

Subject:	Kingsway to the Sea – West Hove Seafront Improvement Plan		
Date of Meeting:	2nd December 2021		
Report of:	Executive Director Economy, Environment and Culture		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Donna Chisholm	Tel: 01273 292571
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This report sets out proposals for the Kingsway to the Sea project, an initiative costing £10.647 million which seeks to greatly improve the linear park and outdoor sports facilities located between the King Alfred Sports Centre and Hove Lagoon. Some improvements would also be undertaken to the play areas at Hove Lagoon.
- 1.2 This report also describes the next steps in developing the project following a successful application for £9.5 million to the government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF) and the requirement to spend the funds by 31st March 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Policy and Resources Committee:

- 2.1 Note the council's recent success in securing £9.5 million from the government's LUF to regenerate a linear park and outdoor sports facilities between the King Alfred Leisure Centre and Hove Lagoon.
- 2.2 Agrees that the Kingsway to the Sea project will be progressed in line with the successful LUF bid and in consultation with community stakeholders and ward councillors.
- 2.3 Approves a total budget of £10.647 million for the Kingsway to the Sea project, including £1.147 million (10.4%) of funding from council resources, to be added to the Capital Investment programme
- 2.4 Approves commencement of this project, with the appointment of project management to accelerate the programme and design towards the deadline of 31st March 2024 for completion.
- 2.5 Approves the design development of Kingsway to the Sea project and requires a progress update report brought back to Policy and Resources Committee before a planning application is made in 2022.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Kingsway to the Sea is an integrated proposal covering sport, leisure and biodiversity improvements which will regenerate an important part of the city's seafront. The scheme will provide enhanced leisure and sporting facilities for local people and it will also attract visitors to a part of the seafront beyond the city's tourist 'hotspots'. A map showing the area covered by the project is included as Appendix 2.
- 3.2 The council made a speculative application for £9.5 million to the Levelling Up Fund in June 2021. The city was considered by government to be in the lowest tier for priority funding but Kingsway to the Sea fitted the criteria so closely that officers decided to assemble an application with help from external consultants Mott Macdonald and architects Untitled Practice.
- 3.3 Currently this seafront area contains some striking heritage seaside architecture which is not in good condition, as well as a number of sports courts, bowling greens, a multi-use games area and several large green spaces. There are also several buildings which are in poor condition.
- 3.4 Once completed, in its entirety the project will transform what is a highly visible and substantial community asset, providing modern facilities for a large local and visitor population. The intervention will deliver significant remodelling and landscaping of the public parkland between the King Alfred Leisure Centre and Hove Lagoon as well as the repair of dilapidated infrastructure, replacement buildings and rejuvenation of the urban realm.

Scheme Details

- 3.5 The scheme has five central objectives which are:
- Transform underused infrastructure into a series of highly valued leisure and commercial spaces across a large expanse of public land at the seafront in West Hove.
 - Unlock the potential of the area for tourism, sport, leisure and events to create a new landmark, must-visit location for family days out in a densely populated area with limited green space.
 - In a major coastal resort, create new and additional capacity away from central Brighton which enables the visitor economy to continue growing.
 - Rejuvenate a highly visible and central part of the city which urgently needs capital investment to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
 - Provide a destination for cyclists and public transport users that is highly accessible and contributes to the health and wellbeing of local people and visitors.
- 3.6 The project will improve the public realm, create new routes for pedestrians and cyclists and expand outdoor family facilities at Hove Lagoon. The remodelling and landscaping will also improve biodiversity and attractiveness for this

significant green space across West Hove and for nearby residents in South Portslade.

- 3.7 New and improved sports facilities for residents and visitors will be provided. These facilities will include padel (a form of tennis), beach tennis, croquet, traditional tennis and football. The Hove and Kingsway Bowling Club will benefit from the investment in facilities. The scheme will also provide new leisure facilities such as a pump track and skate park to encourage greater footfall by young people. This footfall supports local restaurants, cafes and sports-related services, making the area attractive for visitors as well as residents.
- 3.8 Level changes will be addressed to enable sunken gardens, for example around the Rockwater restaurant, will be made accessible for people with disabilities.
- 3.9 The first lawn to the West of the King Alfred Sport Centre will benefit from the installation of power and plumbing, with a designed landscape to enable more events to take place there, for example markets selling local food and crafts.
- 3.10 Opportunities for public art and creative interventions involving local communities will be included to enrich the public realm.

Project Value and Funding

- 3.11 Indicative costs for the project were prepared for the LUF bid by the council’s contracted landscape architects with a quantity surveyor. Costs have been broken down into nine zones within the overall scheme, with 10% contingency, fees and provisional allowances added. As the design advances, the scheme will be continually surveyed to ensure costs are managed.

Table 1: Indicative breakdown of the Kingsway to the Sea costs

	Total
Park Garden East	£492,000
Events Space	£590,000
Bowls & Garden Buildings	£3,853,000
Rockwater Garden	£94,000
Courts & Pitches East	£479,000
Courts & Pitches West	£920,000
Park Garden West	£635,000
Skate & Pump	£695,000
Hove Lagoon	£380,000
Contingency, fees and allowances	£2,509,000
Total	£10,647,000

- 3.11 Funding for this project is made up of £9.5 million from LUF with £1.147 million coming from council resources. It is likely this contribution will utilise Section 106 developer contributions for outdoor sports and public parks.

Procurement

- 3.12 Procurement options are currently being reviewed, including the potential for the

project to be delivered through the council's corporate City Build strategic construction partnership. The approach to procurement will be finalised before the project returns to the Policy and Resources committee, in advance of a planning application.

- 3.13 The City Build strategic construction partnership was procured under an OJEU procurement process authorised by Policy, Resources and Growth Committee in October 2016, following three previously successful construction partnerships. The partnership started in September 2017 for a contract term of five years (plus an agreed extension for a further 2 years). It is currently delivering a range of construction projects for various other council client departments and is managed by the council's Property & Design department.
- 3.14 Projects can be delivered by the partnership more quickly than other delivery routes as the constructor, partner surveyors and some sub-contractors are already procured. The early involvement of constructors and electrical, structural and mechanical and engineering partners ensures final design and construction risks are minimised and the outcome meets the council's required specification. Throughout the design process, prices for each element are obtained and reviewed by the team. If necessary the design is amended to ensure that the budget is met.
- 3.15 The design team meet every four weeks and will work together within the assigned budget to set the Agreed Maximum Price, after which the Quantity Surveyor will produce a review document which demonstrates the project has achieved best value. This document benchmarks the square metre rates against previous partnered and non-partnered schemes and also against national construction rates. An independent partnering advisor is employed and a Core Group meets monthly to oversee the arrangements taking a strategic view of each scheme, ensuring key deadlines are met. If the City Build strategic partnership is not suitable other procurement routes will be reviewed including frameworks and market procurement.

Advancing the Project

- 3.16 This project has to be delivered within 28 months to enable the council to draw down the full £9.5 million from government. With public consultation already completed, a stakeholder group in place (as outlined in paragraph 5.1 below) and a procurement route in prospect, the next step is to appoint project management, move into detailed design stages and maintain cost controls throughout.
- 3.17 A report will be prepared for Policy and Resources Committee before a planning application is submitted to seek approval to proceed. Councillors and community leaders will be kept up-to-date through briefings and their ongoing involvement in stakeholder groups.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The area of land included in this project is entirely council owned, with the Hove and Kingsway Bowling Club holding a lease for a clubhouse and changing facilities. Over time, the costs of ongoing maintenance across the buildings and

public spaces have been very difficult for the council to support. This project will rejuvenate the West Hove seafront, establishing it as a hub for outdoor sport and a beautiful place, with the Bowling Club continuing as a valued tenant, alongside other users and stakeholders.

- 4.2 An alternative option would be to allow extensive commercialisation of the West Hove seafront, for example by leasing out parts of the area to the private sector to attract investment, in exchange for full market rents. However, this runs contrary to the social importance of the seafront as an inclusive provider of sport and leisure activities for residents and visitors. The council's priority is to enable open access to the public realm, combined with affordable outdoor sports provision.
- 4.3 The "do nothing" option allows the West Hove seafront to continue to deteriorate because of lack of council funds to regenerate the area. When set against the option of using the LUF grant on offer and transforming the area, "do nothing" is not the preferred course of action.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation on improvements to the West Hove seafront began in 2018 with the establishment of the West Hove Seafront Action Group (WHSAG) which contains representation from 15 separate local community stakeholders. A full list of members is provided in Appendix 5 of this report. These include West Hove Seafront Residents' organisations, the Western Lawns and Seafront membership clubs, voluntary organisations located on or near the area and some private sector businesses.
- 5.2 As a group, WHSAG agree there is an urgent need for improved outdoor leisure facilities, both in terms of increasing use of the spaces and in reducing crime. The council have led two consultation exercises to listen to the views of local people.
- 5.3 During the scoping of initial plans for the project in May 2021, the landscape architects hired by the council conducted a stakeholder consultation exercise with WHSAG. Around 30 local stakeholders attended the meeting to discuss their requirements and aspirations for the project. Outline project designs were drafted following the input of the stakeholder group.
- 5.4 Ward councillors have also been involved in galvanising community support and in testing local opinion. They are supportive of the plans and will play an active part in shaping the detail of the scheme with the local community.
- 5.5 In September 2021 an online public consultation was delivered using the council's consultation portal. The questionnaire was produced to seek feedback and ideas about the scheme and asked questions such as what currently attracts respondents to the area and what amenities and sports facilities would they like to see developed. Paper copies were made available for those without access to the internet. The questionnaire is available as Appendix 3 and there were 1671 online responses.
- 5.6 The council also hosted a drop-in consultation event on the seafront in

September. The landscape architects and council officers were available to answer questions and receive comments, ideas and feedback on the scheme. This event alone generated over 150 written comments and conversations.

- 5.7 A summary of consultation responses is currently being prepared. What is clear is that the current focus of Kingsway to the Sea is exactly what respondents are looking for – a mixture of modern sports facilities, beautiful green spaces and community resources.
- 5.6 Over the course of the development phase in 2022, WHSAG will continue to be consulted on a monthly basis, as the design progresses. In addition, officers and the design team will meet regularly with stakeholders such as the Hove and Kingsway Bowling Club, the Friends of Hove Lagoon, the King Alfred Tennis Club and the Beach Huts Association. Local residents will also be consulted on the detailed design work before a planning application is submitted.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The funds available through LUF enables the transformation of West Hove seafront for sport and leisure uses, which will benefit local residents, with attract visitors and help local businesses. Two consultation exercises undertaken over the course of 2021 have clarified the priorities for the scheme and these are evident in the outlined designs created to date.
- 6.2 The £9.5 million secured from government comes with a tight timescale for expenditure and the project must move ahead if the funds are to be spent. This requires expenditure relating to the appointment of project management, detailed surveys of the area, further development of designs and clarification of the procurement route. The WHSAG will continue to be consulted as the major stakeholder group throughout the development of detailed designs.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The project has an overall budget of £10.647m funded from a £9.500m Levelling Up Fund grant allocation and £1.147m from council resources through a combination of utilising S106 contributions for outdoor sports and public parks, and council borrowing. The financing costs for any borrowing are estimated to be between £0.020m to £0.040m per annum depending on the level of S106 contributions. These costs are expected to be met from increased income generated from the development. Whilst detailed income projections have not been estimated at this early stage, this level of additional income is considered low risk and would not require the project to focus on commercialisation at the expense of open access to the public realm or affordable outdoor sports provision.
- 7.2 All major construction projects are currently experiencing significant cost pressures and it is difficult to predict whether this is a temporary or ongoing financial risk to the project. The cost estimates include a 10% contingency however the financial risks will need to be mitigated throughout the detailed design and procurement process.

7.3 The project will be added to the Capital Investment programme and profiled over the 28 month project duration.

Finance Officer Consulted: James Hengeveld

Date: 11/11/21

Legal Implications:

7.4 As part of the bidding process, the council considered whether the project involved any subsidy control issues and concluded that it did not because all the contracts associated with the project will be subject to competitive tendering processes in accordance with the council's Constitution and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (or any future procurement legislation).

7.5 The council will need to comply with the conditions of the grant from the Levelling Up fund. As the project progresses the council's legal team will work closely with the project team and will provide further legal implications in future reports.

Lawyer Consulted:

Alice Rowland

Date: 09/11/21

Equalities Implications:

7.4 Kingsway to the Sea has been developed in a way that maximises positive impacts and is tailored to the needs of local communities in particular. This is demonstrated as follows:

- Age: The residents of Wish, Westbourne and South Portslade are on average younger than both the city average and the national average¹. The scheme will install new leisure facilities to increase greater footfall by young people, as well as encourage a vibrant commercial environment that provides jobs through redevelopment of derelict buildings and new outdoor events space.
- Deprivation: The adjacent areas to the seafront (Wish, Westbourne and nearby South Portslade) contain some lower super output areas (LSOAs) which rank amongst the most deprived quintile of wards nationwide². This deprivation spans numerous domains, from economic to health to living environment. Kingsway to the Sea will address the issue of deprivation in West Hove by securing and providing some new employment, as well as ensuring public open space that is free to use in a densely populated area with acute shortage of high quality green spaces.
- Disability: The number of Disability Living Allowance claimants in Wish, Westbourne and South Portslade is almost 50% above the national average³. Disabled access to West Hove Seafront has been carefully considered, with ramps, paths and flatter surfaces envisioned to enable access for wheelchair users.

¹ Local Insight, 2020, Local Insight profile for 'Wish, Westbourne and South Portslade' area

² Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019, Available at:

<https://maps.cdrc.ac.uk/#/geodemographics/imde2019/default/BTTTTFT/14/-0.1849/50.8342/>

³ Local Insight, 2020, Local Insight profile for 'Wish, Westbourne and South Portslade' area

- Race: In Brighton and Hove, people of Black or Black British ethnicity were least likely to do the recommended levels of physical activity on five or more days a week (4%) with low levels also reported by people from Asian or Asian British people (14%)⁴. This project will provide affordable outdoor sport and recreation space that is focused on family activities and creative play. This differs greatly from the bars and nightclubs along the seafront in Central Brighton. This is particularly welcoming to families whose faith excludes alcohol consumption. Wish, Westbourne and South Portslade has a high representation of Asian or Asian British people—a family-oriented beachfront offering is thus a great benefit.

7.5 A formal Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out when project management resource has been appointed and detailed design work commences.

Sustainability Implications:

7.6 Kingsway to the Sea seeks to greatly improve the biodiversity of West Hove seafront through by creating a series of gardens through a linear park. This area can be very exposed to strong winds and high levels of salt in the air, so the landscape design will carefully consider this. The parkland and infrastructure is quite degraded because of ongoing budget constraints, so the introduction of new planting will have to be considered within the context of future maintenance and replacement costs.

Brexit Implications:

7.7 There are no Brexit implications contained in this report.

Any Other Significant Implications:

None.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

7.8 Kingsway to the Sea will help to reduce crime and disorder in the West Hove seafront area because the investment will increase use by residents during the day and into the evening, reducing the likelihood of unnoticed criminal behaviour. Well designed public spaces with good lighting and organised sports facilities will draw multiple users each day, deterring anti-social behaviour. There will also be a skate park and pump track where young people can gather to participate in leisure and social activities.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

7.9 The project's risk register is included in the background documents.

Public Health Implications:

⁴ Brighton and Hove City Council, 2015, Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Brighton & Hove

- 7.10 Whilst Brighton and Hove is the 6th highest city in the country for percentage of physically active adults, a third of the 5-16 age range are less active, doing less than 30 minutes of activity each day. As outlined in paragraph 7.3 above, residents of Wish, Westbourne and nearby South Portslade wards are generally younger than both the city average and the national average⁵. For this reason, the proposed investment in affordable outdoor sports facilities in West Hove is well located for use by young people and some facilities are particularly targeted at them.
- 7.11 More generally, creating an environment which improves the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors is a central consideration for this project. Better outdoor sports facilities and social spaces will enable residents and visitors to increase participation in the range of activities on offer.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 7.12 Kingsway to the sea supports the council's priorities in four areas. Within a City Working for All, this project contributes to community wealth, it further strengthens the visitor economy and helps local businesses by generating additional footfall along the West Hove seafront. It contributes to a Stronger City because it will increase community participation and improves disabled access to public spaces. It contributes to a Sustainable City because it will promote and protect biodiversity, alongside improving public open spaces. Finally, it contributes to a Healthy and Caring City because of the important investment in outdoor sports facilities and the investment of public funds make sure the spaces will be regenerated for the wider public good.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Kingsway to the Sea: LUF Application Form June 2021
2. Kingsway to the Sea: Map of the included geographic area
3. Public Consultation Questionnaire on priorities for project
4. Project Risk Register V1 June 2021
5. Membership of West Hove Seafront Action Group

Background Documents

1. None

⁵ Local Insight, 2020, Local Insight profile for 'Wish, Westbourne and South Portslade' area

