
Subject:	ESSENTIAL REPAIRS AT DOVER TOWN HALL
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 6 July 2020
Report of:	Roger Walton, Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial)
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Oliver Richardson, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Commercial Services
Decision Type:	Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Purpose of the report:	To consider the business case to carry out essential repairs necessary to halt serious deterioration at Dover Town Hall in advance of proposed Heritage Lottery Fund works due to commence in 2021.
Recommendation:	<p>To confirm agreement for the essential repairs required at Dover Town hall to proceed using the £400,000 allocation in the Medium-Term Financial Plan.</p> <p>To delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Commercial Services, to take the necessary actions, including but not limited to the awarding of contracts, to deliver the works that are the subject of this report.</p>

1. Summary

- 1.1 Dover Town Hall is a substantial DDC-owned asset which is not currently being used to its full potential and the condition of the building is progressively deteriorating. Cabinet agreed in November 2015 to allocate funds to support the development of a bid for funding support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).
- 1.2 The provision of £400,000 identified in the current Medium-Term Financial Plan is to be used to carry out additional essential repairs required to ensure that the condition and fabric of the structure is stabilized. This will mitigate the risk of the existing condition of the building being further compromised before the proposed NHLF grant funded Capital Works begins in October 2021.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The Council has been working on proposals for the repair and refurbishment of Maison Dieu, Dover for several years and has allocated funds within the Medium-Term Financial Plan to support these works.
- 2.2 In preparation for the HLF bid Cabinet agreed in October 2016 to draw down £160,000 from the Special Revenue Reserve to enable the completion of the most urgent repairs that had been identified in a condition survey previously undertaken by Purcell Architects.
- 2.3 The Council was subsequently awarded a development grant of £427k from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), formerly the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), in July 2018 to support the preparation of a second-round application for the delivery of the project.

- 2.4 As an integral part of the development phase works a more detailed forensic condition survey was commissioned and carried out by Haverstock in 2019. This more extensive survey has identified further works that the Specialist Conservation Architect has advised requires urgent attention if the condition and fabric of the structure is to be stabilized. A provision of £400,000 has been included in the current Medium-Term Financial Plan to cover these most urgent of works.
- 2.5 The Cabinet report of 18th May 2020 gave an update on the progress of the development phase of the project. The report also confirmed that a second-round grant application for the delivery of the project was to be lodged on 29th May 2020.
- 2.6 Cabinet are asked to note that following a competitive tender process the Strategic Director (Operations & Commercial) will evaluate tenders and award contracts for repairs to the town hall in accordance with the existing scheme of officer delegation in consultation with Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Commercial Services.

3. Survey Work

- 3.1 Many of the defects listed in the most recent condition survey will be addressed as part of the main NHLF refurbishment project. However, there are a number of urgent repairs that have been identified as needing immediate attention. These fall outside of the scope of repairs works covered by the £160,000 drawn down from the Special Revenue Reserve on October 2016.
- 3.2 It is clear from the advice given and contained within the attached Heritage at Risk report that these issues need to be addressed now. Waiting for the commencement of the main NHLF works in October 2021 will result in extensive deterioration of the built fabric and erosion and loss of important architectural details. This will inevitably result in higher remedial costs and could compromise the scope and budget of the proposed NHLF works.

4. Repairs

- 4.1 These essential emergency repair works are generally concentrated around the prevention of water ingress into the building and will focus on a new lead covering and improvements to the layout of the roof to the former Parking Services area which has undergone temporary repair that will not last. A new lead roof over the Connaught Hall galleries to protect the Burges decorations beneath; new leaks have recently been discovered to this area.
- 4.2 The essential repair budget will also focus on means of escape improvements, window repairs and any other areas of water ingress that continue to be an issue/risk to the building fabric.
- 4.3 The repair works themselves will be competitively tendered through the Kent Business Portal. Haverstock, who now have a detailed knowledge of the building, will be engaged to assist with these works as per the fee quotation in Appendix 1 for which a waiver will be sought.

5. Identification of Options

- 5.1 Option 1: To do nothing: If the proposed urgent repairs do not go ahead now the property will continue to deteriorate resulting in significant damage to the building. Not addressing issues around water ingress into the building will also considerably escalate the costs of the eventual remedial works and could compromise the HLF bid.
- 5.2 Option 2: For the essential repairs to go ahead now:
Carrying out the repairs now would halt the damage currently being caused to the building. This will safeguard the historic fabric and important architectural details of

the town hall. Prompt action now to address water ingress is more cost effective in the longer term. This is the preferred option.

6. Evaluation of Options

- 6.1 Option 1: Not doing this work will result in further deterioration of the building which could see repair work costs escalate, bring about new repairs and render areas of the building as unusable if not addressed. By not addressing water ingress to this building the long-term future of the building will be put at risk.
- 6.2 Option 2: Regardless of the HLF works by repairing key roofs of the building water will be kept out and the structural integrity of the building will be maintained. This is seen as essential for the future of this significant DDC asset.

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1 It is proposed to use the £400k provision in the current Medium-Term Capital Programme to finance the repair works; there are no revenue implications. A 10% contingency of £40k has been built into these works.
- 7.2 The importance of the enabling work, needed to arrest the deterioration of the fabric and secure the viability of the building prior to the NHLF decision being received, has been recognised in the budget update report approved by Cabinet on 1 June 2020. (CAB155). The funding for the enabling works was retained despite budgetary pressures and other projects being postponed or cancelled. The reasons for retaining the budget were the obligations on Dover District Council in relation to this Grade 1 listed building and the impact on the NHLF project should the enabling work not be undertaken.

8. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 8.1 Wider environmental issues will be addressed within the main HLF works, however these essential works will help prevent further decay and subsequent rectification or replacement of the existing fabric.

9. Corporate Implications

- 9.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): Accountancy has been consulted and has no further comments. (DL)
- 9.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council:
- 9.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>
- 9.4 Other Officers (as appropriate): None.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Fee Quotation for Pre-NHLF Delivery Phase Urgent Repair Works

11. Background Papers

Dover Maison Dieu – Heritage at Risk Report

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