NON-CONFIDENTIAL BOROUGH OF TAMWORTH



INFRASTRUCTURE, SAFETY AND GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30th September 2024

Wednesday, 2nd October, 2024, 6.00 pm in Town Hall, Market Street, Tamworth

SUPPLEMENT – ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Further to the Agenda and Papers for the above meeting, previously circulated, please find attached the following further information, which was not available when the agenda was issued:

Agenda No. Item

8. FHSF Update September 2024 (Pages 3 - 20) (Report of the Leader of the Council)

Yours faithfully

Chief Executive

To Councillors: M Couchman, L Wood, C Adams, M Bailey, L Clarke, M Clarke, J Oates, B Price and N Statham.



Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny Copartie nda Item 8

Wednesday 02nd October 2024

Report of the Leader of the Council

FHSF Update

Purpose

To provide an update on the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) programme of works.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. The Committee note the progress and challenges of the programme of works

Executive Summary

Below is a summary of how each individual project within the Future High Street Fund is progressing. As we are now firmly in the delivery phase of the project, the contractor Speller Metcalfe and the TBC project team are working to progress works whilst still ensuring the town centre remains open and functional for businesses, residents and visitors.

Project Specific Updates

Middle Entry/FLEX:

Significant progress has been made in these areas since the last report in June 2024. The demolition of the vacant units to the south of Middle Entry is now complete with the Flex build underway. The contract for the Flex has been executed and the current anticipated completion date is April 2025.

The Middle Entry works have not yet commenced and are currently being re-programmed and re-costed. The legal agreement and works licence is currently being drafted and once jointly agreed with Peer Group will be signed and a programme for works established. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government are aware of the amendment and have consented to this. Works are currently programmed to start in the new year.

A stopping up application for the highways to the rear of the Middle Entry units is being progressed with support from Staffordshire County Council. The stopping up order is important because the construction of the new Flex building is on Highways land. Utilities diversions around the Middle Entry units are being identified and fall into Speller Metcalfe's scope of works. The contract for the Middle Entry works is targeted for end of September/start of October and is subject to Peer Group's approval of the works licence. The TBC project team are working with the Economic Development Team who are preparing the operational business case for the units, work to start attracting potential tenants is underway with marketing options to be reviewed.

Castle Gateway:

The Nationwide legal agreements are agreed and signed, with the handover of the former Peel Café to Natonwide's fit out contractor, ISG complete. Their fit out is estimated to take between 3-6 months. The TBC project team continue to liaise with Nationwide to see if they can complete this as soon as possible to facilitate the vacating of their existing unit. Until they have moved out of 26 Market St, we are unable to commence the demolition exercise. An application for the shopfront, made by Nationwide Building Society, was consented at the 02nd July 2024 planning committee .

The initial design and opening up works scope for Market Street properties has been prepared and has had conservation officer input. This is now with Speller Metcalfe to price and will be split into two stages: an enabling and opening up works package followed by the main works. This is necessary to understand the true condition of the building beneath the existing finishes. Upon the last visit to the site, it is clear that there are issues with water ingress and a pigeon infestation. The first phase of the enabling works has been completed, this consisted of an environmental clean and clearance of excess/overgrown vegetation at the rear of the building. Further enabling works are underway with opening up works (as agreed with Historic England and the conservation officer) to better understand the condition of the building before we progress to main works. The focus for the next phase of work will be ensuring the building is weatherproof with any holes/water ingress remedied. The stage one works contract is being prepared and the aim is for this to be sent out for signature by the second week of October.

Castle Gateway designs have been submitted for planning consent, which it is hoped will go to committee in October/November. The TBC project team are in dialogue with Staffordshire Highways with regards to plans for the public realm in this area. The TBC project team has been successful in securing UK Shared Prosperity Funding to aid with improvements to the Castle Gateway area and Scheduled Ancient Monument as these elements are outside the scope of the original FHSF scheme. The Castle Gateway Pre-Construction Services Agreement has now been signed following approval from Programme Board to proceed earlier this year. The works to widen the bridge are due to commence after the fireworks event to ensure minimal disruption, appropriate notice for pedestrian diversions will be implemented closer to the time. Trial holes to determine foundations and structural investigations took place in July, following consent from Historic England to proceed, with additional input from the county archaeologist and conservation officer given this borders the Castle and is within the Scheduled Ancient Monument. The main works to the Castle Gateway area, Castle Bridge and the Grade 2 listed Market Street properties will also require planning and scheduled ancient monument consent.

College Quarter:

The second Tamworth Enterprise Centre is due to complete in November, although there will also be a fit out to complete. Similarly to the Flex, the TBC project team continue to work with the Economic Development Team to source tenants, with a potential lead for a tenant on the entire top floor currently in negotiation.

The St.Editha's Square planning application is currently pending responses to highways queries. A s111 agreement required with SCC for works to adopted areas is in progress and the works information has been issued to Speller Metcalfe for pricing. Early indications show that the cost is over the original budget and has been subject to a value engineering exercise. There is a contingency available following award of extra funding following the full council meeting on February 27th. Currently works are likely to start in Autumn. Speller Metcalfe and TBC are mindful of keeping the town centre pedestrian and delivery routes open and would need to factor in the works required to the Middle Entry bridge links whilst programming the works to the square.

The TBC project team are working with the Economic Development Team in regards to market and trader relocation and communications during the works. Initial engagement has taken place with further visits to be undertaken when commencement dates are agreed.

There is good progress on site and the new South Staffordshire College is adopting a phased approach to opening, with this anticipated to start from Easter 2025. The college manage their own build contract and have now spent the entirety of their portion of the Future High Street Fund which is positive. The rest of their funding is from the Department of Education and covers their build.

Programme:

The programme remains challenging with such an ambitious suite of projects. As a reminder the requirements of the government funding originally was to ensure that money is contractually committed by the end of March 2024, actual delivery can continue after this date. However, The Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (now superseded by The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government herein MHCLG) in 2023 communicated that an extension to the spend deadline has been awarded to delivering authorities, with funds needing to be committed by September 2024 and spent by March 2025. It is clear that some of the projects whilst moving along well are likely to extend beyond this date, this has been flagged in our monitoring reports to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. At a recent meeting with MHCLG the delivery officer has no concerns about the progress that Tamworth Borough Council are making and has suggested that there will be a further extension granted for delivering authorities beyond March 2025, as yet there has been no further guidance on this.

The current position is that the team are working hard to get FHSF grant money spent by the end of March, and work towards this is progressing well.

Budget:

As the project continues to move forwards the budget monitoring currently indicates that the forecast spend is within the budget set at Full Council in February 2024.

As mentioned in the programme section above, some projects are due to extend beyond the March 2025 spend date. For the most part, the projects affected have match funding from the Borough Council and so the aim would be to spend the grant portion of the budget before March 2025 and use our own funds beyond this date as this is not bound by the same spend deadline.

It should be noted that draft costs have not yet been received for the Midde Entry works or Market Street properties. The condition of the Market Street properties was considerably worse than anticipated when the bid was pulled together due to specialist reports that have subsequently been commissioned. There is potential that the costs for the project may be higher than anticipated and exceed budget, given the extent of repairs required. Future meetings will provide updates on this position as the project progressesShould the project come in overbudget and cannot be met with contingency funds , value engineering and scope will need to be reviewed with programme board.

Below table indicates the budgets for the Future High Street Fund Programme of works. The table illustrates spend to date from the beginning of the scheme, current commitments and accruals, year to date spend and current year budgets.

Since the beginning of the programme and award of the funds, the programme has been split down into three cost centres: College Quarter, Middle Entry and Castle Gateway. College Quarter consists of: the refurbishment of the Victorian Co-op building into the second enterprise centre, the new college building and St Editha's Square landscaping. Middle Entry includes Middle Entry works, the new Flex building and landscaping. Castle Gateway

consists of Castle Bridge replacement, Nationwide's relocation to the former Peel Café, the demolition of the old Nationwide building, refurbishment of the Market Street properties and landscaping of the Castle Gateway area.

Project/ Cost Centre	Total Commitments	Total Accruals	2024/25 Year to Date Actuals	Sub Total	2024/25 Budget	Total Spend to Date
College Quarter	1,640,864.57	1290.75	955,329.05	2,597,484.37	3,197,960.00	14,820,976.62
Middle Entry	2,242,613.70	0	462,527.81	2,705,141.51	5,842,790.00	2,337,059.00
Castle Gateway	3,163,486.01	303	664,431.74	3,828,220.75	5,784,050.00	1,878,428.99

Communications:

Communications to date have been challenging because the programme timetable keeps changing as the design process continues. Speller Metcalfe and the Borough Council continue to engage directly with affected businesses, street traders and market stall holders. Affected market stall traders have been moved further down George St whilst works are underway to the Flex, Middle Entry and Peel Café following successful negotiation with the market provider LSD. The communications plan is in place consists of a communications activity timetable which shows planned activities and milestones as well as individual, detailed engagement plans for site specific plans for communications for stakeholders directly affected by site specific works. Hoarding wrap designs are displayed on the Enterprise Centre and Flex hoardings. Additional designs can be added to the Castle Gateway and Market Street hoardings once these go up. Advertising consent was obtained via planning by the FHSF Officer, applications will be made for the remaining sites. The FHSF officer will work with the communications team to produce some informative video content that is available to the public. The first video has been published, detailing a behind the scenes look at the TEC2 development in the former Co-op.

Resource Implications

Budget constraints as currently known have been met following Full Council awarding additional funding.

Legal/Risk Implications Background

Legal- Outstanding contract/ works licence with Peer Group for works to Middle Entry and contracts with Speller Metcalfe for remaining sites.

Risk- Risk is reported monthly by our project management and cost consultant to the project team via risk register and monthly client review update. The TBC project team also attend the Audit and Governance committee quarterly to report on FHSF risks. The last meeting of this committee was 26th June 2024, the report and accompanying risk register was exempt.

Equalities Implications

See CIA that refers to this report directly.

Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)

TBC continues to review with the contractor, Speller Metcalfe to monitor if any adverse impact or opportunities to mitigate potential impact if any are identified As there is new builds and demolition taking place there is a potential for negative carbon impact and emissions. Several of the projects within the FHSF scheme are refurbishments designed to restore

original buildings in favour of demolish and rebuild. Additionally, additional planting and greenery will be added to new public realm areas and has potential to positively increase biodiversity.

Whilst Tamworth Borough Council are not managing the college build, it should be noted that the influx of new students and staff into the town centre presents an opportunity to promote cycling and use of public transport as a more sustainable form of travel. However, it is to be expected that additional car users will be present in town centre, thus potentially resulting in a small increase in emissions in the town centre.

Background Information

N/A

Report Author

Anna Miller- Assistant Director – Growth & Regeneration Alice Poulton- Regeneration Project Officer

List of Background Papers

N/A

Appendices

Community Impact Assessment





Community impact Assessment

Part 1 – Details				
What Policy/ Procedure/ Strategy/Project/Service is being assessed?	Future High Street Fund Programme of Works.			
Date Conducted	12.06.2024			
Name of Lead Officer and Service Area	Alice Poulton ,Regeneration Project Officer			
Commissioning Team (if applicable)				
Director Responsible for project/service area	Anna Miller, Growth and Re	egeneration		
Who are the main stakeholders	Internal council teams/serv Economic Development an Communications, Finance, Street Scene	d Regeneration,		
	Local businesses, town cer residents , South Staffordsl County Highways, Nationw (property team and Tamwo	nire college students , ide Building Society rth branch)		
Describe what consultation has been undertaken. Who was involved and what was the outcome	What's Next Tamworth Survey – 2019 ahead of bid submission to government in 2020.			
Outline the wider research that has taken place (E.G. commissioners, partners, other providers etc)				
What are you assessing? Indicate with an 'x' which applies	A decision to review or change a service			
	A Strategy/Policy/Procedure			
	A function, service or project	х		
What kind of assessment is it? Indicate with an 'x'	New	X		
which applies	Existing			
	Being reviewed			



Being reviewed as a result of budget	
constraints / End of	
Contract	

Part 2 – Summary of Assessment

Who will be affected and how?

There will be multiple affected stakeholders, the programme of works involves internal teams but will also affect those in proximity to where the work takes place. This primarily will be town centre users, residents, businesses. It will also involve other delivery partners such as the Highways department of the county council who will be working with us on agreements for the public realm works.

Are there any other functions, policies or services linked to this impact assessment?

Yes x No

If you answered 'Yes', please indicate what they are?

Assets – acquisition and ongoing management and maintenance of TBC owned buildings that are part of the FHSF project

Economic Development – TEC2 and Flex operational activity, designing operating model as well as attracting and managing tenants.

Planning- reviewing applications and dealing with any objections

Communications- Communicating progress, responding to press enquiries . ensuring key information is available

Street Scene- additional maintenance of new public realm and any planting Highways – As part of the existing reverse agency agreement with TBC, the Highways team will be responsible

Part 3 – Impact on the Community

Thinking about each of the Areas below, does or could the Policy function, or service have a <u>direct</u> impact on them?

Impact Area	Yes	No	Reason (provide brief explanation)
Age		X	Outputs of scheme are designed to be beneficial for all age groups. Some schemes may be more targeted benefits e.g the college will



			directly advantage school leaver ages. However, the remainder of the schemes should be accessible and beneficial to all age groups as are mainly focused around accessibility, improvement of public realm surroundings and diversifying retail and business offer in the town centre.
Disability	X		Accessible public realm adjustments to St Editha's Square – currently not level so can be difficult for those with wheelchairs or sight impairments to navigate. Slopes to be added to Middle Entry/Flex plaza as well as steps to provide alternate means of access that isn't currently available. Bridge in Castle Gateway area will be widened to increase capacity and will be accessible to wheelchair/mobility scooter uses. The new TEC2 building has a platform lift installed, building was not previously accessible. The paving has been chosen which is non-slip to facilitate safe use by all.
Gender Reassignment		X	The components of the FHSF scheme are broadly: new accessible public realm, improving link between heritage assets/walkways through the town centre and new offer for retail and new services office space at TEC2. The majority of these should not have any negative impact on individuals who are going through gender reassignment. Any prospective tenants for the flexible retail space and the TEC2 would be assessed equally and not discriminated against on this basis.
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X	There is no direct impact on those who are married, civil partnered –



			ashama is designed to be baneficial
			scheme is designed to be beneficial
			to all town centre users regardless
Drognong, 9 Motorpit,		1.5	of marital/partnered status
Pregnancy & Maternity		X	The components of the FHSF
			scheme are broadly: new
			accessible public realm, improving
			link between heritage
			assets/walkways through the town
			centre and new offer for retail and
			new services office space at TEC2.
			The majority of these should not
			have any negative impact on
			individuals who are pregnant or on
			or returning from maternity leave.
			Any prospective tenants for the
			flexible retail space and the TEC2
			would be assessed equally and not
			discriminated against on this basis.
Race		x	The components of the FHSF
			scheme are broadly: new
			accessible public realm, improving
			link between heritage
			assets/walkways through the town
			centre and new offer for retail and
			new services office space at TEC2.
			All schemes are designed to be
			accessible for anyone from any
			race. Any prospective tenants for
			the flexible retail space and the
			TEC2 would be assessed equally
			and not discriminated against on
			this basis.
Religion or belief		Х	The components of the FHSF
o o			scheme are broadly: new
			accessible public realm, improving
			link between heritage
			assets/walkways through the town
			centre and new offer for retail and
			new services office space at TEC2.
			All schemes are designed to be
			accessible for anyone from any
			religious background or belief. Any
			prospective tenants for the flexible
			retail space and the TEC2 would be
			assessed equally and not
			discriminated against on this basis.
Sexual orientation		х	The components of the FHSF
			scheme are broadly: new
			accessible public realm, improving
			link between heritage
			assets/walkways through the town
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		centre and new offer for retail and new services office space at TEC2. All schemes are designed to be accessible for all regardless of sexual orientation. Any prospective tenants for the flexible retail space and the TEC2 would be assessed equally and not discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation.
Sex	X	The components of the FHSF scheme are broadly: new accessible public realm, improving link between heritage assets/walkways through the town centre and new offer for retail and new services office space at TEC2. All schemes are designed to be accessible for all regardless of sex. Any prospective tenants for the flexible retail space and the TEC2 would be assessed equally and not discriminated against on basis of an individual's sex.
Gypsy/Travelling	X	
Community		
Those with caring/dependent responsibilities	X	
Those having an offending past	X	
Children	X	No scheme directed specifically at children but neither are there any elements of the scheme that should negatively impact them. Improvement to public spaces should be a benefit to children who are town centre users. Those of school leaver age and future generations will benefit from having a new college facility.
Vulnerable Adults	X	Vulnerable adults should not be negatively impacted or have any issues using or accessing the new retail offer or office provision provided. Neither should any of the new public spaces not be accessible or be hard to use for vulnerable adults.
Families	X	
Those who are homeless	X	The schemes should not require



		relocation of any homeless or rough sleepers. It should be noted that whilst the schemes are designed to improve the town centre and increase footfall and spending, homeless individuals will not directly see a positive impact as are not likely to have disposable income to use the new retail units or may not be in employment or in a position to benefit from the TEC2 as this is targeted specifically at local businesses.
Those on low income	X	Whilst components of the scheme do not have a direct impact, it should be noted that as some of the scheme is related to new retail that this is dependent on spending potential and prices of goods for individuals as to whether this in particular is accessible. Other schemes that form part of the FHSF should not have a direct or negative impact.
Those with drug or alcohol problems	X	None of the schemes should present any exclusion for those with drug or alcohol issues or any opportunity to potentially exacerbate any existing problems
Those with mental health issues	X	The schemes should not negatively impact anyone with mental health issues. The schemes are designed to improve the experience of town centre users. Any prospective tenants for the Flexible retail space and TEC2 should have equal opportunities to apply for units regardless of and without discrimination of any mental health issues.
Those with physical health issues	X	The schemes should not negatively impact anyone with physical health issues. The schemes are designed to improve the experience of town centre users, making the town centre physically more accessible as public realm is improved to be more level and user friendly. Any prospective tenants for the Flexible retail space and TEC2 should have equal opportunities to apply for



			units regardless of and without discrimination of any physical health issues.
Social inclusion Please include refugees and asylum seekers,		Х	Ticaliti locace.
Social inclusion: Armed Forces The Armed Forces Covenant is a pledge that together we acknowledge and understand that those who have served in the armed forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect and any impact should be considered		X	The components of the FHSF scheme are broadly: new accessible public realm, improving link between heritage assets/walkways through the town centre and new offer for retail and new services office space at TEC2. All schemes are designed to be accessible for all regardless of whether individuals or families associated have an armed forces background. Any prospective tenants for the flexible retail space and the TEC2 would be assessed equally and not discriminated against on basis of an individual's previous service history.
Health and Wellbeing	X		Whilst the scheme is not aimed at improving health and wellbeing there are some positive impacts as a result of the interventions that may have an impact. The improvement of public realm offers additional outdoor and green space for town centre users. The potential for new business opportunities with the flexible rental units and rental space may improve opportunities for individuals and therefore wellbeing as a result of improved prosperity/personal circumstances.
Climate Change	X		As there is new builds and demolition taking place there is a potential for negative carbon impact and emissions. Several of the projects within the FHSF scheme are refurbishments designed to restore original buildings in favour of demolish and rebuild. Additionally, additional planting and greenery will be added to new public realm areas and has potential to positively increase biodiversity. Whilst Tamworth Borough Council



are not managing the college build, it should be noted that the influx of
new students and staff into the town centre presents an opportunity to promote cycling and use of public
transport as a more sustainable form of travel. However, it is to be
expected that additional car users
will be present in town centre, thus potentially resulting in a small
increase in emissions in the town
centre.

Part 4 - Risk Assessment

From evidence given from previous question, please detail what measures or changes will be put in place to mitigate adverse implications. this includes climate change considerations

This is the section in which to please outline any actions to mitigate negative or enhance positive impacts in terms of economic, environmental or wider societal considerations, and actions to review and monitor the overall impact of the change accordingly.

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Impact Area	Details of the Impact	Action to reduce risk
Climate Change	With increased engagement with town centre and the addition of the new college, waste, cleanliness, pollution and noise would need to be maintained. Overtime, high footfall to the town centre would be positive, but in the future might result in additional street cleaning or monitoring. This is to be reviewed. Currently, the high street is considered to be underutilised so there is infrastructure already to attract more visitors than the town has now.	Engagement with street scene team around maintenance of public spaces and litter management. South Staffordshire College will have their own policies around ensuring their impact on the town centre is positive. In terms of influx of vehicle traffic, controlled issuing of permits in restricted numbers and promotion of public transport routes may assist but ultimately not much the council can do about the increase in footfall as more students come into class. The existing site is just outside of the town centre so it is not much further for existing staff and students to travel to.
Low Income	A very small part of the scheme (Flex retail units) may	Monitoring of spend and prices set by individual retailers could assist but realistically the council have
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potentially sell goods that might be at a higher price point, therefore there is potential risk that the Flex retail space would be under utilised or that there may not be enough spend for it to remain open.	little control over independent businesses prices as these will be dictated by their own running costs and profit margins. Research at the time of the FHSF bid suggested that a diversification of retail offer may bring new customers or renewed interest from existing visitors so shows there is demand for the space. Existing affordable retail offer will remain in the town centre.



Part 5 - Action Plan and Review

Detail in the plan below, actions that you have identified in your Community Impact Assessment, which will eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations.

If you are unable to eliminate or reduce negative impact on any of the impact areas, you should explain why

Impact (positive or negative) identified	Action	Person(s) responsible	Target date	Required outcome
Positive: Increased footfall in the town centre, increased dwell time with new retail offer and public realm as well as increased users of town centre with college and second enterprise centre. Presents opportunities for both existing and new businesses to benefit from increased prosperity in the town centre.	Targeted communications and engagement plan to keep traders and businesses informed throughout the works to ensure no negative impact and that visitors to town centre are aware that the town centre is open for business. Monitor via spending and footfall reports already in place and sent to the Economic Development team to measure impact.	Alice Poulton/Anna Miller	By end of project April 2025- monitoring of data and footfall reports ongoing yearly with no fixed end date as informs success of FHSF interventions and other Economic Development work streams	Completion of all project outputs to ensure positive increase in town centre use. Continued monitoring of reports and data to measure impact.
Positive: improvement of town centre surroundings and accessibility	New relandscaped areas to be more even and accessible. General addition of seating and planting to improve dwell areas for all town centre users and to create a cohesive town centre design that	Alice Poulton/Anna Miller	By June 2025	Completion of public realm/Nationwide demolition to ensure benefits are realised.



	draws people through it. Improved viewpoints and access into the castle grounds once old Nationwide building is demolished.			
Negative & Positive: Climate Change	Specifically as a result of increased use in town centre as has shown decline in previous years. Will likely require monitoring of additional traffic and footfall and measures to ensure additional waste and usage of town entre is effectively managed and cleaned. As a positive impact, there will be increased biodiversity as a result of new planting in public realm and castle gateway areas and installation of sustainable urban drainage systems.	Alice Poulton/Anna Miller	June 2025	Completion of project and continued monitoring and maintenance of new planting. Will require college and council to monitor parking data and parking permits and emissions from any new buildings. Whilst new buildings are replacing other buildings that has existing energy output and uses – most should be more efficient as either new builds or refurbishments with more efficient energy out puts and EPC ratings.

Date of Review (If applicable)

Guidance and form updated July 2023 following CMT approval.



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