

Councillor Jeff Jones
Convener
Development and Regeneration
Performance Panel

(By Email)

Please ask for: Cllr Robert Francis-Davies
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Our Ref: RFD/JG
Your Ref:
Date: 20 September 2021

Dear Councillor Jones,

Re: Development & Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel - Scrutiny Letter to CM (RFD) 01.07.21

Thank you for your letter dated 18th August 2021.

Officers informed us that the associated costs of the Bascule Bridge project have escalated and that discussions were ongoing. The Panel would be grateful for further information about these project specifics, in particular the costs and timescales.

1. Regarding the Bascule Bridge, please may we have a breakdown of information about the associated cost escalations?

The cost pressures faced by the project relate to the repair works associated with the timber support structures of the bridge.

A tender exercise was carried out in May 2020 from Lot 10 of the SWWRCECF seeking to procure a works contractor to carry out this phase of works and this resulted in only one tender being returned in June 2020.

Following assessment of the tender return it was clear that the cost presented was significantly in excess of the project budget. A value engineering exercise was undertaken in consultation with the supplier which although presented significant savings on cost of £617,000, the levels presented did not meet the allocated budget. This value engineering exercise was based on omitting the provision for coffer dams in the river and focusing on removing timber sections to be repaired on land. The revised cost for the timber repair phase following a full value engineering exercise was £1.8m. A revised work methodology for the timber repair phase has been drawn up with our structural engineers Mann Williams which is currently being evaluated in terms of cost and appropriateness by the client team and wider consultees, based on reducing the previous accelerated work programme and reducing the extent of in river repair work by

replacing, as opposed to repairing some of the timber truss sections. The client team are hopeful that this will yield cost savings.

This alternative approach to the timber section repair has also been discussed with Cadw and dialogue is to continue to reach agreement although early feedback has been positive to the approach within the context of a structure that remains to be in a deteriorating condition.

It is expected that the revised brief will also allow the opportunity for additional suppliers to tender for the work allowing for increased competition although this is within a period of material and industry shortages with inflationary pressures well documented which could impact on the final expected outturn cost. In terms of projecting an expected full outturn cost for the project and full completion timescale estimate, it remains too early to estimate at this stage, however the client team with the design consultants are progressing with the exercise to produce a revised cost estimate and brief for the timber repair element prior to initiating a new tender exercise when the estimated costs are presented and accepted within approved budget tolerance. Due to the work progressed to date the timescale from now until re-tender consideration is not expected to be protracted.

The superstructure (metal bridge span section) repairs are nearing completion at a local specialist fabricators where the painting phase is to commence shortly prior to signoff and handover.

2. Panel Members queried the anticipated timescale on the Penderyn Distillery fit out and whether or not the lease has been signed. Officers undertook to check on this point and revert with further information.

The fit out works, led by Penderyn Whisky will be undertaken following completion of the main refurbishment works currently on site. The key milestone for Penderyn Whisky is to be operational by June 2022. The Agreement to Lease is subject to a final review by both parties Solicitors, therefore is yet to be signed.

Yours sincerely



**Y CYNGHORYDD/COUNCILLOR ROBERT FRANCIS-DAVIES
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