

Avon Beach Promenade Raising and Widening Project**1. PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report Type:	Public Report for Recommendation
Purpose of Report:	To seek approval for additional funds to allow the project to proceed
Recommendations:	It is RECOMMENDED that: a) £224,000 is allocated from unallocated revenue reserves to the capital programme to fund the Avon Beach Promenade Project in order for construction work to commence in January 2018
Wards:	Mundeford & Friars Cliff;
Contact Officer:	Lindsay Cass – Head of Property and Engineering

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Council has a capital programme project to raise and widen a 250m long section of promenade between the Noisy Lobster café/restaurant and the higher section of promenade towards Friars Cliff in the east. The project will reduce the risks of coastal erosion and flooding of the promenade by the sea in accordance with the 'Hold the Line' policy in the Shoreline Management Plan for Poole and Christchurch Bays.
- 2.2. The project is supported by the Dorset Coastal Forum and funding of £80,000 has been secured from the Coastal Communities Fund.
- 2.3. The original intention was for construction to commence on site in October 2017 but this was delayed pending a decision on the planning application and the evaluation of tenders.
- 2.4. Planning permission for the project was granted in October 2017 and tenders for the work have now been evaluated. The most economically advantageous tender submitted is significantly higher than the funding available, so additional funding is required if the project is to proceed.
- 2.5. The original project estimate was produced in October 2016. Since then the design of the scheme has been developed which resulted in larger quantities of work being included in the tender documents. There have also been changes to the method of fixing the precast concrete units in place to resist the forces generated during extreme storm events, together with enhancements to some elements of the specified works resulting from the public engagement events organised by the Dorset Coastal Forum.
- 2.6. Officers estimate the cost of works but it is not until the project is put out to tender that the council receives a market price for delivering a project.
- 2.7. The construction costs shown in the table below includes the cost of solar-powered uplighters along the edge of the widened promenade (£3,700),

benches, bicycle hoops and signage (£10,500) and buff-coloured surfacing of the promenade. The benches, bicycle hoops, signage and buff-coloured surfacing were recommendations from the Dorset Coastal Forum as a result of their public engagement events. There are not any further 'value engineering' opportunities for reducing the project cost.

3. FUNDING SHORTFALL

3.1. The funding shortfall is estimated to be £224,000 as set out below:

Cost	
Expenditure already incurred	£45,000
Construction costs	£495,000
Total cost	£540,000
Funding	
Council capital programme	- £153,000
Coastal Community Fund	- £80,000
3 rd Party contribution	- £83,000
Total funding	-316,000
Shortfall	£224,000

3.2. The Council has approached the Dorset Coastal Forum to explore the possibility of obtaining additional funds from the Coastal Community Fund. They have said that there is no additional funding available from the current grant allocation and, whilst an application for funding from the next round could be submitted, this wouldn't be allocated for about another year and they believe it to be highly unlikely that additional funding would be secured for a project that has already received grant aid.

3.3. If the funding of the shortfall is approved by the Council, work would commence in mid-January 2018 and be completed by Easter weekend 2018

4. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Plan & Council Objectives

4.1. The matter under consideration impacts upon the Corporate Plan in the following areas:-

- EC1 - Focus on collaboration and partnership in the delivery of services
- SC2 - Promote healthy and active lifestyles
- ME2 - Balance growth and development with the conservation of our built and natural heritage

Legal

4.2. The Council is both a Coast Protection Authority and a Coastal Erosion Risk Management Authority as defined by the Coast Protection Act 1949. The Act

gives powers and responsibilities to the Council to carry out new or replacement schemes to ensure the coastline is protected. These measures can take the form of hard (sea walls, promenades, rock armour or groynes) or soft (dunes, marshes and beach replenishment) engineering works. The Council would also be expected to follow the policies in its Shoreline Management Plan, which is intended to manage flooding and coastal erosion risks in the long term. Although the site of the proposed works is leased out, carrying out coast protection or sea defence works remains the responsibility of the Council.

Environmental

- 4.3. The planning application included an Environmental Impact Assessment, Heritage Statement and Tree Survey, which were all considered to be acceptable by the Planning Committee.
- 4.4. Since the planning approval was granted a Phase 1 Bat Survey has been carried out in response to concerns expressed by local residents. The survey concluded: *All of the trees within the survey area were recorded as holding negligible potential to support roosting bats. Therefore, no further surveys have been recommended. However, to contribute towards a gain in the biodiversity of the local area, it is advised that enhancement measures are incorporated into the scheme. Suitable enhancement measures include the erection of bat boxes on local retained trees within the site ownership.*
- 4.5. Bat boxes will be provided when the scheme is complete.

Financial and Risk

- 4.6. The tenders that have been received and evaluated have resulted in a further allocation of £224,000 being required if the project is to proceed.
- 4.7. There is a risk that adverse weather conditions or other unforeseen events could delay the completion of the project and increase costs.

Equalities

- 4.8. There are no equality issues arising from the recommendations in this report.

Consultation and Engagement

- 4.9. Public consultation was carried out as part of the planning application process and the comments made were considered by the Planning Committee.
- 4.10. The Dorset Coastal Forum carried out public engagement on the 'look and feel' of the promenade project and the recommendations from this process have been incorporated into the project design.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. Planning permission for the Avon Beach Promenade project was granted in October 2017 and tenders for the work have now been evaluated. The most economically advantageous tender submitted is significantly higher than the funding available, so additional funding of £224,000 is required if the project is to proceed.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

Tenders received – Exempt Information Category 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).