

PUBLIC HALLS COMMITTEE OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 17 September 2012

at 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Witney

Present

Councillor: T J Morris (Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs J C Baker D A Snow
 P J Dorward C K Woodward
 H B Eaglestone

Officers: Town Clerk Deputy Town Clerk
 Democratic Services Officer

Also present: 2 members of the public

H403 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for his absence was received from Councillor D S Enright.

H404 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor C K Woodward declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 10, Legionella Risk Assessments – as the contractor is known to him.

H405 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2012 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

H406 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Minute H329 – the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the full report on the Corn Exchange market research had been presented to Council at the meeting held on 6 August 2012 (Minute No.376)

H407 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The members of the public present did not wish to speak.

H408 **COMMITTEE VISION**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk, as circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman remarked that he envisaged a report with regard to the Corn Exchange would be presented to a future meeting.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted.

H409 **PUBLIC HALLS OPERATIONAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk, as circulated with the agenda.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the improvements to the halls were almost complete, as per the original plan. Members noted the position with regard to the heating in Langdale Hall and the associated costs for a replacement system and an alternative contingency plan.

Due to the confidentiality of the correspondence received with regard to the Corn Exchange tender process, this was deferred to the end of the meeting.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the report be noted.
- 2) that the costs for the heating contingency plan for Langdale Hall be included in the budget for next year.
- 3) that a letter be sent to O G Masonry congratulating them on their excellent work to the exterior of the Corn Exchange.

H410 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk, as circulated with the agenda.

The Town Clerk confirmed that there would be an adjustment from the earmarked reserves at the end of the financial year; the overspend would not be as large as shown in the current figures.

A Member queried whether there was an increase in the usage of Langdale Hall since the closure of the Corn Exchange. The Deputy Town Clerk commented the Langdale appealed to a different market and there was no significant increase.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the expenditure on Madley Park Hall would be recovered from WODC as part of the section 106 monies. She understood that any remaining sum in the S106 budget would be passed to the Madley Park Hall Trustees. The Town Clerk highlighted the provision in the budget for a grant to the Trustees and considered that this should be reviewed once the balance was transferred to them from the S106 monies.

The Committee considered the correspondence from The Inner Wheel & Rotary Clubs of Witney with regard to the costs associated with the hire of Langdale Hall. Members were sympathetic; however, they considered that they had been more than generous in the allowances already agreed.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the report be noted.
- 2) that the request from The Inner Wheel & Rotary Clubs of Witney for further financial support is not agreed.
- 3) that a budget of £1,800 be agreed for provision of a Subsidised Letting Budget, and to be reviewed during the budget setting process.

H411 **MADLEY PARK COMPLETION PROJECT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk, as circulated with the agenda.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the required works had now been completed to enable the Trustees to take on a full repairing lease.

Members were concerned with regard to the list of required works, some of which would have been completed under the snagging. The Deputy Town Clerk commented that she had evidence of the issues and

what had been done to rectify these. The Town Clerk had spoken to a solicitor with regard to litigation (no win, no fee basis), in order to review the advice the Council had been given.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted.

It was agreed at the meeting that the following item did not require the exclusion of press and public.

H412 **LEGIONELLA RISK ASSESSMENT**

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Deputy Town Clerk, as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the confidential report be noted.
- 2) that the costs identified in the report be agreed.
- 3) that a supplementary estimate be agreed by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

H413 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: that the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting in accordance with Section 1 of the Local Government Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

(The 2 members of the public left at this point, being 6.35pm).

H414 **CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE CABINET OFFICE**

The Committee received and considered the confidential correspondence, as previously circulated.

The correspondence contained three recommendations for the future handling of tender submissions. A Member commented that the Council had received advice throughout the process.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the correspondence be noted.
- 2) that the recommendations contained in the correspondence be agreed, with the stipulation that recommendation (3) will be within RIBA guidelines.
- 3) that a letter be sent to the Council's advisers to notify them that the process had been referred to the Cabinet Office, in order to make them aware of the gaps in their advice and to enable them to take measures to ensure this situation did not arise in the future.

The meeting closed at 6.50pm

Chairman