

**TOWN CLERK'S REPORT  
PROPERTY COMMITTEE – MONDAY, 13 JANUARY 2020**

**Summary**

This is a report of follow-up to decisions made at the Property Committee. This is a Standing Item on agendas to update Members. Once follow-up is completed, items will be marked as closed. Ongoing items will be brought back to committee when a new decision is required or when a fuller update is needed. Items already included on the agenda are not listed here.

<b>Min. 329/18</b>	<b>Defibrillators</b> – The Assistant Town Clerk continues to work closely with the Community Heartbeat Trust to ensure that all defibrillators are in good working order and that the online portal is kept up to date. Further to recent reports of the unit at the Kennet Pharmacy being deployed, replacements pads/equipment are currently on order. Renovations taking place at the Costcutter store in St Margaret's Mead will mean that the defibrillator will not be able to remain in situ and will have to be relocated elsewhere. The ideal location for its relocation is the Youth & Community Centre, a very short distance away. The Assistant Town Clerk will investigate this further and arrange its installation in due course. <b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Min.147/19</b>	<b>Town Hall Marketing Working Party</b> – Work towards the completion of the Town Hall marketing material continues. Towards the end of 2019, a local professional photographer took internal and external photographs of the Town Hall. The quality of the images is excellent and the Town Hall looks impressive both inside and out. We now have over 300 photographs for our use (if Members would like to have a look, please contact the Assistant Town Clerk). These images were shared with the designer who has drafted some rough visuals. The Town Hall Marketing Working Party will be meeting soon to look at these, give feedback and start working on copy for submission to the designer by mid-Feb. <b>Ongoing</b>

**Town Clerk**

**8 January 2020**

**Report on Town Council Properties**

**Summary** - To note an update report on properties owned by the Town Council.

1. **Town Hall – See Agenda Item 7**
2. **5 High St Offices** – Nothing to report.
3. **5 High St Shop** – Nothing to report
4. **5 High St Flat 2** – Nothing to report
5. **The Merchant’s House** – Nothing to report
6. **1/2 Kingsbury St Shop** – Exterior redecoration to be completed, nothing further to report.
7. **1A Kingsbury St Flat** – Nothing to report
8. **2A Kingsbury St Flat** – Nothing to report
9. **3 Kingsbury St Shop** – Lease about to be signed
10. **3a Kingsbury St. Studio Flat** – Nothing to report
11. **3b Kingsbury St. Studio Flat** – Nothing to report
12. **Recreation Ground Cottage No. 1** – Gas Safety Check to be carried out
13. **Recreation Ground Cottage No. 2** – Gas Safety Check to be carried out
14. **Elcot Lane Pavilion/Boxing Club** –Nothing to report
15. **Bowls Club** –Lease/Licence discussions to be re-started
16. **Marlborough Community & Youth Centre** – Repairs to be carried out to security lights. Tables to be replaced in new financial year
17. **George Lane Facilities** – Community Room has been furnished and stocked with basic kitchen equipment.
18. **Workshop** – Nothing to report
19. **Bus Shelters** – Refurbishment ongoing.

**General** - Window cleaning has been carried out at the Town Hall, Offices and Kingsbury Street.  
Legionella testing takes place monthly at the Town Hall, Offices and MC & YC  
Fault with entry system at Kingsbury Street has been rectified

**Author –Office Manager**

**January 2020**

## Town Hall

**Summary** - This report brings Members up to date with current works at the Town Hall including details of an internal structural survey and asks Members to consider recommendations about external works.

### 1. Planned Works/Projects

The following works will be taking place during the Municipal Year 2020/21

WORKS	COMMENT	COMPLETED
Painting of external railings	Painting of railings. This is now listed as part of the external works schedule following the Condition Report /Drone Survey	<i>Remove from this schedule</i>
Installation of public toilet	Installed and opened on 1 July 2019.	Completed June 2019
Refurbishment of part of basement to create 2 new storage areas and a Caretaker's Office. (Some storage offered up to The Merchant's House)	This work has been completed. It has included additional intruder alarm systems, heating and lighting too. Storage units are currently being added to the MTC storage area. Issues around damp have reduced since the heating has been turned on. A dehumidifier has now been purchased (more cost effective than hiring)	Completed July 2019
Installation of new chandelier and wall lights in Kingsbury Street foyer	This work has been completed. Many positive comments have been received about the improvement this makes at this entrance to the building.	Completed September 2019
Installation of new projector in Assembly Room	Installed and in use by hirers.	Completed September 2019
Recommendations listed in a Condition Survey	Now being taken forward as a major project (see para.3)	Ongoing
Works to flagpoles and associated safety precautions	Quotes agreed by Committee, works being taken forward	Ongoing
<b>GENERAL MAINTENANCE - Standard day to day and other ongoing tasks (lift checks, window cleaning, boiler maintenance, gutter clearance, etc. continue outside of this schedule).</b>		

### 2. Budget

A breakdown of budget expenditure is at **Appendix 1**. Councillors should be aware that the largest expenditure is attributed to works in the basement. Ear marked reserves for the Town Hall remain at £159,000.

### 3. External Works

At the meeting of 8 July, a Condition Survey was submitted to Councillors with details of recommended works to properties in Kingsbury Street, 5 High Street and the Town Hall. At the meeting on 11 November, it was agreed that an Architect/Project Manager be appointed to take forward the works on the Town Hall and his proposed terms and conditions of engagement for this were agreed. He has now submitted the following documents which are appended as follows:

**Appendix 2** - Specification, schedule of works and pre-construction information on the external repairs and redecoration

**Appendix 3** - Draft drawing showing the elevation of the building

**Appendix 4** – Draft drawing showing possible design for a handrail on the balcony to help alleviate safety issues around the low height of the current balustrade (as discussed at previous Property Committee meetings). This could be amended if perspex/glass was to be included

This thorough spec and schedule of works covers all recommendations in the Condition Report (undertaken with a Drone Survey). These were:

**4.01 TOWN HALL**

**4.01.1** The most urgently required work is the overhaul of the rainwater goods, particularly the guttering, where seals between components have broken down, while repair or replacement of the cracked fitting at the east end is also strongly recommended.

**4.01.2** When the gutters are attended too, the accumulations of debris in valley gutters, behind chimneys and on top of the rear dormer should be cleared out and, if practical, missing tiles replaced.

**4.01.3** As with the other buildings surveyed, re-decoration of those elements not readily accessed from Ground Level is overdue. When undertaken, it would be highly beneficial for specialist overhaul of the leaded lights and their iron opening lights to also be done.

**4.01.4** When access to re-decorate the dormer windows is secured, a close-up inspection of the lead coverings can be made and any necessary remedial work undertaken.

**4.01.5** Implement a scheme of repair and re-decoration of the decorative iron railings.

**4.01.6** Localised repointing of brick and stonework, where the pointing has been lost, would also be extremely beneficial.

At a recent meeting between our Architect, the Chairman of Property and the Town Clerk, various other works were discussed which may not have been picked up by the drone survey and which it would be worth including (depending on cost). All works are listed at Section C of the spec at **Appendix 3**. Whilst the scaffolding (a large proportion of the overall cost) was in place, it would be worth attending to other repair works.

Our Architect is now working on estimated costs for all elements of the project ahead of drawing together a tender.

**Financial Implications** - The Town Hall budget (Works/Maintenance) for 2020/21 has been recommended at £50,000. The ear marked reserves remain at £159,000. Though no costs have yet been estimated, a project of this size will incur significant expenditure. It is recommended too that a sensible contingency is included for the likelihood of additional work being identified once the scaffolding has been erected. All projects in excess of £10,000 must have prior approval of Full Council. All projects over £25,000 must be advertised via the government's Contracts Finder website. No enquiries have been made about the possibility of a public works loan being taken on for this. Members should be aware that there is no budget line set aside for 2020/21 for loan repayments.

**Impact on Town Hall Bookings** – Though it is not clear how long the scaffolding would remain in place (ideally no longer than 2-3 months, but it's weather dependent), it has been suggested that a list of all hall bookings between April – September 2020 is drawn up. This is at **Appendix 5**. The concern is that the building (often hired on the strength of its impressive facade) will appear considerably less attractive. As bookings are usually made at least 12 months ahead for weddings and major festivals, no forewarning has been given to hirers. Of most concern is that there are 17 weddings already booked between April -September. Other events include VE Day commemorations, Mayor Making, Puppet Festival, Literature Festival and the Dark Skies event. Members may like to consider how hirers might be compensated. With warning now, event organisers will have a chance to look for alternative venues and the Council could possibly offer discounts. If these options are taken, then it will impact on income for the Town Hall (estimated at £30,000 for 2020/21).

### **3. Internal Structural Survey**

Though not part of the main thrust of the Condition Report dealing with the hall exterior, comments were also made in it about cracking in the Assembly and Court Rooms as well as the Chamber. It was recommended that though there was no immediate concern, a structural engineer should be approached for professional advice and monitoring of the cracks should start. A structural engineer specialising in listed buildings has been commissioned at a cost of between £325- £550.

### **Town Clerk's Recommendation**

The Town Clerk recommends that Members note this report and

- i) Agree the schedule and scope of works prepared by the Town Council's Architect and that he now goes ahead and costs out all works in preparation for drawing up a tender document
- and
- ii) Consider what action should be taken towards compensating and handling bookings already made for spring/summer 2020

**Town Clerk**

**8 January 2019**