

19th March 2019

Policy, Projects & Resources Committee

Brentwood Town Hall Update

Report of: Steven Butcher – Project and Programme Manager

Wards Affected: All

This report is: Public

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The attached report provides an update on the Town Hall redevelopment programme, including the community hub and partners, Council Chamber and back office space, commercial space and residential units.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 For Members to note the progress of the Town Hall Transformation Programme.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 In October 2016 Brentwood Borough Council approved the redevelopment of the Town Hall with a number of distinct elements:

- Council Service
- Community Hub (with customer facing partners co-locating)
- Police back office for Brentwood Borough
- Residential units (19 x 1- and 2-bedroom apartments)
- Commercial space
- Business start-up space

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

Construction

4.1 Work began on site in November 2017 with the soft strip out of the building, including asbestos removal.

4.2 When the main contractors, Farrans, started on site in March 2018, much of the early work concentrated on demolitions, stripping the roof, excavations for lift pits and propping up in preparation for the installation of the steel work. These initial works are now completed with main areas of activity shown below:

- Roof works and window installation close to completion
- 1st fix mechanical and electrical are progressing throughout the building
- Partitions on the 2nd and 3rd floor are 95% complete boarded one side and sign off procedure ongoing to close walls
- Lift installations progressing
- Curtain walling installation to the rear of the building on-going
- Rendering to parapets and rear façade
- Preparation works in basement for decoration
- Plant room installation on going
- Front façade window and stonework installation is underway
- Groundworks underway
- Screeding preparations ready
- 2nd fix carpentry, window boards, doors, skirting throughout

4.3 Forthcoming planned activities in the coming weeks include:

- Plastering and making good to walls
- Bulk heads and ceilings throughout the building.
- Scaffold drop to front façade
- Balustrades and handrails to parapets
- Decking to apartment balconies
- Power changeover
- Brickwork cleaning

4.4 Currently there are in excess of 100 contractors on site.

4.5 The site continues to be well managed and safe and recently received a glowing report from a recent Health & Safety Executive visit.

- 4.6 The programme timescales are slightly over anticipated with the original target for the residential units to be completed by the end of March 2019, now forecast to be finished by 16th April 2019. The remainder of the building was expected to be completed by the end of May 2019. This is now expected to be 18th June 2019.
- 4.7 The delay has been caused by the discovery of further asbestos at the beginning of the programme.

Service Delivery Hub Partners

- 4.8 Discussions continue with the various groups who have engaged with the Council to take space within the Service Delivery Hub.
- 4.9 The Department for Work and Pensions has presented a business case to its finance board to relocate Brentwood Job Centre from its present site in Fairfield Road to the Town Hall. They plan to occupy a space equalling 204sqm/2196sqft, to include a front of house with 11 positions, training room, small back office and admin stores. The first stage in the DWP governance has been approved (December 2018) and a draft agreement for lease has been prepared. Subject to full business case approval, expected in March 2019, the intention is that the Brentwood Job Centre will relocate to the Town Hall in September 2019.
- 4.10 Brentwood Mind has previously expressed a desire to locate to the new Town Hall. However, Brentwood Mind has announced that they will no longer be operating with effect from 31st March 2019. The space that was to be occupied by MIND will be utilized by the Electoral Services team as they relocate from Merrymeade House back to the Town Hall. This move is expected to take place in July/August 2019.
- 4.11 Brentwood Council for Voluntary Service, currently located at the multi-storey car park office, is looking to relocate back into the Town Hall to occupy a small back office space of 18sqm/193sqft.
- 4.12 Talks with Citizens Advice Brentwood are at an advanced stage with draft heads of terms being discussed for agreement with CAB board. It is anticipated that the move for CAB will coincide with DWP moves and is planned to take place in October 2019. The future lease agreement will be with Brentwood Borough Council and will allow the Assizes Trust scope to develop CAB's current accommodation in Crown Street and generate revenue income to be reinvested in the community.

- 4.13 Completing the service delivery hub, the new reception area will benefit from a range of meeting and interview rooms, waiting area and soft seating, digital information screens, as well as the self-service iPads, scanning software and payment kiosk.

Brentwood Borough Council back office

- 4.14 The Council's back office function will be mostly confined to the first floor. Some 604sqm/6501sqft has been set aside to form space for 74 fixed desk positions, meeting rooms, kitchen and rest area facilities, as well as offices/meeting rooms for the Leader and Chief Executive. CCTV, Parking and Enforcement will be located in the basement, with close proximity to the Police. Electoral Services will be located on the ground floor.

Council Chamber

- 4.15 The Council Chamber has been completely stripped to make way for new, more flexible furniture. This will make the chamber far more accessible, versatile and useful as a space, opening opportunities for seminars, conferences, larger weddings etc. to be held there and provide additional income. The Mayor's desk will be on a raised platform with a new glass Brentwood Crest above. The old crest will be positioned at the main entrance to the Chamber. See Appendix A – Layouts, artist's impression, progress photos.
- 4.16 Modern audio-visual solutions, including presentation and audio-conferencing equipment with wireless microphones will also improve the flexibility of the room, thereby increasing the revenue potential for the area.
- 4.17 Meeting rooms will be available for members to book ahead of committees.

Access

- 4.18 Officers have met with the Brentwood Access Group throughout the design process to ensure that the building meets and goes beyond the standards expected of a modern public building.
- 4.19 This includes providing an adult changing places facility, improving and increasing the number of disabled parking spaces, split level reception desk, and a hearing loop in reception, Chamber and Committee Rooms.

- 4.20 Officers have also met with the Alzheimer's Society to make sure that the Town Hall is as dementia friendly as possible. Recommendations applicable to signage and floor colourings will be adopted within the new Town Hall reception area and all public areas of the building.

Managing Agent

- 4.21 A procurement process has been undertaken to secure a private rental and commercial lettings managing agent. The outcome of this was a joint bid from Beresfords to manage and market the residential units and Sanderson Weatherall to market and manage the commercial spaces.
- 4.22 Whilst the Council will manage the community service delivery hub, the lettings agents will be responsible for marketing and letting both the residential units and the commercial space, including the start-up hubs. They will also be responsible for facilities management, invoicing and service charge management, lease renewals and compliance management of the spaces.
- 4.23 Initial meetings have taken place with the successful bidders and it is anticipated the marketing of the property beginning in Spring 2019.

Return to the Town Hall

- 4.24 As well as confirming that space planning is in line with members, staff and service delivery hub partners' expectations, officers are working to ensure that all requirements are captured and delivered as part of the plans for the return to the Town Hall.
- 4.25 As with the move out of the Town Hall, detailed plans will be established that make the transition back as smooth as possible so that there is no loss in service to the public and staff down time is kept to a minimum.

Members' Tour of the Town Hall

- 4.26 A tour was arranged for members to see progress on Friday 1st February 2019. A further tour is to be organised in April for members and staff to see the Town Hall closer to completion. Members will be notified to the times and date once confirmed with Farrans Construction.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To provide an update to Members on the progress of the Town Hall Transformation programme.

6. Consultation

6.1 Not applicable.

7. References to Corporate Plan

7.1 The Town Hall redevelopment programme fits with a number of corporate objectives set out in the vision for Brentwood 2016-19:

- Review the Town Hall project to deliver a community hub, shared by others
- Consider how Council assets can be utilised to promote sustainable development in the Borough
- Maximise Council assets to deliver corporate objectives and ensure community benefit
- Review our asset management governance strategy
- Develop new ways of working for the Council, improving service delivery and reducing costs and unnecessary bureaucracy
- Explore alternative methods of service delivery, including shared services and outsourcing

8. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Interim Chief Finance Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312829/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 Regular budget meetings are held with officers and the external project managers. The financial position of the Town Hall, as discussed at these meetings are captured within the Councils budget monitoring process and reported as part of Capital Programme Monitoring.
- 8.2 Due to the further discovery of asbestos at the beginning of the programme, this delay has incurred additional costs of £125k. This will be funded from internal borrowing and reported as part of the outturn report to Policy, Projects and Resources in June 2019.
- 8.3 Costs associated with the furniture and audio-visual equipment for the Town Hall are subject to a procurement exercise. Indicative figures are currently included in existing budgets, any changes to these will be reported accordingly.
- 8.4 The Town Hall business model is updated to reflect the current tenancies as detailed within the report. The income expected from these tenants are captured within the Medium-Term Financial Plan, and amendments will be reflected through the budget monitoring process.

- 8.5 Costs associated with staff moving back to the refurbished Town Hall, are expected to be met from within existing budgets.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Daniel Toohey, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312860/daniel.toohey@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.6 The Council when delivering these projects is required to comply with the EU procurement regulations and related legislation, as well as regulations on State Aid. Legal Services acting in conjunction with specialist legal and technical advisers are advising and assisting on these projects to ensure ongoing compliance.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

Health & Safety Implications

Name & Title: David Wellings, Corporate Health and Safety Advisor

Tel & Email: 01277 312500/david.wellings@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.7 Health & Safety, Farrans have been on site with 352 accident free days to date. No incidents have been reported and is being monitored closely by Farrans H&S team. The Health & Safety Executive has visited the site twice during the development (26/06/18 & 05/02/19) no issues have been reported

9 Background Papers (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

- 9.1 Not Applicable.

10 Appendices to this report

Appendix A – Layouts, artist's impression, progress photos

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Steven Butcher, Projects & Programme Manager

Telephone: 01277 312500

E-mail: steven.butcher@brentwood.gov.uk