

Report No. 3

Report to Policy and Resources Committee 21st July 2015

Repairs to Town Hall

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Town Hall and Facilities Committee on 7th July 2015 the committee resolved to seek authority from the Policy and Resources Committee for the release of funds to enable additional repairs to the external stonework of the Town Hall.

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2014 a survey of the external stonework of the Town Hall revealed a number of areas where urgent repairs were required.
- 2.2 Whilst the work was being undertaken some of the areas at high level were found to require greater attention as a matter of public safety and as a consequence work was concentrated on those areas of the south and west elevations where scaffolding was required.
- 2.3 The Town Clerk presented a report to the Town Hall and Facilities Committee on the 7th July identifying those areas still requiring attention to preserve the fabric of the building.
- 2.4 The Town Clerk identified in his report that the work could be spread over a two year period.
- 2.5 Whilst the Town Hall and facilities Committee accepted the report it was felt that greater economies would be made by seeking support from the Policy and Resources Committee to ensure that the work was undertaken as one contract.
- 2.6 The report considered by the Town Hall and Facilities Committee is attached to this report for information.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 The agreed Town Council budget for 2015/2016 includes for the annual sum of £19,000 to be allocated to Town Hall depreciation and £15,000 included in urgent special projects for the external fire escape from the Wesleyan room.
- 3.2 The work indicated could be spread over a two year period but there would probably be an uplift in price for the later work in view of the period between quotation and commencement.
- 3.4 The initial repairs were of a specialist nature and three quotations sought. The work proposed could be considered an extension to the previous contract as the majority of the repairs now under consideration were previously identified but the committee resolved to concentrate on the higher levels and the areas of highest risk.
- 3.5 During discussion about the rear external fire escape it was found that the framework was sound and that suitable alterations could be made to negate the need for a new fire escape. The quotation received for the modification would leave at least £10,000 no longer required from the special projects money previously agreed.
- 3.6 The damage caused by the recent incident involving a car is being undertaken as a separate contract authorised by the insurance company and does not form part of the proposed repairs.

4. Financial implications and risks

- 4.1 The total cost of the work is estimated to be in the region of £34,000 but no contingency sums have been included.
- 4.2 The majority of the funding could be taken from the contribution to the deprivation account and the balance of the funds set aside for the external fire escape. However, the balance would need to be taken from reserves as it cannot be found from within the budget agreed for Town Hall and Facilities Committee.
- 4.3 The identified repairs could be undertaken over a two year period without the necessity of drawing upon reserves on the assumption that a similar amount would be set aside for depreciation in next year's budget but the cost could increase.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 Members are recommended to consider the request from the Town Hall and Facilities Committee and, if agreed, determine the sources of funding for the repairs. They are also recommended to enter into a contract with the specialist contractor who undertook the major repairs last year.

Jeff Penfold
Town Clerk
9th July 2015.