

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change**Brinsley Headstocks - Update****1. Purpose of Report**

To update Members on progress at Brinsley Headstocks and to seek approval for additional funding to complete the scheme.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that the additional budget required to complete the Brinsley Headstocks project be approved, with the total revised cost of £453,000 being funded by a mix of external capital grants, Section 106 contributions and prudential borrowing as detailed.

3. Detail

In July 2024, Cabinet approved the direct replacement of the Brinsley Headstocks following the deterioration and subsequent dismantling of the structure.

Significant progress has since been made to prepare the site for reconstruction and to enhance the wider visitor experience. A range of biodiversity and heritage improvements have been undertaken, including the creation of a bench from original Headstocks timber, the establishment of a memorial orchard commemorating the 33 miners who lost their lives at the site, extensions to onsite ponds, in partnership with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, to encourage biodiversity and water voles, and access improvements to the site.

Progress has been affected by several unforeseen challenges. The most significant was the discovery of an uncharted mine shaft, which was not identified on any historic plans or records and required additional investigation. This resulted in delays to the replacement programme.

In addition, the groundworks required for the replacement structure proved substantially more complex than originally anticipated due to the extent of buried rubble and obstructions beneath the site. These works have been completed, and a new reinforced foundation has been installed. Unlike the original structure, which was set directly into the ground, the replacement Headstocks will be mounted onto a concrete plinth. This design will help protect the timber structure from moisture and significantly improve its longevity.

A procurement exercise was undertaken for the construction of the replacement Headstocks. The initial quotations received showed significantly higher costs than anticipated and did not demonstrate best value for the Council.

In order to ensure value for money, Officers subsequently engaged directly with specialist suppliers to explore alternative options. This exercise has identified potential lower-cost solutions, reducing the anticipated cost of the timber framework from around £260,000 to between £150,000 and £220,000.

The quotations received are currently being assessed, with due diligence and technical evaluation still required before a preferred option can be confirmed.

The project is now approaching the stage at which a contractor can be appointed and work commenced. It is anticipated that construction of the timber framework will largely take place off-site using specialist oak sourced from France, before being assembled on site. Subject to final approvals and contractor mobilisation, work is expected to commence later this year or early next year, with completion anticipated by Easter 2027.

Further works remain outstanding, including the restoration, shot blasting and repainting of the original metalwork. Officers continue to work closely with specialist contractors to ensure the reconstruction is undertaken sympathetically and in a manner that preserves the heritage significance of the structure.

While Officers have successfully reduced anticipated construction costs through further market engagement, the project has experienced several unavoidable cost pressures arising from site conditions, programme delays and specialist construction requirements. To ensure the successful completion of the project and provide sufficient flexibility to address any remaining unforeseen costs during delivery, an additional cost budget of £233,000 is required.

Officers will continue to actively pursue external capital funding opportunities to support delivery of the project and reduce the Council's borrowing requirement. This will include engagement with the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) and the Coal Authority to explore appropriate funding and partnership opportunities that may contribute towards the capital costs of the Brinsley Headstocks restoration project.

The additional contingency will support completion of the Brinsley Headstocks restoration project while ensuring the Council can continue to manage risks associated with the final stages of construction and restoration.

4. Key Decision

This report is not a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

Not applicable.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer were as follows:

The original budget for the replacement of the Brinsley Headstocks scheme was £220,000, with the funding to be met from a mix of capital grants, Section 106 contributions and prudential borrowing.

The estimated total cost of the Brinsley Headstocks project has now increased to £453,000. External funding secured to date includes contributions from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (£42,000), a £5,000 grant from Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (£5,000) and an allocation of £100,000 from developer Section 106 contributions.

The preference will always be to secure further capital grants towards the project, which could include funding bids into the East Midlands Combined Counties Authority (EMCCA) and similar. The remaining balance of funding would have to be met from prudential borrowing, to which there would be ongoing revenue implications for the Council with the cost of borrowing.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

There are no direct legal implications that arise from this report.

8. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

7. Union Comments

Not applicable.

8. Climate Change Implications

Not applicable.

9. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

10. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

11. Background Papers

Nil.