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| Report to: | Amenities Committee |
| Agenda Item: | AMC/2024/17 |
| Date of this Report: | 05.09.2024 |
| Meeting Date: | 12.09.2024 |
| Lead Officer(s) | Geoff Sawyer |
| Author: | Geoff Sawyer |

Projects Progress Report – September 2024

1. Town Hall

1.1 Phase 1 – Flat Conversion funded by Bridgwater Town Council

Ongoing – works within the flat conversion are progressing well. We are approx. 4 weeks behind on the programme (new completion date of Friday 27th September 24) due to various unexpected issues that have arisen during the course of the works:

- i) Investigation of water services routes and drain down of the water system.
- ii) Mansion House Lane / Clare Street shut for 5 days so no access.
- iii) Building control changes to design.
- iv) Additional walls & ceilings to be removed and replaced with new fire rated plasterboard as the existing was a MDF board which doesn't have a fire rating so not safe or compliant.
- v) Structural engineer additional works to make areas of the building safe.
- vi) Waiting on BT Open Reach for the installation of a high-speed line as part of the building regulations (Appendix B of Approved Doc R Vol 1) to ensure compliance and BC sign off.

Due to these variations, the project will go over budget by approx. 10% officers have tried to minimise any additional costs with additional value engineering exercises being undertaken during the course of the project.

Progress photos can be found via this link: [Project Progress](#)

1.2 Phase 2A - Dressing room refurbishment & upgrades (town deal funding)

Ongoing – works to the dressing rooms are progressing but slower than hoped, we are approx. 4 – 6 weeks behind the original programme as there have been lots of unexpected variations/changes that have had to be made which has caused delays:

- i) Investigation of water services routes and drain down of the water system.
- ii) Building control changes to design.
- iii) Additional walls & ceilings to be removed and replaced with new fire rated plasterboard as the existing was a MDF board which doesn't have a fire rating so not safe or compliant.
- iv) Structural engineer additional works to make areas of the building safe as there were some doorways without lintels, and addition supports needed to stop walls collapsing.

- v) Repairs to unknowns found during opening up works such as crumbling brickwork, no ceiling joists in places.
- vi) Changes to material specifications due to long lead times for their procurement that we were unaware of when the project started.
- vii) New incoming water supply required to replace the incoming lead pipe which has to be undertaken by the Utility Company so out of our hands on timescales.
- viii) Delays by contractors over discrepancies on drawings.
- ix) Water ingress through a damaged roof (out of the project scope) that needs rectifying before the ventilation can be installed or commissioned.

To ensure that the changing rooms areas are available for Carnival Concerts we have agreed with the contractors for a partial completion and handover of the changing rooms on Thursday 19th September. The contractors will then clean and clear site and return on Monday 14th October for a further 4 weeks of work to complete the corridors and first floor areas.

Progress photos can be found via this link: [Progress Photos](#)

1.3 Phase 2B - Theatre refurbishment and infrastructure upgrades (partial town deal funding)

Ongoing – Full design has now been completed and is being reviewed before the final tender package is put together to go live by the end of September 2024. The tender process will be over 3 months with appointment early in 2025, and project to commence in March 2025.

1.4 Phase 3 - Town hall site remodelling and new atrium (Bridgwater Town Council funding)

Ongoing – Full design has now been completed and is being reviewed before the final tender package is put together to go live by the end of September 2024. The tender process will be over 3 months with appointment early in 2025, and project to commence in March 2025.

1.5 Other Town Hall works

1.5.1 Seating procurement (town deal funding)

Balcony – The fixed balcony seating is being installed next week on Wednesday 11th & Thursday 12th September; this will be in place for Carnival Concerts.

Stalls – This seating is still currently in production and fingers crossed will be completed in time for installation just in time for concerts. There was an issue raised from the seating suppliers with the fabric that was due to the manufacturing factory in Turkey, which went on shutdown for three weeks over the summer. No one was aware of this, and as a result causes a knock-on effect as it didn't allow enough time for shipping the materials to the UK (approx. 3 weeks). We have put pressure on the suppliers and managed to arrange for the fabric to come via air freight which means it arrives in the country on the 6th September and is being delivered straight to the seating manufacturers rather than the fabric suppliers. They have committed that if they receive it this week/early next week then can still achieve the delivery date as they have already commenced the production of the frames etc (see attached pictures). I will be keeping on top of this over the next couple of weeks and getting regular updates from the suppliers and you can be assured it is my priority to get these in for concerts. The back up plan would be the old seating set out in the new seating plan format.

Tiered Rostra – The tiered rostra installation is provisionally pencilled in to be delivered and installed next week on Thursday 12th September subject to their other ongoing installations. If they are delayed on other projects, it might be put back to the following week, but this will not affect anything and be in place for Carnival Concerts.

1.5.2 Redecoration of the front façade, refurbishment of the sash windows, external lighting upgrades, and installation of PV solar panels:

1.5.2.1 Redecoration – scaffolding has been erected and the project has commenced with completion before carnival at the beginning of November.

1.5.2.2 Sash Windows – scaffolding has been erected and the project has commenced with completion before carnival at the beginning of November.

1.5.2.3 External lights – we are awaiting advice from Somerset Council planners as to whether we can install these under permitted development or not. The conservation officer has advised us to follow this route.

1.5.2.4 Photovoltaics (PV) – scaffolding has been erected and the project has commenced with completion before carnival at the beginning of November.

1.5.2.5 Heating Systems – Now all the systems have been drained down we have placed an order for the removal of the existing radiators and pipework which will commence during October. Following this new electric heating will be installed ready for the winter months (November onwards).

1.5.2.6 Alarm Systems – Now we have started the future development of the building which includes upgrading both the fire & intruder alarm systems, we have an option to link all three intruder alarms which will be a cost saving. This would take require moving away from ADT for the intruder alarms with immediate effect and then we would gradually move away from ADT for fire alarm once the new zones are commission in phases as part of the sitewide development. I recommend we do this now and get new systems in place and commissioned as part of the ongoing schemes with an initial one-year service contract and then in a years' time go to tender for a 5 year contract for the ongoing servicing and maintenance contract.

2. Arts Centre

The deadline for the Town Deal Arts Centre project was Friday 31st August and we received four submissions. These submissions were opened following the tender opening procedure on Wednesday 4th September.

The values of the four submissions were:

Bid 1 = £887,344.55

Bid 2 = £765,935.61

Bid 3 = £618,805.00

Bid 4 = £879,794.22

The next stage is for the bids and submissions to be evaluated and reviewed by the project manager and architect/lead consultant and then a recommendation report issued to full council for approval prior to the appointment of the principal contractor for the project.

Following the appointment and contracts signed we plan to commence works in the first week of January 2025.

3. Blake Museum – Mill Feasibility Study

This has previously been on hold due to other priority projects but following the appointment of the new grants and funding officer we are now in a position to start to investigate what funding is available for the project. The new grants officer is bringing herself up to speed and reviewing progress to date and then we can decide the next course of action to move the project forward.

4. St John's Cemetery - Bristol Road Extension

Ongoing – following the feasibility surveys and reports undertaken by CDS on our behalf we have been advised by the environment agency that the land cannot be used for burial plots.

This means the only option is for a memorial garden to be used for ashes internments. After looking at ideas with CDS we have come up with an initial design that can be developed and then look to obtain planning permission to proceed with this idea.

[CDS-C1000P01-L-001 Site Layout Plan Option 1.pdf](#)
[CDS-C1000P01-L-002 Proposed Landscape Elements.pdf](#)
[CDS-C1000P01-L-003 Proposed Buildings.pdf](#)
[Ideas](#)

5. Axe Road Depot

Axe road depot is now being managed by the facilities team.

Unit 4 has had CCTV, lighting upgrades, emergency lighting, intruder alarms, and electric vehicle charging points installed along with the fit out of a new drying room. A new BT broadband line has been installed by QSS IT to run systems. Now that we have occupancy of unit 5 some of these services need extending and a fire alarm system installed to both units which will be completed by the facilities team.

6. Other

6.1 Electricity supplies

Previously we were looking to and are still working through all properties electricity supplies / suppliers to change to green energy. This is ongoing as we are tied into contracts at various premises, so unable to change until the contract ends.

This has now been passed over to the facilities and finance team to take on as part of their departments scope.

6.2 PV feasibility study

As previously requested by the amenities (previously the property) committee we have undertaken a feasibility study to install PV on all of our properties. We are looking to obtain 2-3 quotes for each property and compared these against each other and other properties and the attached cost analysis shows the current position with the majority of the building completed:

[PV Cost Analysis.xlsx](#)

6.3 BOS Café water

During the construction of phase 1 for the flat conversion we have had to investigate the water supplies into the Town Hall building (there are currently 4 incoming mains supplies) so we can convert one of these to become a dedicated supply to the flat. Whilst working out the routes and which supply we will use we have found that one of the supplies feeds BOS café but is charged to Bridgwater Town Council and no counter charges have been made to the tenants since their occupation in 2011. Therefore, any tenant of BOS café has been getting their water free of charge throughout their tenancy which equates to thousands of pounds. This has been highlighted to the senior management team to deal with to recover the costs.

End of report.