

Liskeard Town Council Facilities Committee Tuesday 13th June 2017

Facilities Managers update & report as at 31st May 2017

Staff

The new members of staff continue to settle in and establish their new roles.

Jeff Barrett has sustained a fall from a slip on a wet floor in the Public Hall toilets which has aggravated an old neck / back injury. This has resulted in a combined absence of nearly six weeks and at the time of writing we are awaiting confirmation of his return to work and any temporary limitations on his duties.

The new branded items of caretaking staff uniforms have been delivered and are in use providing a good Town Council identity, especially within the Public Hall.

Business Rates

Information regarding the revised business rates for the Town Council properties has been provided to John Blake of Jefferies to review and advise on potential grounds for appeal. Mr Blake's opinion is that the new non-domestic rates "seem fair and reasonable", please see supporting letter from Mr Blake.

Civic Regalia Storage

Investigations have been made as to the potential options for long-term storage of our Civic Regalia currently held in the HSBC vaults.

Our insurers, Aviva, had initially specified a 'jewellery' safe which from Aviva's preferred supplier would cost £5300 + VAT.

In addition we would be required to extend our intruder alarm detection in the safe's location. This together with a small amount of building work to get the safe to its location gives a total estimate of £6k + VAT.

Issues that require consideration for the storage of the regalia are obviously its security but also its protection from fire (the potential for melting / distortion from excessive heat) Ease of access for use at Civic events, Access control – who has access to the storage location and how is this controlled. Insurance cover and liability, if we were to use a third party store.

A revised 2017 insurance valuation for the regalia has now been received and new advice is being sought from our insurers regarding storage specification. This, together with proposals regarding the level of insurance and alternative storage options will form part of a full report to the next full Council meeting. The deadline for removal of our regalia from the current storage facility is 31st December 2017 and any extended lead times for installation of new secure storage facilities will need to be considered.

Fire Risk Assessment

The new Fire Risk Assessment has identified the need for improvements to many of the fire doors within the Public Hall and the Guildhall. This is fairly specialised work to ensure the doorways fully conform to regulation FD30(s) and it has been difficult to engage a supplier who has sufficient working knowledge of the full regulations.

Please see attached Fire Risk Assessments (FRA), the recommendations are in section three, and for the Fire Doors are marked 'Moderate' with a timescale for action of six months.

Attached is further information on Fire Door specifications.

There are 17 (seventeen) doorways within the Public Hall complex requiring improvement and 8 (eight) at the Guildhall, plus other issues such as a ventilation gap on the Guildhall stairs. The work required at the Guildhall is further complicated by the fact that it is a listed building and will require additional permissions and fees for Listed Building Consent to complete the work.

An initial estimate for this work has been received but due to its high value it would be necessary to obtain two further quotations, however it has proved difficult to identify suitably knowledgeable and qualified contractors.

RECOMMENDATION: That the facilities manager uses his best endeavours to obtain two more comparative quotations to be put to the Facilities Committee on July 18th 2017, before further consideration is given to the current single quotation.

I am also awaiting advice from our Fire Risk Assessor as to a permissible timescale for completion of this work as it would be advantageous, particularly in the Public Hall, to carry this work out at the same time as the refurbishment project.

Guildhall

The broken window in the MMA unit has now been replaced by the tenant and the 'basement' storage area has been cleared of all MMA tenants' items. The area requires final cleaning but is ready to be used for Town Council medium term storage.

Energy Efficiency Standards – From April 1st 2018 it will be illegal to agree a lease or renew any lease on a commercial property that has an energy performance rating of "F" or "G" (EPC certificate)

This legislation could have an impact on the letting units at the Guildhall, as and when any leases are renewed or new leases issued. Further investigation is underway to establish the full impact and any possible exemptions.

Water Bowser

New electricity and cold water supplies have been installed in the Fore Street lobby of the Guildhall and the new hanging basket watering bowser has been delivered and is in use. In addition access has been given to the LIB group at the Fountain and Dean Street toilets for the purpose of topping up the bowser with water.

Hanging Baskets and Flowerbed planting

The new 'self-watering' hanging baskets and other items for the Liskeard In Bloom group were ordered and delivered to Browns Nursery for planting.

The hanging baskets for use on the Town Council buildings have now been supplied by LIB and installed on our buildings.

The flowerbeds on the Parade and Plymouth Road roundabout were due to be planted during week commencing 22nd May 2017. It was previously agreed that Jeff Barrett would undertake this work as additional hours. Jeff has prepared the beds for planting but due to his current sickness absence and unknown return to work, together with a need to get the plants in and established we have engaged a contractor to complete the planting as a one off item.

Public Toilets

Intermittent vandalism continues at the Westbourne and Sungirt Public Toilets. A toilet seat was damaged by fire at Westbourne ladies, locks and toilet roll holders damaged at Sungirt and toilet rolls stolen from both locations. Repairs have been made and the activity has ceased for the time being.

Sungirt and Dean Street toilets periodically suffer from blockages in the drainage; this is partly due to miss-use and partly to the design of the drainage system and low use water saving flushes. I am currently looking at options to increase flushing and their cost implications.

Westbourne and Sungirt toilets are fitted with 'Wallgate' hand wash systems. The units in Westbourne were installed in 1996 and are still functioning well under a service contract. The units in Sungirt are now nearly thirty years old, being installed in 1988. These units are also under a service contract but the company, Wallgate, have advised us that within 12-18 months they will be unable to maintain them due to availability of spare parts.

An estimate has been received from Wallgate to replace the two Sungirt units with the current equivalent at a total cost of £4881.20 + VAT

We currently have a nominated reserve in the Public Toilets budget of £9k plus the dilapidations reserve.

These new units are extensively used within Public toilets and are much improved in terms of usability and cost saving from lower energy, water and soap consumption.

Land at Eastern Avenue

Jeff Barrett has maintained the area of amenity land at Eastern Avenue by litter picking and strimming but pending Jeff's return to work this may have to be put out to a contractor for the remainder of the season.

Formal Footpath – I have made extensive investigations into establishing a more suitable, formal, footpath across this piece of land, which would provide pedestrian access from Springfield Road to Eastern Avenue, replacing the current foot-worn track.

Initial talks with a landscaping company suggested a simple meter wide concrete path at a cost of approximately £3k.

To enable us to fully complete the footpath link it will involve crossing a short section of Cornwall Council land on the Springfield Road side.

I have been in communication with several departments of Cornwall Council, Tree officer, Rights of Way, etc. and, in conjunction with the Town Clerk, the Community Link Officer David Read.

It has been noted that if the Town Council were to install a suitable footpath it may be possible for Cornwall Council to adopt it and its future maintenance. However, this would be subject to the correct specification for the construction of the footpath and could involve things such as handrails and even street lighting, all of which will considerably increase the cost.

There are other legal and liability issues to consider and before any further investigation can proceed. The item is currently with Cornwall Council's legal department who are looking into the ownership of the Springfield Road land and permissions that will be required for this footpath to cross it.

Parks

Both parks have received their annual RoSPA inspection, reports attached. The items for improvement have now / are been actioned.

The report on the Rapson's Field Skate Park is worth noting in that it gains a very high 10 on the risk score. This is not unusual due to the nature of risk in this type of park but is increased due to the age of the equipment and surfaces and the non-conformity to current standards.

The skate park was completed in 2005 and RoSPA give an expected life span of 10 years for this type of equipment.

If consideration were given to a refurbishment of these facilities, as a guide, the cost to install in 2005 was £63,000 for the equipment and installation (excluding ground works) The current cost would depend on the grade and scope of refurbishment but would incur a cost for removal and disposal of the old equipment. If we were to budget for a refurbishment in say 2019/20 a figure of £100k would not appear unreasonable. As an alternative, and given the amount of time and money spent on maintaining these facilities and the narrow segment of users, other uses for this space could be considered such as returning it to an open green space possibly for event use given the availability of parking or possibly, subject to the prevailing grant situation, there may be scope for

outdoor fitness equipment or similar. These issues will require consideration in conjunction with any devolution planning.

The current situation with the Skate Park is that although minor fence damage does still continue, the removal of the boarding from the fences, which has increased visibility, does appear to have reduced it somewhat. However, litter and broken glass continues to be an issue.

Up to the point of writing this report there have been very few issues at Thorn Park but over the Bank Holiday weekend a litterbin was vandalised and damaged almost beyond repair.

However this continues to be a very well used 'family' park with at least two community-organised events planned for the summer months.

Allotments

Mr. Gander, Plot A2 (b), had made good progress in tending a large area of his plot as promised but the work had appeared to cease and the plot was deteriorating again. The disused greenhouse frame and various other items on his plot have still not been tidied / removed and an email was sent to Mr. Gander to ascertain his current situation.

Improvements have since been made and Councillor Whitty has subsequently met with Mr Gander and we understand that he now has a person to help him on the allotment as he is awaiting hip surgery.

I have also been informed that Mr Gander has now joined the Allotments Association.

Plot A1 was also identified as requiring attention and a first letter of improvement was sent. I understand that the plot holder was on extended holiday and this plot is now very well tended.

Mr McLeod, plot holder of plot K2 has relinquished his plot.

This has now been re-let and to date we have no current waiting list. Tess Andrews, the allotments association secretary has been informed.

Grass Cutting and Hedge Trimming Tender

A draft Grass cutting and Hedge trimming tender document has been prepared and is attached for consideration and approval in item 11 of the June 13th Facilities Committee meeting.

The main items for consideration are the duration of the contract and the frequency and number of grass cuts.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Facilities Committee agree and adopt the Grass Cutting and Hedge Trimming Tender Document, subject to the completion of the Westbourne Gardens Management Agreement with Cornwall Council.