

# **FACILITIES MANAGERS REPORT – 20<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2018 - FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING**

## **5. FACILITIES MANAGERS UPDATE**

### **Staff**

As previously reported, we have not replaced the Foresters Hall cleaner since her retirement and have been covering the work with existing staff, due the reduced bookings at the Public Hall during the refurbishment. I am continuing to monitor the situation and will possibly need to recruit a replacement cleaner as bookings improve post-Christmas.

### **Public Hall Refurbishment Project**

The refurbishment project is in its final phase, with most of the construction work completed and now into the second fix work. Most ceilings are complete, and the hygienic walls and floors are completed in the new kitchen. The first items of kitchen fittings and equipment have been ordered and should be installed by the time of this meeting. The decorators are making good progress and we are starting to get a feel for the completed project.

The Changing Places toilet is also approaching second fix stage and the specialist equipment is awaiting delivery.

The kitchenette / Bar in the Refreshment Room is onsite and awaiting fitting.

The main platform lift from the Foyer is programmed for installation W/C 26<sup>th</sup> November following which the main entrance flooring will be laid.

At this stage the remainder of the floors and final decoration can be completed which should take us to our target date of mid-December. Following this we will be updating directional and safety signage and re-instating some of the more domestic items such as plants, plaques and pictures.

The platform lift to the Stage has proved particularly difficult to achieve, with constraints from the position of the main heating pipes and the existing structure of the proscenium arch, coupled with the need for various safety clearances and structural fixings. Overcoming some of these design issues has pushed the installation date forward to W/C 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

The Communications and Engagement Committee have approved a budget of £300 for new signage and we will be liaising with that Committee regarding the design and style. However, guidance is also sought on which of the previous photos, plants etc. are to be reused and it is felt that we should wait until the rooms are finally completed to take an overall view of the design and style before making that decision.

### **Parks**

The tree and hedging work at Thorn Park has now been completed as per the conservation area planning permission.

## **Allotments**

All allotments plots have now been allocated and we currently have two names on our waiting list.

A request to split a plot has been received and one to replace a dilapidated shed. These items are being dealt with under delegated authority.

## **Sharps bin at Sungirt Public Toilets**

The initial proposal for a sharps bin and signage at Sungirt Public Toilets, to be supplied and serviced by the Safer Liskeard Partnership, was previously passed by this Committee on the basis that the Town Council were only providing a venue for this equipment.

It was initially thought that the servicing of the bin would be carried out under the Cornwall Council waste contract. However, this has not proved possible and in correspondence with the Community Safety Officer for East Cornwall the SLP have now made an agreement with Adaction for them to empty and dispose of the full sharps boxes until this can be ultimately managed under the 2020 Cornwall Council waste contract.

Minute number 125/18, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018, approved the siting of the sharps bin and signage but under the expectation that Cornwall Council would manage the waste from the start, however this will now be carried out by Adaction until the new Cornwall Council waste contract in 2020.

The Town Council have reserved the right to withdraw its permission at any time.

## **7. Budget Setting 2019/20**

In conjunction with the Facilities Manager, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Facilities Committee have prepared the attached Draft Facilities Committee budget for 2019/20

Adjustments have been made using historical and projected future expenditure and consideration given to planned maintenance, statutory compliance and the ongoing five-year financial plan.

The Chair and Vice Chair are concerned over some inaccuracies and miss-allocations in the budget reporting which they would like to be brought to the attention of the Finance Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee APPROVES the draft 2019/20 Facilities Committee budget to be presented to the Town Council Finance Committee together with request for more accurate information in future reports.**

## **8. VAT**

As reported to Council on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018 we have been investigating the possibility of opting to apply VAT on our business activities (option to tax) and thereby allowing us to reclaim larger amounts of VAT on projects such as the Public Hall refurbishment.

The Support Services Manager and Town Clerk have been taking advice from a VAT specialist advisor and are examining both the short- and long-term implications of any action and its wider effect on the Town Council's activities.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Facilities Committee RESOLVES to refer any decisions on the Town Councils Option to Tax to the Finance Committee.**

## **9. Council Chamber Furniture**

Following the Council meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018 investigations have been made to try to establish the history of the various tables used to make up the current Council Chamber layout.

With the assistance of Brian Oldham, the online County archives have been searched as have any information held by our own museum, however no conclusive information has been found.

It is believed that the large 'D' shaped table was made for the Magistrates office at the Guildhall and a photo has been found that appears to be taken in front of that table at the Guildhall in 1973

Following on from that date a further photo has been found dated 1985 showing the current Council Chamber but with more contemporary tables.

It is therefore thought that the current layout came about sometime after 1985.

The table itself appears to have been altered or repaired at some point as the main top is not the same quality as the frame. In addition, the whole set is made up of three further tables, all of which have been altered in height in order to make one continuous surface.

Consideration has also been given to the potential value of the tables and/or any alternative use or location and a local antiques dealer has given the following valuation as guidance.

The large 'D' shaped table is typical of ecclesiastical or municipal furniture of that era and is interesting due to its Liskeard connection, however it will require skilled carpentry work to remove it from the Chamber and re-instate it. The other tables have been altered, repaired and stained / varnished and would also require work to restore them.

As a guide to possible sale value the sixteen spindle back chairs and the group of four tables have been estimated at £1200 in total. This figure is low due to the amount of restoration.

Further valuations should be obtained for comparison.

### **Possible options for the future:**

A key objective of the Public Hall refurbishment project was to improve accessibility to our building and the new lift will allow wheelchair access to the Council Chamber. This work has required an enlargement to the existing rear lobby of the Chamber and therefore a small reduction in the space of the Chamber.

Although the new lift will enable wheelchair users to attend Council meetings, once in the chamber space to manoeuvre will be very limited, especially if attendance is high.

Flexibility – In its current configuration the Chamber is predominantly used for Town Council meetings with only an occasional paid for hire. The current layout cannot be altered and therefore only really lends itself to more formal style meetings.

To allow full flexibility of use, enabling the room to be an additional source of income, modular furniture is required to create various layout as we would in other rooms, such as theatre, café or classroom style etc. or even a clear room by folding away the tables.

The raised area to the East of the room also limits its flexibility to some degree.

The Chamber needs redecoration which could be considered along with any of the options below. In addition, consideration could be made to providing better IT facilities in that room allowing the electronic display of presentations etc. via a large monitor or projector either for Council use or for hire.

**Option 1:** - Retain the current furniture and layout noting the limitations above.

**Option 2:** - Remove the raised area and bench but retain the four tables which make up the set. This would give an extra 18-24 inches of floor space. There would be a cost associated with removing the platform and redecorating etc.

**Option 3:** - Retain the raised area and bench along with the traditional chairs. Replace the remaining furniture with good quality office style modular tables and chairs at an estimated cost of approximately £3500 + VAT

**Option 4:** - Remove the raised area and install a new contemporary style boardroom table to seat 15-20 people in an oval shape, estimated cost of £8-10k depending on design and finish, plus the cost of removing the plinth and decoration.

There are further variations of the above options, but the key consideration will be the intended use of that room. If it remains solely as the Council Chamber, with occasional ancillary use, we will need to address the ability for wheelchair users to manoeuvre. If it is felt better to increase its commercial use flexibility is key, which requires modern modular tables.

Should it be decided that the room be made more flexible there is then an issue regarding the future of the existing furniture and its significance to the Town. We do not have the ability to store or reuse it in our own buildings and its exact value, if sold, is not fully known. Also, some of the furniture will require work to remove them from the Chamber, again possibly effecting their value.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Committee consider the future use and layout of the Council Chamber and its furniture requirements in the light of the new access improvements together with any budgetary implications.

## **10. Guildhall**

The new fire alarm system in the Guildhall has now been completed and commissioned and I am awaiting final documentation from our contractor.

The leases on Unit 1 and the Main Hall are still in hand and awaiting final confirmation from the tenants in response to the notices being served.

The tenant of the Main Hall has confirmed via email that he is happy to proceed with a new lease as requested by the Town Council and has asked for permission to make some minor internal alterations.

Within the Main Hall demise there is currently a small, disused, kitchen area which the tenant wishes to reconfigure to provide a utility area with sink and two changing cubicles. This work would be carried out at the tenants' expense.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee APPROVES the tenants request to make minor alterations to the disused kitchen area, creating a utility area and changing cubicles, PROVIDED THAT, the tenant uses good quality materials and any colour scheme be approved by the Facilities Manager in conjunction with the Chair. In addition, that at the request of the Town Council any such alterations be re-instated at the tenants' expense should the tenants lease terminate at any time.**

## **11. Westbourne Gardens**

The Westbourne Gardens Management Agreement is now in place and it has been the Town Councils' aspiration to improve access and usage of the gardens.

Preliminary work and designs have been carried out for the creation of a new entrance to the garden in the area of 'Little Dean' in Dean Street. This would enable controlled vehicle access to the gardens for setting up events etc. Our designer has given an indicative figure of £60-70k for works to complete the new entrance.

In addition to the access improvements it is intended to provide water and electricity supplies to the site for the use of hirers requiring power and water for their events. Initial studies were carried out earlier this year with the aim of bringing in these utilities from Westbourne Lane and terminating them in a secure cabinet on the Eastern side of the Gardens nearby the Westbourne Lane wall. The estimates given for this work at that time was £6,700 + VAT (subject to inflation)

The 2018/19 Facilities budget has an allocation of £10,000 for Westbourne Gardens 'Entrance and Utilities'

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee RESOLVES to:**

- a) **Inform the Cornwall Council stakeholder group of its plans for a new Westbourne Gardens entrance and utilities, for approval.**
- b) **Progress and complete the installation of power and water utilities for Westbourne Gardens.**
- c) **Progress the new entrance element of the project to planning consent stage.**

**The above items to be carried out in the current financial year and financed from the 2018/19 budget allocation of £10,000.**

## **12. Public Hall Launch Event**

At the last Communications and Engagement Committee meeting a launch event for the newly refurbished Public Hall was discussed.

The committee agreed to set up a small working group to plan and cost the event. The group is currently made up of Councillors Whitty, Bennetts, Clarke and Shand. There was a proposal that the Facilities committee also nominate a member to join this group, however it was pointed out that Councillors Whitty and Clarke are both also members of the Facilities committee and would therefore be representing both.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Facilities Committee considers any additional members of this Committee it may wish to put forward to join the Launch Event working group.**

## **13. Welcome to Liskeard sign**

The Communications and Engagement Committee have been looking into the possibility of siting a new Town Welcome Sign on the roundabout near Morrisons, currently planted by the Town Council, and have asked this Committee for their comments.

This new sign would replace the dilapidated one on the slip road of the A38 westbound at Island Shop. Cornwall Council Highways have advised that replacing this sign in its current location would not be favourably received by Highways England.

Cornwall Council Highways has agreed to the roundabout location in principle but has asked us to specify an exact location, due to the floral planting and the sensitivities of the Celtic Cross which is also on this site.

C&E have again considered this at their recent Committee meeting, in particular the sensitivities around not obscuring the cross and, in comparison to other suitable locations, have decided that a position to the left of the cross (as you approach across the bridge from the A38) would be the best location. Please see supporting mock up photo.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Facilities Committee considers the impact of this signage on the roundabout site and any relevant comments it may wish to make to the Communications and Engagement Committee.**