

Lowestoft Town Hall Project

Progress Report for July 24 Project Steering Committee

This report covers the period to 19 July 2024.

Procurement

- Our tender for main construction work was published on 24 June as intended and has attracted good levels of interest. Following requests from several contractors, we have extended the tender period by two weeks. This may push out starting onsite by a week or so, but this won't be confirmed until we receive the tenders in August, as we may be able to reduce the evaluation period, depending on how many bidders there are, thus minimising the impact of the extension.
- We have issued six clarification documents so far, with a total of 21 queries answered, none of which has been material.
- We have hosted multiple site visits for contractors and their sub-contractors. Many thanks to LTC officers for facilitating these and covering the communications both on this and clarifications.

Design/Construction-related work

- We have had a further review from dry rot specialists Hutton + Rostron. Some of the timbers have dried out well and the dry rot has died out, but other areas remain quite damp. Further opening of windows to increase ventilation was recommended, and the facilities team have done this.
- Street lighting changes (to introduce 'heritage' style fittings, and to remove certain fittings that will be affected by construction works) have been delayed. I am working with SCC's team to develop a fallback position where the work necessary to enable construction is undertaken before October, and the new lighting implemented after construction ends. This would have the advantage of protecting expensive heritage lighting fittings during construction but may cost slightly more.

UKPN substation/ESC land transfer/use of land during construction

- ESC has received the drawings showing the extended requirement for land to accommodate the power supply running from the UKPN substation to the Town Hall and is taking that into account in the legal work to transfer the necessary sections of title deeds.
- ESC has confirmed there will be no charge for the licence to use their land adjacent to the Town Hall for site accommodation and compound and are also covering the cost of land clearance themselves. This is excellent news for the project and underlines their ongoing support.

Business

- We are now beginning some work to review the Business Plan, starting with research into the current market activity re cafés and co-working sites within the town. This is important because several new venues are intending to include both, and we must examine the overall need/capacity in the market and ensure that the Town Hall is able to provide a competitive offering, or switch to an alternative income generator. However, any alternative needs to be

carefully considered in terms of its impact on some of our outcomes, eg predicted footfall drawn to the High Street.

Activity Plan & Interpretation

- Kate and Jess (Heritage Manager and Heritage Project Manager) have been revising the activity plan and firmed up a number of specific works required. The timetable for the summer and into the early autumn is now confirmed and we will share this shortly.
- We are currently advertising for a freelance filmmaker to undertake a long-term programme of film making, workshops and masterclasses, and there has been a good level of interest so far.
- Unfortunately, Kate Reeder has tendered her resignation, as she has been offered a curatorial role at Chelmsford Museum. We are now preparing to recruit a Heritage Officer, which is a more developmental role, to be supervised for the first year by the Heritage Project Manager. The Heritage Fund has approved this change, and an advert will be published shortly. This will provide an excellent opportunity for a museum studies/history graduate (or equivalent).

Evaluation

- I have held a detailed planning session with the evaluation consultants looking at how we track the non-activity plan related outcomes on the project – ie the economic regeneration outcomes and those relating to how people feel about living and working in Lowestoft.
- The work will entail quite a bit of upfront 'baseline' measurements, updating some of those taken back in 2019 by ESC/People and Places research and as part of the business planning process, as well as introducing some new measures.

Financials

- Total spend to date is below:

Lowestoft Town Hall Project (NL-21-00031)	
Spend to date	TOTALS
Budget	£ 9,290,089.09
Actual spend to date	£ 624,481.27
Balance remaining	£ 8,665,607.82

Invoiced expenditure in the period since the last Steering Committee is as follows:

Lowestoft Town Hall Project (NL-21-00031)		Delivery Stage	Invoice control sheet				
Invoice							
Date	Inv Ref N	Supplier	Description	Amount	VAT	Total inc VA	
19/06/24	LTH163	MossKing Associates Limited	Project management fees May	£ 5,136.00	£ -	£ 5,136.00	
31/05/24	LTH164	Andrew Morton Associates	Prof fees QS May	£ 17,871.00	£ 3,574.20	£ 21,445.20	
20/06/24	LTH165	MossKing Associates Limited	Heritage project management Apr-May	£ 3,150.00	£ -	£ 3,150.00	
10/06/24	LTH166	Anglia Print	Leaflets for activities	£ 62.00	£ -	£ 62.00	
27/06/24	LTH167	HAT Projects	Design team fees tender prep	£ 2,743.33	£ 560.33	£ 3,303.66	
27/06/24	LTH167	HAT Projects	Planning condition discharge disbursement	£ 230.00	£ -	£ 230.00	
03/07/24	LTH168	MossKing Associates Limited	Project management fees June	£ 3,609.00	£ -	£ 3,609.00	
30/06/24	LTH169	People Landscape Buildings	Interpretation design fees	£ 1,860.00	£ 372.00	£ 2,232.00	
03/07/24	LTH170	MossKing Associates Limited	Heritage project management June	£ 1,290.00	£ -	£ 1,290.00	
	LTH171	HAS					
Total spend to date				£ 624,481.27	£ 113,658.15	£ 738,139.42	

Next steps

- During July and August, I will be managing/undertaking the following:
 - Supporting the tender process re clarifications.
 - Continuing work with ESC re land transfers and the UKPN substation.
 - Reviewing the business plan, including a review of the café operating model.
 - Procuring any further surveys or specialist advice to support the design team and/or tender.
 - Developing content for interpretation and planning activity/engagement.
 - Supporting the process to recruit our first Heritage Trainee.
 - Financial control over expenditure to support the above (in line with approved budgets).
 - Reporting as necessary to other funders.

Sheila Moss King
Project Manager