

Subject:	Contractual Arrangements for Strengthening the King's Road Arches		
Date of Meeting:	24 January 2013		
Report of:	Strategic Director – Place		
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Ward(s) affected:	Regency		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The city council as the local Highway Authority is responsible for the management and upkeep of the seafront structures, which are fundamental to the city's transport infrastructure and tourism. These structures form key parts of the seafront transport corridor as they support the carriageway and promenade of the A259. Many are also used as commercial spaces for businesses that add to the attraction of the seafront for residents and visitors, and this arrangement is managed by the council's Property and Seafront Teams.
- 1.2 Urgent strengthening works are immediately required to the seafront arch structures between Alfresco's Restaurant and the West Pier in advance of other essential, planned strengthening, and the Committee's approval of the overall contract for these works is being sought, which will also enable a fuller refurbishment of the internal spaces to be carried out in association with the i360 viewing tower.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee recognises the urgency and essential nature of the initial strengthening works to the seafront Arches and the additional, associated opportunities and benefits that these works present regarding the delivery of the i360 viewing tower.
- 2.2 That the Committee is requested to formally approve the award of the scheme contract for the urgent and essential strengthening works to the seafront arch structures between Alfresco's Restaurant and the West Pier (referred to as Arch Numbers 36-61), under the 'Coast Protection and Highway Structures Maintenance Framework Agreement 2012 – 2015'.
- 2.3 That the Committee agrees that priority should be given to identifying and allocating funding from within the council's budgets to enable the planned strengthening works and internal refurbishment to be undertaken during 2012/13

to 2014/15, to coincide with the planned construction programme for the i360 viewing tower.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 Parts of the city's seafront consist of approximately 375 different structures, with a plan area of approximately 21,000 sq/m; and an asset value of approximately £300 million plus. The vast majority of these structures are over 120 years old and large sections of these are at the end of their serviceable life. The city's engineers undertake regular inspections, assessments and maintenance works to keep the public safe. As part of these ongoing works, there is a management plan and outline, planned reconstruction programme for all the deficient and end of serviceable life structures. The management plan will be the subject of a future committee report.
- 3.2 The reconstruction, strengthening and refurbishment of Kings Road Arches (numbers 36-61) between Alfresco's Restaurant and the West Pier form part of this overall programme. Following recent surveys these arches have been found to be structurally defective. Under the Highways Act, the council has a duty to ensure that highways are adequately maintained, and as part of this it must ensure that supporting structures are safe for use and fit for purpose. It has therefore been necessary to close off a short section of the upper promenade to protect the public from any harm or danger and allow essential, initial works to begin to protect and stabilise this area. This strengthening work will involve the demolition and replacement of the deficient structures with new units that are adequate to carry certain loads (up to 40 tonnes) that may be applied to them.
- 3.3 In order to continue to maintain these structures and undertake coastal protection, the council has recently retendered a Framework Agreement for a single contractor to undertake these essential works. They form part of a longer term programme that is set out in the management plan, which identifies and recommends a 16-year programme to rectify all the known deficient seafront structures. The current project will assist in the regeneration of the seafront between Alfresco's and the West Pier with new commercial units which will add vitality and new business opportunities to this run down area of the seafront. The works are therefore entirely consistent with the recently approved Draft Seafront Strategy and will contribute towards achieving the current objectives of that strategy.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 There has been no external engagement with the local community regarding the urgent need for the strengthening works to be undertaken, other than with the promoter of the i360 viewing tower. This has been necessary to co-ordinate construction programmes and access arrangements. Internal engagement has focused on discussions with the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Transport Committee, and a number of officers, primarily the Seafront Team and the i360 Project Officer in the Major Projects Team and the Planning case officer for the project.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 £750,000 has been set aside from within the Local Transport Plan budget for 2012-13 to fund the urgent works required to stabilise this location. Indicative sums of £800,000 for 2013-14 and £823,000 for 2014-15 have been earmarked for bridge and arch strengthening within the LTP, and it is anticipated that the majority of this will be used as funding for completion of the project. It is intended that Seafront Services will then fund the interior refurbishment, in order to let out the arches for rental income. This will form part of a separate report requesting capital funding.

Finance Officer Consulted: Karen Brookshaw Date: 19/12/12

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The Council is under a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 to maintain the highway and ensure that it is not dangerous for traffic. It is also under a duty as landowner to ensure that the arches that it owns under the highway are kept in good condition and repair.
- 5.3 The recommended works will be compliant with the Council's Contract Standing Orders as they can be awarded under the current Coast Protection and Highway Structures Maintenance Framework Agreement 2012 – 2015 without a new procurement process

Lawyer Consulted: Carl Hearsum/Oladapu Oluwole Date: 20/12/2012

Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 There are no direct equalities implications associated with this report.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct sustainability implications associated with this report.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 There are no direct crime & disorder implications associated with this report

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.7 The very poor condition of the arch structures in this location on the seafront presented a very high risk of collapse, with associated danger and threat to public safety. The opportunity that these strengthening works present, in terms of their location directly adjacent to the site of the i360 viewing tower, has enabled the council to plan to refurbish the internal spaces to enable them to be used as commercial spaces and help further regenerate this area by increasing activity and therefore its attractiveness.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.8 There are no public health implications associated with this report.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.9 The strengthening of this section of the Kings Road accords with the priority in the Corporate Plan to support the i360 and is consistent with the council's Local Transport Plan objectives and draft Seafront Strategy.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The only viable alternative to undertaking the structural strengthening and refurbishment works would to completely infill all the arches with concrete. This however, would render the units sealed in perpetuity excluding all future business development. This would reduce all future rental income to the council and prohibit the regeneration of a viable seafront, leaving the area devoid of any future amenities.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The decision sought is required in order to comply with the council's Standing Order.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None.

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None.

Background Documents

1. Seafront Structures Management Plan.