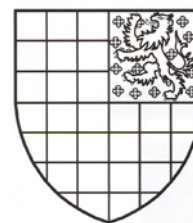


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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the meeting of the **Working Party established to oversee repairs to the Council's buildings**, held on **Thursday 19th October 2017**, in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lewes** at **11:00am**.

PRESENT Cllrs S Catlin; M Chartier (*Chairman*); Dr G Mayhew; R Murray; S Murray, R O'Keeffe and A Rowell

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Grant Crossley (*BLB Surveyors*)

BRepWP2017/11 **QUESTIONS:** There were none

BRepWP2017/12 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies had been received from Cllrs Lamb and Milner who were working.

BRepWP2017/13 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were none.

BRepWP2017/14 **MINUTES:** The Minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2017 were received and signed as an accurate record.

BRepWP2017/15 **UPDATE ON WORKS TO THE TOWN HALL:**

It was reported that a meeting with contractors to discuss the additional roof repairs had been unexpectedly deferred, due to the unavailability of a particular expert, and there was nothing further to report. A question was asked regarding some internal damage in the ceiling of the Parlour kitchen, and TC explained that this was old damage caused by water leaks and damp penetration through the bathroom of the residential apartment above, several years ago. That area had been repaired at that time, but there had been no redecoration of the kitchen until now.

BRepWP2017/16 **EXCLUSION of THE PRESS & PUBLIC:**

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

BRepWP2017/16.1 "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 estimated costs and funding for proposed contracts."

BRepWP2017/17 **REFURBISHMENT of MALLING COMMUNITY CENTRE:**

The meeting welcomed Grant Crossley, Project Manager for BLB Chartered Surveyors.

Members were reminded of the three layout plans which architects had drafted. These options had differing emphasis between sports changing facilities and social areas such as multi-purpose rooms and café and terrace. Each layout catered for a slightly different mix in terms of types of hire, and significantly different attractions for prospective grant funding.

BLB had prepared a relevant Order of Costs for each design, and it was acknowledged that the Quantity Surveyor's (QS) assessment had allowed-for the highest likely cost for each element, and that these estimates would almost certainly prove substantially higher than the eventual final cost. There had been an earlier question regarding additional Value Added Tax, and TC briefly explained the principles of the special VAT regime applying to the Council (*Value Added Tax Act 1994 s33*) and noted that the VAT would be reclaimable by Council as the project was classified as 'non-business', and the building was for community use. Professional fees were already included in some elements of the scheme, and a

significant component would be included within the tender prices ultimately submitted by building contractors.

Mr Crossley gave more detail on each of the three options, which had estimated total costs which differed by £70,000 between lowest and highest. He noted salient points where the QS had provided for specific elements of appropriate quality, and members agreed that these should be the best that could be afforded. All works and materials values had been arrived-at by accepted professional methods using industry-standard reference tables and indices (*Spon's Architects' and Builders' Price Book*). It was stated that allowances for contingency sums and levels of profit for the contractor were probably higher than would be anticipated in reality, and that contractors would temper their own project costing with actual quotes from their trade sub-contractors, driven by practical factors. It was agreed that the QS's estimates could be usefully considered as 'worst-case' and the logic and method underlying them was acknowledged.

Members were reminded that it had been accepted from the outset of the project that external funding would be required to complete it, and the Council's financial Reserve currently stood at £299,000. Third-party grants were likely to be available for particular elements of the design *eg* sports changing facilities; community rooms, or energy conservation measures. It was also noted that once operational management plans were developed for the Centre, some costs may be offset *eg* by contributions from catering franchisees. The Council always had the option to resort to borrowing at extremely favourable rates of simple interest from the Public Works Loans Board, repayable over periods of two to fifty years. TC was pursuing an amendment to the current s106 agreement *in* North Street Quarter (NSQ), to include the Centre and adjoining grass area – excluded at present despite the Centre providing facilities related to nearby sports pitches and being clearly included in designs drafted by NSQ consultants for public consultation over the past year.

Members considered these issues, and agreed that the range between highest and lowest estimated cost should be seen in the context of decades of future use of the improved and more flexible building.

Members were keen to ensure that renewable-energy measures were considered as a high priority when detailed designs were drafted, and funding sources were investigated. Mr Crossley would ensure this was made clear to the architects and in tender documents. It was anticipated that tenders, once invited, would be held open for 60 days. A provisional timetable indicated a meeting at the Centre to introduce design options during November, with Council then being asked to consider the matter for approval, probably in December, which would allow tender specifications to be prepared in the New Year with contractor selection a month or so later. It was anticipated that work was unlikely to commence before June or July 2018. Research into sources of funds would begin in earnest once a design was agreed. Members considered once again the details of the three options, and decided (*6for:1abst*) that the layout given as option three offered the best flexibility and usability of rooms and facilities. This would be recommended as the favoured option when designs were publicized.

Mr Crossley was thanked for his attendance and helpful contribution to the meeting.

BRepWP2017/18

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

The meeting closed at 11:55am

Signed date