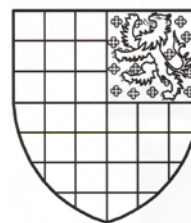


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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the meeting of the **Working Party established to oversee repairs to the Council's buildings**, held on **Wednesday 17th February 2016**, in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lewes at 3:00pm**

PRESENT Cllrs S Catlin; M Chartier; R Murray; S Murray

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*) L Symons (*Town Hall Manager*)

BRepWP2015/01 ELECTION of CHAIRMAN:

Cllr Chartier was elected as Chairman of the Working Party for the 2015/16 municipal year.

BRepWP2015/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies had been received from Cllr Cooper, who was unwell; Cllrs Lamb and Milner who both had unavoidable work commitments; Cllr O'Keeffe, who was accompanying her partner to hospital; and Cllr Rowell, who had a prior commitment (unspecified).

BRepWP2015/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were none.

BRepWP2015/04 QUESTIONS: There were none

BRepWP2015/05 REMIT of the WORKING PARTY:

The remit of the working party, as defined by Council, was reviewed:

The original remit of the Working Party was to commission repairs to the South elevation and refurbishment of offices at the Town Hall. This was extended by Council to include administration of the project to refurbish the Malling Community Centre, and is now extended further (*resolution FC2015/85.2 refers*) to include detailed consideration of the options for permanent roof repairs to the Assembly Room and Corn Exchange, as described in report FC011/2015.

BRepWP2015/06 BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:

Town Hall façade and associated works: Members were pleased to note that the works were almost complete, and that a license had now been granted by East Sussex County Council for the installation of the clear pavement light which would reveal the 'Martyrs Steps' leading to the Town Hall undercroft. This would enhance the experience of the many hundreds of visitors to the town who are regularly observed scrutinizing, with great interest, the commemorative tablet on the wall above this feature. The roofing contractors had some finishing works to complete, and the pavement light was scheduled for installation within the next two weeks.

Assembly Room and Corn Exchange roofing: Members reconsidered report FC011/2015 (*copy in Minute book*), referred by Council, and revised estimates provided by Clarke Roofing (Southern) Ltd (CRS) who had arranged the emergency safety works when roof tiles first dislodged in December 2015. Closer inspection had been facilitated by the safety scaffold now in place, and a more detailed proposal was in prospect. Examples of tiles suitable as replacements (subject to Listed Building Consent) were examined and one of these was considered to be very similar in appearance to the originals. If both the Assembly Room and Corn Exchange projects were combined there would be a considerable saving in the costs of scaffolding and set-up for works. With regard to the contract, it was noted that CRS were the lead contractor currently engaged on the Town Hall roofing and façade project. They had won that contract in open competition less than one year earlier, and had executed those works in exemplary fashion. It was considered that there may be distortion to open

competition for a separate contract in respect of these contemplated re-roofing works, by the general nature of such procedures, as CRS's earlier costs were now in the public domain. This could lead to undervaluing by third parties that would leave the Council exposed to unknown additional cost or reduction in standard. Given that these specialized works were effectively an extension of the current (in progress) contract, which had been won under normal open market conditions only one year earlier, Members were satisfied that the provisions of the Council's Financial Regulations related to contracts would be observed if CRS were given this work under those circumstances. Estimates for the elements of the work and specifications for materials were considered to be fair and reasonable, and Members agreed that Clarke Roofing Southern Ltd should be asked to execute the works needed to both the Assembly Room and Corn Exchange.

Malling Community Centre: The Working Party reviewed earlier work to prepare for the refurbishment of the Malling Community Centre (MCC). A professional structural survey had been carried-out, and current and prospective users of the Centre had been surveyed in 2011 with the results indicating the scope of the redesign that should be undertaken. Meetings with users and local residents had also discussed ideas to integrate use of the area of open space adjoining, immediately West of the building. Architects had provided (free of charge) some design ideas, and a casual inspection by a professional quantity surveyor had produced an estimate of the order of costs to be anticipated. Council had established a financial reserve (R10) which would yield £263,000 in 2016/17 and it was expected that additional funds would be available for specific elements/aspects of the refurbishment from external grants schemes and from 's106' contributions arising from the planned North Street Quarter development. The project offered a prime opportunity to incorporate the most sustainable energy conservation/generation techniques and other innovations. It was agreed to recommend that Council formally resolve to commence the project in earnest, with the first steps being to work with the Malling Community Association to 'refresh' the user survey; establish a project timetable which minimized impact on current users and a draft design brief for approval by Council. The next stage then to invite architects to bid for a design-and-build contract.

All Saints Centre: Although not specifically within the remit of the Working-party, Members considered any building-related matters affecting the All Saints Centre. There were no known issues with the building, which was in generally good repair. The recent work of the Town Ranger and Cllr Catlin in clearing overgrown areas of the churchyard was acknowledged and thanks were recorded to both for this valued contribution.

BRepWP2015/07

CONCLUSIONS:

The Working Party recommends that works be put in hand as soon as possible to repair the roofs of the Assembly Room and Corn Exchange, with this work being offered as an extension to the current contract with Clarke Roofing (Southern) Ltd. All works subject to the grant of Listed Building Consent.

It is recommended that the project to refurbish Malling Community Centre now be commenced in earnest, as described in these minutes.

BRepWP2015/08

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 4:30pm

Signed date