

COUNCIL MEETING

21 February 2022

PUBLIC QUESTION 1

Name of person submitting the question: Mr Bernard Brown

Member to whom the question is to be put: Councillor Doug Oliver

Question

In the Budget for the current year there is a Capital Sum of £460,000 for the Development of the Town Hall. The forecast last seen suggests a spend in this financial year of £445,000 with £15,000 transferred to 2022/23.

Can the Council give an update on the progress made to date, when the output from this expenditure is expected to be published and the timescale for implementing its' conclusions. Is there any reason to believe the original guesstimate of £14million will be substantially varied?

Answer

The Town Hall Renaissance project is still in the design process and is currently in stage two of the RIBA development process. The project has undertaken planning pre-application meetings with the Council's planning department to inform the final proposal. It is anticipated that a full planning application will be ready for submission in the early summer with an aim to have this considered at Planning Committee before Christmas. In the meantime, a full report on the business case for the development will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July and then to Cabinet and Full Council in September. Whilst we are still in the design process, the professional team are aware of the budget constraints and we do not anticipate a significant variance from the original budget estimates at this stage. There will be an opportunity for a full debate on the commercial case for this project once full costs are available.