

LISKEARD TOWN COUNCIL

AT A MEETING of the **PROPERTY COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber on Tuesday 12 April 2016 at 7.30 pm there were present:

The Deputy Mayor Councillor Jane Pascoe, Ex-Officio

Councillor Ian Goldsworthy - in the Chair

Councillors - Sally Hawken, Hella Tovar and Christina Whitty

Town Clerk - Steve Vinson

Minute Clerk - Stuart Houghton

Members of the Public – None

Facilities Manager - Tony Misson

The Chairman advised those present of Housekeeping matters.

934/15 APOLOGIES

An apology was received from the Mayor, Councillor Phil Seeva and Councillors Adam Hodgkins, Tony Powell and Sue Pike.

935/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

936/15 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8 MARCH 2016

The Deputy Mayor proposed, Councillor Whitty seconded and the Committee **APPROVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on the 8 March 2016.

937/15 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ITEMS FROM THE LAST MEETING, TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's report, attached, had been circulated and was noted.

The Town Clerk reported that the joint management agreement for Westbourne Gardens had been passed to Cornwall Council's legal department.

938/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

939/15 BUDGET REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2016

The budget report to 31 March 2016, as circulated, was noted.

The Chair commented that this was effectively the year end figure and he was pleased to note that, overall, the Committee had performed within the budget set.

940/15 REFURBISHMENT OF THE PUBLIC HALL

The Town Clerk's report, as circulated, contained the current information. Layout drawings had been received from the Architect and had been circulated.

The Chair added that the original plans had been updated to improve the flexibility of the building, by allowing lift access to the Refreshment Room and Council Chamber, baby changing facilities in the foyer area and the ability to provide hot food to the Public Hall without encroaching on the use of the Refreshment Room.

The Deputy Mayor proposed, Councillor Tovar seconded and the Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to Council that the layout plans be accepted.

The Chair then explained that the Council could apply for grant assistance towards the cost of this work, but to make an application estimated costs must be provided.

The Deputy Mayor proposed, Councillor Tovar seconded and the Committee **RESOLVED** that costings for the project should be obtained.

941/15 PIANOS IN THE PUBLIC HALL

The Town Clerk's report contained details of the condition of the four pianos and recommended that the two least used, the upright piano on the stage and the one in the Long Room, be disposed of.

The Facilities Manager said that neither piano was regularly used and had not been kept in tune. A leg on the piano in the Long Room had broken recently when it was being used.

Councillor Tovar said that if these pianos were disposed of she had an electric keyboard that she was willing to donate to the Council. The Chair thanked Councillor Tovar for this generous offer.

In response to a statement about the potential cost of disposing of the pianos the Facilities Manager said that there had been interest expressed in taking the one from the stage.

Councillor Hawken proposed, Councillor Whitty seconded and the Committee **RESOLVED**, that the pianos in the Long Room and on the stage should be disposed of.

942/15 AMENITY LAND AT EASTERN AVENUE/SPRINGFIELD ROAD

The Town Clerk's report gave details of the proposal, put forward by the landowner, that the Council adopt this amenity land. The Town Clerk had visited the site as had the Chair of this and the Planning Committees. Comments made were;

- a. The land had a steep slope and an informal footpath across it
- b. Residents informed them that the area was used by children for playing
- c. Would any conditions be imposed on the Council if they accepted the land
- d. What would the maintenance costs be
- e. A tree maintenance plan would be required

The Town Clerk said that he had received a quotation for the grass cutting of the site, at £40 per cut, with a recommendation that it was cut 24 times a year. He did not think it would need cutting that often.

The Chair proposed, Councillor Hawken seconded and the Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that the Council enter into negotiations to adopt this site.

943/15 CORRESPONDENCE

None.

944/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 10 May 2016 with the Allotment Plotters

4. Clerk's Report – to receive an update on the progress of items from the 8th March 2016 Committee – For Information

Item	Update
Thorn Park – Tree Works	The works have been completed.
Thorn Park – Play Equipment	The replacement parts have arrived. The works are being scheduled.
Westbourne Gardens Agreement	Cornwall Council have been contacted and informed that the Town Council ratified the decision to enter into the agreement. The signing of the agreement is being organised.
Unit 3 – Guildhall	The new tenant Melanie Barwis has moved into the unit and commenced trading.
Public Hall – Water Costs	At the previous Committee a question was asked regarding the increased water rates costs of the Public Hall in this year compared with last year. In a subsequent check of our facilities no leaks were found. However, it was found that an internal toilet cistern's ballcock had become defective and that this was resulting in increased water use. The repair has been made.

7. Refurbishment of the Public Hall – a) to receive and approve the amended plans for the refurbishment of the Public Hall. b) to agree to obtain costings for the project.

Attached to the report are the latest version of the plans for the proposed refurbishment of the Public Hall. These include numerous improvements including to the First Floor:

- New platform lift to improved disabled access to the Refreshment Room, Public Hall and the Council Chamber.
- Significant reduction in the size of the pillar in the Refreshment Room to give more usable space.
- Doubling the size of the Refreshment Room kitchen to include cooking and dish washing facilities and much improved food preparation space.
- Removal of the current counter in the Refreshment Room to create additional space.
- New catering servery into the Public Hall from the improved and extended kitchen.
- Quimperle Room Upgrade – including the provision of a platform lift and sink unit and water supplies.

Ground Floor changes include:

- Provision of a Baby Changing Room to replace the former Cloakroom.
- Enabling the doubling of the size of the Kitchen in the Refreshment Room by relocating the Caretaker's Rest Room and Store to the former ground floor kitchen.

The Committee is asked to approve the plans.

With the design finalised it is appropriate to seek costings for the project. There are ongoing discussions with grant funding bodies to ascertain which sources might be applicable to the project.

The final cost of the project proposal and the amount of grant that can be obtained are not yet known. When they are known it might be prudent and necessary to recommend phasing the works. For example, the Quimperle Room Upgrade could be undertaken as a Phase 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That the amended plans for the refurbishment of the Public Hall are approved.

That detailed costings for the project are obtained.

8. Pianos in the Public Hall – to consider disposing of the two least used pianos in the Public Hall.

The Town Council has four pianos in the Public Hall. These are:

- the Grand Piano, - this is used weekly by the East Cornwall Bach Choir – other occasional uses.
- the piano in the Quimperle Room, weekly use from the Liskeard Ladies Choir and Adult Education’s “Signing for Pleasure”.
- the piano in the “piano” store – is used very infrequently.
- the piano in the Long Room. Is only used once a year.

The piano in the Long Room takes up space in a room that is long and narrow. One of the castors is broken which makes moving it difficult. If the piano were disposed of it would free up space for the better storage of chairs and tables relating to the operational use of the Long Room.

As the pianos in the “Piano Store” and Long Room are so infrequently used the tuning and repair and maintenance has been invested in the two pianos that get the most use.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee agrees the disposal of the two least used pianos.

9. Amenity Land at Eastern Avenue/Springfield Road – to consider an offer that the Town Council adopt a piece of amenity land at Eastern Avenue/Springfield Road.

Background Information The Town Council has been approached by the owner of a piece of land which fronts Eastern Avenue and Springfield Road. The site is indicated on the attached plan. It is the smaller undeveloped plot bounded by a row of houses including 49 Eastern Avenue on one side and a row of houses including 55 Eastern Avenue on the other. The site is 340 square metres / 3,659 square feet in area. The sloping site is mostly grassed with a number of mature trees. There is a small tarmac footpath at the top of the site fronting the row of houses which includes 49 Eastern Avenue. There are no facilities upon it e.g. play equipment, benches, bins, or street lights.

The owner Windmill Investments Ltd. purchased the site in 2009. They have submitted planning applications for residential development in 2010 and 2015. They have failed to secure planning consent. The most recent application being objected to by residents, the Cornwall Council tree officer and Liskeard Town Council.

Consideration of Offer The Chair of Property, Chair of Planning and the Town Clerk have visited the site.

- The Town Council's insurance broker has been contacted and would extend the current insurance cover at no extra cost (subject to the site not being polluted with heavy metals or industrial waste).
- Grass cutting and strimming - A quote of £40 per cut has been obtained from a local contractor. They suggest 24 cuts per year. This would mean an annual cost of the £960.
- Culvert – South West Water Ltd. have confirmed that the culvert that passes under Eastern Avenue is their adopted culvert which is a surface water drain.
- Footpath – it is evident that there is informal use of the site to cross from Springfield Road into Eastern Avenue. It might be necessary to provide a formal footpath with better wet weather capability than the present arrangement. The piece of land at the very end of Springfield Road is owned by Cornwall Council. They have been contacted and asked if a proposal to provide a footpath across their land would be acceptable. Initial feedback from Phil Jones a Valuer with Direct Services in Cornwall Council is that it would seem like a sensible idea.
- Power to accept and maintain gifts of land – The Local Government Act 1972 section 139 gives the Town Council the power but not the obligation to accept gifts of land and thereafter maintain them.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee considers whether to recommend to Council that it enters into negotiations to adopt the site.