

North East Derbyshire District Council

Clay Cross Town Board

Friday 5th March 2021

Accelerated Projects Update

Report of Gill Callingham, Director of Growth and Economic Development

Purpose of the Report

- To update Board members on progress made with projects funded by the Accelerated Projects budget

1 Report Details

- 1.1 On 25th September 2020 central government confirmed the approval of £500k to be used on bringing forward a number of projects identified in the Clay Cross Town Investment Plan.
- 1.2 A condition of the original funding offer was that all proposed projects had to be completed by 31st March 2021, and all expenditure defrayed. Because of difficulties for a number town team locations to progress their proposals, due mainly to the impact of Covid and local authority capacity, this deadline has now been extended to March 2022.
- 1.3 The projects originally proposed by the project team were:
 - Relocation of tenants from Bridge Street depot and site clearance
 - Demolition of the former junior school
 - Purchase of vacant former job centre
 - Public art programme

The purchase of the former job centre has not been progressed as the current owner did not respond to a request for dialogue. A replacement project was identified, purchase of DCC's former constabulary building, and agreed with government. Project updates are as follows:

1.4 Bridge Street Depot

All tenants have been successfully relocated, and demolition contractors took control of the site on 18th February, with site clearance due to start on 23rd February. Planning consultants have been appointed, and a planning application for a mixed-use commercial development will be submitted during March 2021.

1.5 Demolition of the former junior school

Tender specifications for demolition have been drawn up by DCC, and a detailed programme has been prepared. Seasonal restrictions on ecological surveys required for planning approval means that activity won't be seen on site until the summer, with expected completion and handover of a cleared site by October 2021.

1.6 Public art programme

There has been significant activity generated by this proposal, which is to produce digital images related to the Town Deal and project them onto the ventilation shaft on Market Street and onto other structures. To date, 14 virtual workshops have been held with care homes, schools and Chesterfield College to generate artwork that can be converted to digital images for projection. A lecturer from the college gave particularly positive feedback, saying '*it was a terrific opportunity for the students to be involved in a "live" project, very local so accessible to the students, look at the two briefs and to meet active practicing artists*'. MCHLG have promoted the outcomes to other town deal locations as an innovative project and an example of best practice. It is proposed to delay the projection onto the shafts to reflect the easing of lockdown and ensure a greater number of people engaging with the art. See Appendix 1 DLC Feb_report, Appendix 2 February Update Clay Cross and Appendix 3 Lucie M Feb_report for more details

1.7 Purchase of the former constabulary building

Agreement in principle has been reached between DCC and NEDDC for NEDDC to purchase the building, and for the current occupants to remain for a short period of time on a peppercorn rent until a new location could be identified for them. An independent valuation will be carried out to obtain a price for the property, which will be binding on both parties.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 In conclusion, all accelerated projects are progressing well and are on programme.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

3.1 All of the above projects are central to interventions contained in the Clay Cross Town Investment Plan which has been the subject of a comprehensive consultation exercise

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 No other options deliverable in the given timeframe

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

- 5.1.1 All projects will be delivered within the £500k budget established. The significant risk of the difficulty in successfully relocating depot tenants has been overcome, and the demolition risks will be owned by the demolition contractors

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

- 5.2.1 None

5.3 Human Resources Implications

- 5.3.1 None

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 For Board members to note the positive progress made on all accelerated projects
- 6.2 For Board members to agree to delay the projections from March to the summer to reflect the projected easing of the National lockdown and ensure greater community engagement.