

East Herts Council Report

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 7 September 2021

Report by: Councillor Eric Buckmaster, Executive Member for Wellbeing

Report title: Progress Report Corporate Plan: Hertford Theatre and Hartham Leisure Centre

Ward(s) affected: ALL

Summary

- The Council's Refreshed Corporate Plan and SEED priorities were adopted by Council on 28 July. Under the "Enabling Communities" Theme is the key action to a) deliver £20m investment in Hertford Theatre and b) complete construction of a refurbished and extended Hartham Leisure Centre. This paper updates Committee Members on progress on both these projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY:

A) That Committee Members review progress of the Hertford Theatre and Hartham Leisure centre capital projects.

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 The Committee are invited to review progress of the Hertford Theatre and Hartham Leisure centre capital development projects.

2.0 Background

Hartham Leisure Centre

- 2.1 In July 2017, the Council approved capital funding for a new extended and refurbished leisure centre at Hartham Common. The development is to include: a new gym facility, three studios, a café, a soft play facility, changing facilities for gym and studio users, and a refurbished pool area and refurbished village change.
- 2.2 After running a successful OJEU tender from 29 September 2020 through until 5 February 2021, Cadman Construction was appointed as the successful bidder on 17 February 2021
- 2.3 In order to ensure some facilities are still available for residents the project has been phased. The table below highlights these phases and programmed delivery dates.

Phase	Programmed delivery	Work Activity
1	Mid May – end of September 2021	Pool Hall and pool changing village refurbishment
2	Late August to late October 2021	Refurbishment of the downstairs dry changing rooms
3	End of August 2021 – mid September 2022	Demolition and building of the new extension
4	End of August 2022 – December 2022	Converting the old gym into upstairs changing room and spin studio

- 2.4 The original phasing for the project would have been the demolition of the front of the building and construction of the new extension with the refurbishment of the pool hall to follow. However, the phasing had to be readjusted due to the

need to divert a sewer which would sit underneath a portion of the new extension. The re-phasing allows the sewer diversion works to take place without delaying other works at this stage.

2.5 Enabling works to facilitate the construction company's entry and access commenced from 12 April 2021 with Phase 1 of the main works commencing from 17 May 2021. The detail of the Phase 1 works include:

- Refurbishment of the changing village's toilets and showers
- Complete replacement of the kitchen
- Replacing the pool hall floor tiles and pool edge tiles
- Relining of the swimming pool tanks
- Installation of new LED lights within the pool hall
- Redecoration of the block walls within the pool hall
- Increased spectator seating
- Installation of underwater drown detection systems
- Complete replacement of the pool plant filtration system

Construction Progress Update - Hartham

2.6 During the enabling works and phase 1, the dry side of the leisure centre has remained operational with the reception being moved to the rear of the building. As part of the installation of new tiles in the pool hall it was discovered that the screed underneath the old tiles were in a poor condition and needed to be rectified before the new tiles could be laid. In addition, the impact of Brexit, COVID-19 and the "pingdemic" has resulted in delays to supply of materials and labour which has been a national issue in the construction industry. This has meant re-programming the project delivery and work packages to ensure the impact on delivering the next phase is minimised. At this stage it is too early to

determine whether the delays will have an impact on the overall completion of the project.

- 2.7 A temporary group exercise studio has been erected in a small area of the rear car park of the leisure centre which the leisure operator will occupy by the end of August 2021. This is to allow them to keep this particular service operational whilst the contractor demolishes the portion of the building that these activities presently take place in.
- 2.8 In terms of BREAAAM excellence, a number workshops have taken place with the BREEAM assessor and the scheme continues to be on target of BREAAAM excellence. This will continue to be monitored through the tracker as the project moves into construction of the extension.
- 2.9 The refurbishment of the dry side changing rooms and demolishing part of the old extension will be the next phase of works. In line with the Council's recommendation in 2017, the leisure project board is updated regularly to monitor the progress of the project.

Hertford Theatre – Progress Update

- 2.10 The Hertford Theatre capital development project was approved in 2018 to deliver Growth and Legacy Project which includes:
- Increased auditorium (+150 seats) plus 3 new cinema screens
 - Studio theatre
 - Improved front and back of house
 - Improved accessibility
 - Riverside walkway to improve connectivity with Castle Gardens and to open up the historic Motte
 - BREEAM Excellent

- 2.10 Planning permission for this project was approved in March 2021. The progress to date includes the completion of RIBA stage 4 (Technical Design) which provides design detail required for the procurement process for a construction contractor. The project team advertised the tender in July 2021, it is expected that the tenders will be returned by bidders on 8 September 2021.
- 2.11 Following a series of closures and re-opening as a result of the pandemic and associated lockdowns, the Hertford Theatre finally closed on 7 June for decant and asbestos removal.
- 2.12 The tenders are due to be returned on 8 September 2021 with the contract then awarded in November 2021. The demolition of parts of the building will commence in December 2021 with construction taking place swiftly afterwards. The building is due to be complete and ready for soft openings from Summer 2023.
- 2.13 In accordance with obtaining a BREEAM Excellent rating the project is adopting the following sustainable measures:
- Retaining as much of the existing building as possible
 - Hybrid concrete and CLT (timber) structure exposing the structure where possible
 - Upgrading the external fabric (new build and refurbishment) to increase performance
 - Use of efficient services and go electric
 - Utilising intelligent building systems to drive down energy use when in operation
 - Adoption of a travel plan that encourages sustainable forms of transport

3.0 Reason(s)

3.1 This report has been requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.0 Options

4.1 Not Applicable.

5.0 Risks

5.1 The key risk to both projects is the impact of the Pandemic and Brexit resulting disruption to supply chains negatively impacting the cost and availability of materials and labour. This is a national problem in the industry.

5.2 The key risk for Hartham leisure centre is the sewer diversion works, the outcome of this will be known in early September 2021.

5.3 For the Hertford Theatre project the key risk is cost certainty, as this will not be known until tenders are submitted in early September. As mentioned previously, labour and material supply problems nationally/globally are likely to impact the project. In order to mitigate this, the tender returns will include an alternative bid with Value Engineering options.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

Yes – as discussed in the report.

Financial

Yes – both projects are budget monitored in a monthly basis. Impact on tender submissions are to be determined for the Hertford Theatre project.

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

No

Specific Wards

Hertford wards.

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 None.

Contact Member

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