.

Decision type: Key Decision

Officer recommendation(s):

- (1) To agree that £3million be earmarked from the Council's capital programme in order to support priority improvement works on the Bandstand and the adjacent promenade.
- (2) Approval be given to the commencement of the procurement processes to deliver the priority improvement works on the Bandstand and the adjacent promenade and delegation of the development and management of the procurement processes to be followed and authority to appoint the necessary contractors be given to the Director of Regeneration and Planning, such delegation to include approval to allowing exceptions to the council's contract procedure rules should that become necessary.

Reasons for recommendations: Priority improvement works are required on the Bandstand and adjacent promenade.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council holds the freehold to the Bandstand, an iconic structure on Eastbourne's seafront. The existing structure was built in the 1930's and is a popular attraction both for visitors and residents, with well over 50,000 people attending performances throughout the open season.
- 1.2 The property is in an exposed location on Eastbourne seafront and therefore is subject to the worst of the weather, which has taken a toll on its condition. Phase 1 works were undertaken some years ago to replace the roof of the Bandstand, but recent high storms have meant that a further phase of repairs are now required. Phase 2 works are likely to concentrate on the Bandstand, its arena and the promenade within its curtilage.
- 1.3 Some planned repairs were carried out on the Bandstand prior to the 19/20 season commencing, however, a wider assessment of the full works on the property involving intrusive investigations has been undertaken in order to establish future capital need. The Bandstand and surrounding colonnades are listed structures and Listed Building Consent was obtained in order for the investigative works to take place in order to establish a specification of works.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 Work has been undertaken to establish the level of need using known survey information which outlined worst scenario repairs costing around £8million. Further intrusive investigations have been undertaken in order to refine need and costings information for Phase 2 works and it is estimated that a budget of £3million will be required in order to address the most urgent works.
- 2.2 Early temporary works will be undertaken prior to the 2020/21 season commencement with main works starting after the end of the season. Any temporary works will be dressed and covered where appropriate and possible. A detailed specification and a brief will be drawn up against the available budget in order for the main Phase 2 works to be tendered. Initial works are anticipated to focus on improving the water-tightness of the Bandstand itself and replacing the stage, as well as replacing tiling and cladding and repairs to both the Bandstand and promenade area within its curtilage. Relevant consent will be in place before the main works commence. Works will take note of the recent adverse weather conditions and the impact of climate change on the property.
- 2.3 A later phase of works will be required to address works outside the immediate Bandstand curtilage which will be subject to a separate report. Members will note that the concept of a heritage contribution on ticket sales has been approved; as this fund develops this may be able to help fund a further phase of works, which would likely focus on works outside the immediate curtilage of the Bandstand.
- 2.4 In order to keep the Bandstand open, these works have to be taken forward. If there is no investment in the Bandstand to address these needs then the property will be required to close for health and safety reasons.

2.5 Officers are also investigating longer term options to future proof the Bandstand including ways to extend the season and improve the food and beverage offer available to visitors. These options will form part of a future report to Cabinet as part of a wider seafront development strategy.

3. Corporate plan and council policies

3.1 This proposal meets the following aspirations of the Corporate Plan:

- Prosperous economy: by improving Eastbourne as a destination through securing the future of the Bandstand and supporting employment
- Sustainable performance: by making the best use of our assets and proactively working to improve building performance.
- In addition it supports achieving the 2026 Partnership vision of Eastbourne being a premier seaside destination.

3.2 Cabinet adopted the Corporate Asset Management Plan (AMP) in 2017. The AMP focuses on 4 key areas:

- Improving yield from the investment portfolio.
- Reducing maintenance costs and liabilities.
- Delivering efficiencies through smarter procurement.
- Increasing the capital value of the Council's asset base.

The AMP provides the strategy framework for the Council to manage and exploit the potential of its property portfolio, part of which is ensuring that future maintenance liabilities are reduced and opportunities for increasing social and economic value are maximised wherever possible, which are supported through this proposal.

4. Financial appraisal

4.1 The recommendation is to agree that £3million be earmarked from the Council's capital programme in order to support priority improvement works on the Bandstand and the Promenade. It is noted that not all projects have full funding in place and projects where funding is to be identified will be progressed to a stage where further Member approval will be required before the Council is financially committed to delivering the project.

4.2 Given the current financial climate for public funding and its impact on the Council's financial position, it is sensible to have flexibility before substantial financial commitments are made. The proposal is subject to continual review to establish whether the forecast as stated within section 2 (above) remains achievable. Whilst the objective is for the Council to progress the proposal as stated, some priority projects and their sources of funding may require re-profiling into future years.

4.3 As noted earlier in this report, the concept of a heritage contribution on ticket sales has been approved and may be able to support a future phase of works.

5. Legal implications

5.1 The estimated contract value for the works at £3million is below the applicable threshold that would currently require a full competitive procurement process under the Public Contract Regulations 2015. The contracts in relation to the repair and improvement works will however need to be awarded following the processes set out in the council's Contract Procedure Rules.

5.2 Legal due diligence will be carried out to ensure that the works take any title issues into account

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6. Risk management implications

6.1 There are inherent risks associated with not agreeing a financial package to support capital works on the Bandstand and Promenade as without investment both assets will continue to deteriorate and the proposals set out in this paper seek to address priority issues.

7. Equality analysis

7.1 An equality screening has been undertaken and has assessed that an Equality Analysis is not relevant to this report.

8. Environmental impact analysis

8.1 An Equality Analysis is not required on this occasion. However, if works are later identified of an urgent health and safety manner that cannot be addressed before the new season commences, then there may be a need to either close the Bandstand or reduce the open season. It could therefore be appropriate to conduct an analysis at this stage depending on the extent of those works and impacts at the time. This is however unlikely and not the proposed course of action.

9. Appendices

- None

10. Background papers

- None