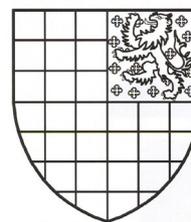


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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the meeting of the **Working Party established to oversee repairs to the Council's buildings**, held on **Tuesday 23rd June 2020**, online via Zoom Meetings at 11:00am.

PRESENT Cllrs Bird; Catlin; Earl; Lamb; Dr Mayhew and Waring.

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*)

BRepWP2020/01 ELECTION of CHAIRMAN: Cllr Dr Mayhew was elected to chair the working Party for the 2020/21 year.

BRepWP2020/02 QUESTIONS: There were none

BRepWP2020/03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies had been received from Cllr Milner, who was working.

BRepWP2020/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were none.

BRepWP2020/05 MINUTES: it was resolved that

BRepWP2020/05.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 20th September 2019 are received and signed as an accurate record.

BRepWP2020/06 REMIT of the WORKING PARTY

Members noted the remit of the working Party, which is:

The Buildings Working Party is tasked with oversight of maintenance of the Town Hall; All Saints Centre, and Malling Community Centre and other buildings/ structures, meeting ad hoc. Currently mandated to administer the refurbishment of Malling Community Centre, and authorized to act for Council in that regard, the Working Party will otherwise formulate recommendations for Council as appropriate with regard to repairs; non-routine maintenance matters, or replacements/ refurbishments of major plant and equipment.

BRepWP2020/07 EXCLUSION of the PRESS & PUBLIC

At this point the Chairman moved, **and it was resolved:**

BRepWP2020/07.1 That in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted during the remainder of the meeting, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 *etc* any members of the press or public present be excluded and instructed to withdraw. The nature of that business is to consider commercially sensitive detail related to proposed works and contracts.

BRepWP2020/08 TOWN HALL HEATING SYSTEM REFURBISHMENT:

1. The meeting considered a second report submitted by Delta Green Environmental Design, providing more detail on feasible options offered by air-source heat pump (ASHP) and photovoltaic panel (PV) technologies in replacing the Town Hall's existing heating system. Members welcomed James Porter and Ben Campbell of Delta Green; attending to present the report and advise.

2. Air Source Heat Pumps consist of an outdoor condenser or heat exchanger unit, which extract ambient air and transfer the heat through refrigeration pipework to indoor plant. A system would be capable of providing 100% of heating demand within the building during mild temperatures (*eg* Autumn/Spring), but it was highlighted that the flow temperatures which they generate (around 55°C) is considerably lower than required (around 80°C) to adequately 'drive' the existing internal heating system during colder periods, when the system would need topping-up by an additional boiler. As the existing heating system (cast iron radiators and distribution pipework) is to be retained, it was proposed to install a hybrid heating system, comprising an air source heat pump supplemented by boiler plant. Comparisons were shown between the capital and running costs, and emissions, of

both gas and electric boilers based upon the Air Source Heat Pump providing approximately 75% of the heating requirements.

3. There were a number of variables to consider in the final selection of the equipment, including physical size, access requirements, noise break-out and system efficiency. There were also different refrigerants to consider; proposals where refrigerants have a Global Warming Potential (GWP) greater than 2500 had been dismissed on both environmental grounds but also the future availability of the refrigerant (for maintenance). Members were advised that the noise generated would be a significant consideration, given the proximity of nearby homes.

4. When reviewing several potential locations for the outdoor equipment, three areas in and around the rear service yard, were favoured. Other options had been considered and dismissed on various grounds, such as distance and routing of pipework from the outdoor unit to the basement plant room. The meeting considered these three and accepted DG's recommendation that option 2 (as presented) was the best choice. This allowed a larger, more efficient, unit which was quieter and uses a more sustainable refrigerant. The location would involve the loss of 3 car parking spaces, but this was considered acceptable. Further investigation would be needed into electrical loading and pipework routing options.

5. The report showed estimates of capital cost and running costs, and emissions, for combinations of ASHP and boiler with any remaining subsidies or incentives factored in. The cost estimates were said to be robust but expected to prove reasonably accurate. The capital costs ranged from £91,000 for simple replacement of gas boiler to over £240,500 for an ASHP-only design.

6. There was a detailed discussion as to the use and future availability of gas, and the experts recommended it as the most viable option at present, when considered against the likely service life of a new system; said to be around 15 years, and in the context of it being needed only for topping-up during coldest periods if associated with an ASHP. After deliberation on the options presented, the Working party agreed that it would recommend the option shown as "Air Source Heat Pump with Gas-fired Boiler", and accepted the suggestion that around £70,000 of the total cost could be deferred to a second year if the installation were to be planned in two stages. Members were keen to ensure that this would not involve duplication of any cost and were assured that it would not if the system is designed with this in mind.

7. The project was estimated to take a total of 16 weeks, technically, but would be subject to external factors such as Planning and Listed Building consents. The Working party would recommend to Council an immediate start on the agreed option, with the second phase in 2021/22 committed at the outset. Mr Porter and Mr Campbell were thanked for their report and extremely helpful advice.

BRepWP2020/09

REFURBISHMENT of MALLING COMMUNITY CENTRE:

8. The meeting received a briefing from TC on progress of the building works, which were proceeding well and had suffered only a short closure due to Covid-19 although work was slowed by distancing restrictions and supply-chain disruption.

9. Members welcomed Duncan Kerr, Managing Director of Wave Leisure Trust; Council's preferred choice for future management of the building. Mr Kerr related the position Wave found itself in due to lockdown restrictions and described the effects as "devastating". When the main centres of Wave's operations (indoor gymnasias and swimming pools) were eventually allowed to reopen they would face such severe limitations on customer numbers that the costs would be disproportionate to the income. There had been tentative suggestions that some supporting funds for Leisure Trusts may be made available through Sport England but this was speculative, and in all probability would be very limited in effect. Without some form of significant third-party funding Wave would be in a parlous state. Given these unknowns, Mr Kerr was unable to commit to undertaking a management agreement for Malling Community Centre at this time, and Members

were understanding and sympathetic.

10. TC rehearsed the options for management of the Centre, as they had been originally considered by Council, and the positive and negative factors for each. The preferred option if Wave were unable to assist was direct management by Council staff. It was noted that the building work may finish in October (at present estimates) but the Centre could not immediately reopen as there would be a period needed for final finishing and fitting-out. Given the present situation with lockdown restrictions and prospects for relaxation it was unlikely that the Centre could be operational before the New Year. Assuming that timescale to be fairly pragmatic, it was possible to defer a decision until the end of August when Mr Kerr may be in a position to give a definitive answer. This was agreed by all to be practical, and meanwhile TC would draft a plan for LTC self-management which, it was recognized, could be an interim solution or permanent. Mr Kerr was thanked for his helpful contribution and offered Members' best wishes for Wave's speedy return to stability.

BRepWP2020/10 ALL SAINTS CENTRE

11. Members had been provided with a copy of a recently completed surveyor's report on the building. This detailed report comprehensively described various items of repair that were considered to be needed. Councillors were pleased to note the description of the Grade 2* heritage-listed building as:

"Overall, this building is in remarkably good condition considering the mixture of constructions and ages and this reflects care in the ownership, renovations and extensions through the 19th and 20th centuries until it was deconsecrated. Its condition also reflects high quality renovations during the 1980s followed by excellent care and maintenance since, together with further modernisations such as for the heating system and west end lavatories. The level of maintenance repairs currently identified is much less than would be expected for a previously-redundant building of this size and complexity and reflects well on its management."

12. This commendation notwithstanding; 20 areas of work and individual items identified as necessary or desirable were shown in a table with estimated costs ranging from £2,000 to £59,000 - in aggregate amounting to £450,000. It was recognized that many of these were not immediate concerns, and that the schedule would inform the drafting of a programme for future prioritized work. Several areas would require further, specialized, surveys and these would also be prioritized. Analysis would begin immediately, and the matter reviewed later in the year.

13. The Working Party also reviewed the proposal to install a public WiFi network at All Saints, similar to that in place at the Town Hall. This project was started at the same time but paused when other work on the building became more urgent. The cost was provided-for in the Centre's operating budget for the year and the contractor was able to install promptly as the building was closed for public use during the Covid-19 emergency. Members recognized the advantages that such a system might offer, including to several of the Centre's regular hirers when devising their post-lockdown strategies, and were pleased to agree the work.

BRepWP2020/11 RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Working party agreed to recommend:

- a) That Council notes these Minutes.
- b) That Council agrees the decisions regarding replacement of the Town Hall heating system, and commissions Delta Green Designs to design a system as described in point 6 above.
- c) That Council notes the position regarding future management of Malling Community Centre as described in points 9; 10 above.

BRepWP2020/12 There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance. *The meeting closed at 12:40pm.*

Signed date