

Report To: Charity Committee

Date of Meeting: Monday, 13th July 2020

Report Title: Status Report - Foreshore Trust Business Plan 2019/20 – 2024/25

Report By: Victoria Conheady, Assistant Director, Regeneration & Culture

Key Decision: N/A

Classification: Open

Purpose of Report

To present a review of progress made in 2019/20, and in year COVID-19 related activity

Recommendation(s)

1. That the report on 2019/2020 Business Plan as appended to this report be noted.
2. That the Committee delegate authority for any minor modifications to the Assistant Director of Regeneration and Culture in consultation with the Chair of the Charity Committee.
3. That it is agreed that the activity projected in the 2019/20-2024/2025, as agreed in March 2019 for this financial year be followed (except for exceptions noted in paragraphs 18-23).
4. That a business plan for the 5-year period commencing 2021/2022 be presented in March 2021, once COVID-19 impact on the Foreshore Trust assets are understood, and full engagement with the coastal users' group is allowed under covid social distancing rules.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. The Charity Committee requires a business plan to support its decision-making on the use of Foreshore Trust assets and surpluses.
2. It was agreed at the Charity Committee in March 2020 that this year's business plan be presented at the June 2020 meeting to enable full consultation and engagement with the Coastal Users Group after the appointment of a 'Foreshore Trust Liaison officer'
3. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the development of a business plan has not occurred

Background

1. The business plan normally is a rolling 5-year plan which is revised every year. It is based upon our current knowledge of maintenance, income, required capital works and proposals for new activities.
2. It normally is subject to review and modification as developing proposals and investigations are completed, most significantly in relation to the Stade facilities and the White Rock Baths area.
3. The plan should be reviewed annually.
4. Due to the impacts detailed below it has not been possible to work on a business plan for this financial year and into next financial year. We are still to understand the loss of income for the trust from the COVID-19 pandemic. This could impact the ability to deliver some of activity, beyond maintenance of our assets.
5. In addition to this, due to realignment of staff we have not had the capacity to draft a business plan for this financial year and will be basing maintenance and other activity on the 5-year plan which was adopted last year.

FY 20/21 and the COVID-19 pandemic

6. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented effect on all sectors and changed everyday life here and across the world. As a council we have had to quickly refocus our priorities and the way we operate. We are working at an incredible pace on a huge range of issues to protect our community and staff to reduce transmission of the infection, as well as continuing to deliver essential services. It has been an extraordinarily demanding period for the council, but staff have worked above and beyond coming together as one team to serve our community.
7. Councillors and officers have worked in collaboration with key local partners including East Sussex County Council (ESCC), the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), other Boroughs and Districts, the Sussex Resilience Forum, East Sussex Housing and Homelessness Cells, and participated in national networks such as the Local Government Association, District Councils Network, liaising with relevant central Government departments and briefing the local MP.
8. Following the initial intensity of the crisis, we are continuing to adapt and react often quickly as government guidance changes. Focus is now on moving towards the re-start and recovery phases for the economy and community of the town. This is being done whilst continuing to keep our residents safe; abiding by social distancing rules; continuing to support our most vulnerable residents; supporting businesses and maintaining essential services.

Relevant services which impact the Charity

9. **Waste and street cleaning services** - There has been minimal impact on waste and street cleaning services for residents. Garden waste collections were only suspended for 4 weeks, and all household waste and recycling collections undertaken by our waste contractor have continued uninterrupted. The introduction of further safety and social distancing measures for our in-house street cleaning staff has enabled street cleaning

services to continue, keeping the town clean and tidy. Bulky waste collections were resumed on 5 May after a short period of suspension.

10. **Foreshore Trust Car Parks - Parking changes during COVID-19** - Hastings Borough Council offered key workers the opportunity to park for free at all council and Foreshore Trust -owned off street car parks in the borough up for the 12 weeks up until the end of June 20.
11. **Suspended services** - A number of services were suspended due to lockdown restrictions or to staff being reassigned to other priority areas. The cliff railways, all public conveniences, playgrounds, tennis courts, bowling greens, putting pitches, multi-use games areas and skate ramps are closed. Work on the Country Park Visitor Centre has stopped. Pest control appointments were suspended. Some regeneration projects have paused.
12. **Cycle and Deck Chair Hire.** This provision was due to commence for the summer season and is currently delayed until government guidance allows the provision of these services. It is expected that there will be costs incurred for increased cleaning and health and safety measures, and it is possible that this means that there is insufficient return to make this work financial within the already agreed subsidy.
13. Due to Active Hastings staff being realigned to working on the community hub response, there has been no resource available to review the business operation model of this concession, though this is now taking place.

Financial Implications

14. The Council estimates loss of income to amount to some £3.37m on the basis that lockdown ends in July. Areas of income loss include, for example, car parks (including those owned by the Foreshore Trust), cliff railways, licensing, planning fees, rentals, investment income, business rates, Council Tax.
15. In regard to projected loss of income to the Foreshore Trust – assuming lockdown eased fully by the end of July is approx.:
 - a. £1.33m total council loss of income for car parks, of which it is estimated that the Foreshore Trust could potentially be impacted up to £600,000, although figures are still to be confirmed.
 - b. Currently £25,000 of rental income and lease income has been deferred for the first quarter of the 2020/21 financial year, but expectations are that this will be recovered by the end of the financial year.

RNLI lifeguard service – Summer 2020.

16. The RNLI lifeguard service was due to commence on the last weekend of May. However due to staffing availability (a number of their seasonal staff work in New Zealand/Australia, in our winter and with COVID-19 travel restrictions have been unable to travel; they have also been unable to recruit and train staff in the UK during the lockdown, the RNLI service is now due to commence here on 20th June, two weeks earlier than expected, subject to procuring appropriate PPE. That will be at Pelham, the busiest station.

17. Work continues to try to provide a further life guarding service at Marina, however that may be unachievable in the short to medium term, not least to the fact that the RNLI have do not have sufficient trained staff at present. Ironically the closure of our Summerfields pool, and others, means they can't train additional staff.

FY 20/21 –COVID-19 response: Overview of changes to FY 20/21 business plan items.

Foreshore Trust Combined Small & Events Grant Programme (responding to COVID-19 pandemic crisis) Round 3

18. The chair of the charity in consultation with the protector and the chair of the grant advisory panel agreed to alter the scheduled combines grant call to focus on the COVID-19 response. It was agreed that the grant call would primarily fund organisations to help our communities respond to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.
19. This COVID focussed round has had a quicker turnaround to award grant funding to local organisations that are responding to the challenges within our community presented by the current health pandemic. Applications will also be considered from organisations which have been indirectly disadvantaged by the pandemic or which bring proposals to enhance social cohesion at the present time.
20. The main aim of this programme will be to support smaller voluntary and community groups in carrying out activities and services supporting the current demands and needs of local residents to provide relief and support.
21. The fund also has ambitions to help with capacity building of smaller voluntary and community groups to strengthen their ability to carry out their work. Grants of up to £6,000 will be awarded to voluntary and community groups providing support within Hastings. To release the funding as quickly as possible the call was open for less time than normal.

Large Grants Scheme

22. Officers were planning to launch this programme this year, however due to the workload of COVID-19 directed combined scheme, and staff being realigned to the council's response during March/April and part of May, the launch of this scheme has been delayed. This scheme will be financed during 21/22 and successful programmes will commence activity from April 2021.
23. **Electric vehicle charge points** - The installation of electric vehicle charge points in Pelham car park was agreed in March 2020 and is due for completion during the Summer/Autumn of 2020.

2019/2020 Business plan achievements:

24. Appendix 1 gives an overview of the main achievements of the business plan across the last financial year.
25. Some highlighted achievements are detailed as follows:
 - a. Page 1 – Completion of white rock water feature
 - b. Page 3 – Completion of the FLAG programme
 - c. Page 4 – Commencement of the Foreshore Trust Seafront Arts Programme

Consultation

26. Though the views of this report and appendix 1 will be sought from the Coastal Users Group and the Protector, when work starts on compiling the future business plan, a method of closer engagement in its development will be sought from the Coastal Users' Group, as outlined in the paper which went to the March 2020 committee.
 27. The Coastal Users' Group's comments will be contained in the minutes of their next meeting (7th July).
 28. The Protector's comments will be considered at the meeting of the Charity Committee on the 13th July 2020.
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Timetable of Next Steps

29. Please include a list of key actions and the scheduled dates for these:

Action	Key milestone	Due date (provisional)	Responsible
Present paper at the Committee planning meeting	Review document	22 June	Assistant Director Regeneration and culture
Coastal Users Group	Seek coastal users group comments	7 July	Marketing and Major Projects manager
Charity Committee	Chair, protector and members of the charity committee adopt recommendations	13 July	Assistant Director, Regeneration and Culture

Wards Affected

Castle, Central St. Leonards, Old Hastings, West St. Leonards

Policy Implications

Reading Ease Score: 38.9

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	
Risk Management	Y
Environmental Issues & Climate Change	
Economic/Financial Implications	Y
Human Rights Act	
Organisational Consequences	
Local People's Views	Y
Anti-Poverty	
Legal	

Additional Information

Appendix 1: Foreshore Trust Business Plan Achievements - FY 19/20

Officer to Contact

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