

Report to Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board

18 December 2023

Subject:	Improving the Millennium Centre Project Overview
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out the progress of the Improving the Millennium Centre Project

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the WLUP Board input into the design principles and proposals for consulting on the Friar Park Millennium Centre

3. Background

- 3.1 The Improving the Millennium Centre project aims to improve the Friar Park Millennium Centre to meet the demands from an extended community (as a result of the proposed Friar Park Urban Village) and enhance the skills delivery offer for residents including an improved library presence.
- 3.2 The Friar Park Millennium Centre currently provides a range of activities and facilities for local community use. As part of public consultation in relation to the Friar Park Urban Village development, residents raised a



key concern around the capacity of the centre. In addition, key service providers have identified the potential to extend the existing services to meet new and existing demands from the community.

- 3.3 £2m capital has been granted for the project via Levelling up Funds.
- 3.4 Project work to date has included formation of a project group to set out the project requirements and production of stage 1 designs.
- 3.5 A capital appraisal will be undertaken by the Council as part of project assurance arrangements once an initial cost assessment has been completed.

Consultation and Engagement

- 3.6 The project was identified for inclusion within the LUP due to feedback from residents as part of the Friar Park Urban Village masterplan consultation. Residents expressed their concerns around the capacity of the centre.
- 3.7 Initial information about the project is planned to be shared at the Millennium Centre Christmas event and with Ward Members in early December.
- 3.8 Public consultation is due to commence from January 2024 once Stage 2 designs have been produced.
- 3.9 Views from the WLUP Board are sought on the design principles and proposals for public consultation which will be set out during the meeting.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- 3.10 Project output measures were submitted to DLUHC as part of a return made prior to the Grant Funding agreement being issued. The measures were proposed as follows:
 - Improved library facility



- Extended meeting spaces
- Improved Kitchen / Storage facilities

3.11 The project is expected to contribute to the LUP programme outcome measures of:

- Resident satisfaction with their local area as a place to live
- Skills / qualifications gained (or equiv. measure)
- Numbers of participants in community activities (or equiv. measure)

4. Implications

Resources:	<p>£2m capital has been granted for the Millennium Centre project</p> <p>A capital appraisal will be undertaken once the cost assessment is available.</p> <p>The LUP Grant includes the requirement for all spend to be made by March 2025. This is on track.</p>
Legal and Governance:	<p>Procurement for the project will be in accordance with Sandwell MBC's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for Contracts.</p>
Risk:	<p>Key risks have been identified. The project risk register will reviewed as part of the project capital appraisal.</p> <p>Main risks are associated with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - design requirements exceeding budget costs. A cost assessment of the stage 2 design is being undertaken. Value engineering will be undertaken if required to ensure project is deliverable within budget - Delays to planning application and contractor appointment <p>A 2 month contingency is allowed for in the project plan. Currently on track to submit for planning in Jan 24 and project completion by Jan 25.</p>



Equality:	An EqIA screening will be undertaken during the Stage 2 design process to identify potential impacts on groups with protected characteristics and an assessment undertaken as required.
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>The underpinning objective of the LUP is to ‘level up’ and reduce inequalities. The proposed interventions focus on tackling health inequalities in a multi-faceted way and compliment public health programmes.</p> <p>Improvements to the Millennium Centre are expected to lead to improvements in residents’ satisfaction with their local areas as a place to live, through increasing access to community activities and skills development opportunities.</p>
Social Value	<p>The proposed interventions will be delivered in accordance with the Council’s Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules.</p> <p>A social value target of 50% spend in the local economy through the contract has been identified along with identifying opportunities for work placements and work experience.</p>
Climate Change	Climate change impacts will be considered as part of the stage 2 designs which will include consideration of the heating system. The scope of works will improve the energy efficiency measures in the building.
Corporate Parenting:	<p>Young peoples’ views and opinions (voice of the child) will be considered through the public consultation process and through oversight from the WLUP Board.</p> <p>The project includes space that will enable additional youth service provision, an increase in advice and support around skills and employment, and an</p>



improved library presence at the Millennium Centre. For young people and their families who access this, positive impacts include emotional health benefits, and support with education and employment opportunities.

