

 Executive – 10th July 2013		Agenda Item No. 6
Title	Town Hall Repairs and Improvements	
For further information about this report please contact	Rose Winship 01926 456223 Rose.winship@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Wards of the District directly affected	All	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number		
Background Papers		

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	??
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	No
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Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Deputy Chief Executive	11 June 2013	Andrew Jones
Head of Service	11 June 2013	Rose Winship
CMT	11 June 2013	Chris Elliott, Andrew Jones, Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	11 June 2013	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	11 June 2013	Andrew Jones
Finance	11 June 2013	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)		Cllr Stephen Cross
Consultation & Community Engagement		
n/a		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report seeks approval for funding from the Capital Investment Reserve to allow essential works the Town Hall.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Executive approves a maximum allocation of £142,000 from the Capital Investment Reserve to allow essential works to be completed at the Town Hall

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Town Hall continues to be used for a wide range of purposes and as such is a valuable asset to the Council and the people of the district. In addition to the use by the District Council and Leamington Spa Town Council, the venue now has leases with Warwick University and Bromford Housing, is a popular venue for evening functions and celebrations, is a flexible and well located training venue, and hosts many civic functions throughout the year. The income from leases and hirings has grown significantly (109%) in the last 12 months. However, the condition of the venue has deteriorated over a number of years, and the uncertainty around the long term plans for the venue has meant that a number of pieces of work have been delayed. It is now recognised that some of this work is now critical to the ongoing operation of the Town Hall, leading officers to develop a programme of works which is considered to be appropriate given the ongoing uncertainty, but essential in operating as a safe and commercially viable venue.
- 3.2 The major element of the works is the rewiring of large parts of the Town Hall. There is a need to address the condition of the electrical wiring in order that it will gain its certification again when the current certificate expires in January 2014. In the period since the last certification, the condition of the installation has deteriorated and the requirements of the relevant codes of practice have become more onerous. The area leased to Warwick University, the CCTV Control Room and the 2nd floor area all have compliant wiring, however the remaining elements of the building are included in the scope of this project.
- 3.3 A specification for the rewire has been worked up with the Council's electrical contractors, based on the principles of re-using light fittings where possible and only replacing when necessary. Accessories will be selected from "mid-range" options that will comply with the recommendations of the Conservation Architect. Emphasis has been placed on works in public areas. The budget for this element of the project includes the electrical installation, construction of new "boxing" to hide cabling where required, and a sum for "making good". The sum allowed for this work includes a contingency of £10,000 to allow for unforeseen work identified during the project.
- 3.4 Whilst the electrical work is the major element of the project, there are some other works which are considered to be essential. These can be categorised as either health & safety works, structural works and decoration & finishes.
- 3.5 Health and safety works include the replacement of curtains in the Council Chamber, Room 18 and Room 21. The current curtains are in a very poor state of repair and no longer comply with fire regulations ie are not fire retardant as would be required in a public building. In order that the Chamber can remain

functional for presentations etc, black out blinds have been installed in recent weeks. Officers are awaiting feedback following the installation. If the view is that the curtains are required, funding detailed in 5.3 will be required.

- 3.6 There are 6 historic sofas on the ground and first floors of the Town Hall which do not meet current fire regulations. Whilst they do not need to be replaced so as to ensure compliance, any new replacement will need comply with the regulations. There are also some small general health & safety items including work on doors and signage which would be completed as part of the project.
- 3.7 Whilst the rewire works are in progress and in order to minimise disruption to the venue as far as possible there are work (internal and external) which are required to maintain the building in a safe and sound condition. These works include repairing internal cracks and damage to external stonework and some work on the roof and abutments to prevent future damage to the structure of the building.
- 3.8 Finally there are works which will follow the rewire to redecorate Rooms 18 and 21 and replace the flooring in Room 21 which is a health & safety hazard.

4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 The project aligns to the policy of providing safe and quality cultural facilities for customers of the service, and allows the Town Hall to retain its income generating opportunities and deliver a professional and appropriate venue for civic and public meetings.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 The maximum allocation of £142,000 will allow the works outlined above to be completed as part of a coordinate programme of works. There may be some savings to be made by linking elements of the work, officers will have this discussion with contractors at the point of awarding the contract for the work
- 5.2 The re-wire element of the project will be delivered through the corporate electrical contract. A detailed specification and costing schedule has been developed by Housing and Property Services officers and the contractor, and discussed with Cultural Services who manage the venue.
- 5.3 The project costings are as follows:

Rewire	£90,000
Health & Safety work	£22,000 (including curtains £13,000)
General Maintenance	£24,000
Decoration & finishes	£5,700
- 5.4 The works could be financed from the Capital Investment Reserve. This currently has an unallocated balance of £750,000 excluding funds earmarked towards Leamington Asset Review work. The Council's policy is to ensure that that the Capital Investment Reserves maintains a balance of at least £2m to allow for any unforeseen requirements. Accordingly, this work will further reduce the balance below this level.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED

- 6.1 In respect of the re-wire element of the project, there is no alternative if the venue is to be retained as a functioning venue. The installation must have a current certificate in order to comply with Codes of Practice. The current certificate expires in Jan 2014.
- 6.2 The items included as health & safety works, again, must be carried out in order for the Council to fulfil its obligations to comply with relevant legislation. Curtains or another window covering are essential in these rooms to allow them to be used for presentations. The option of blinds was considered but after considering the relative costs and aesthetic value, curtains were the preferred option. The sofas could be removed from the venue and thus save approx. £600 per sofa. There may be an opportunity to secure some external funding for this work.
- 6.3 It would be possible to do the bare minimum of making good following the re-wire (as included in the cost of the re-wire) and make a saving of £3,200 allocated to the redecoration of Rooms 18 and 21.