

Report No.5

Report to Town Council 9th July 2013

Old School Room

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To recommend to Full Council that the Old School Room is withdrawn from consideration for a commercial lease and that Policy and Resources Committee and the Town Hall Management Committee consider alternative community uses.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Town Council recently agreed a number of core objectives, one of which included the provision of a 'community hub' for Malmesbury and also more affordable use by our community of the Town Hall.
- 2.2 The Old School Room, because of its location, size, facilities and current under usage has been suggested as the most probably place for a 'community hub' in the Town Hall.
- 2.3 Background to this was the reasoning that by letting the Old School Room commercially then income obtained would subsidise community usage of other rooms in the Town Hall. However the Old School Room has not been let for the expected amount of circa £12,000 for some years and so this has not been achieved. A recent offer made was for only approximately half this amount and therefore Policy and Resources Committee have declined this latest offer.
- 2.4 In order to allow usage of the Old School Room for the purposes outlined above it will be necessary to instruct the letting agent to take the premises off the market as soon as possible.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 To propose that the Old School Room is withdrawn from consideration for a commercial lease and to instruct the letting agent to remove it from the market.
- 3.2 To propose future usage as a 'community' hub or for alternative inexpensive community usage, which will be considered by Policy and Resources Committee and the Town Hall Management Committee. (This will include drawing up a three year financial plan and will show potential usage and income as well as initial and ongoing costs).

4. Financial Implications and risks

- 4.1 The Old School Room currently requires work regarding damp in one wall and a new floor covering. If used for the purposes outlined above then funds will also need to be made available to convert the current large storage room to an Office space. Decoration, furniture and other equipment will need to be considered as well as cleaning, rates, insurance and utility bills. Consideration would be needed to decide on the level of charging for use of the facilities. Estimates will need to be obtained and a financial plan drawn up to accurately reflect costs and income involved.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that Full Council agree to the proposals put forward in 3.1 and 3.2.