

**Committee: Cabinet**

**Date of meeting: 18 September 2019**

<b>Subject:</b>	Reopening of the Hersham Village Hall
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Head of Asset Management & Property Services
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Portfolio Holder for Resources Portfolio Holder for Social Affairs Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture
<b>Link to Council Priorities:</b>	All
<b>Exempt information:</b>	None
<b>Delegated status:</b>	For recommendation to Council on 2 October 2019
<b>Key Decision:</b>	N/A

**Executive Summary:**

Following consultation with the Hersham community and input from the Hersham Member Reference Group, permission is sought from Cabinet and Council to spend up to £650,000 to enable the hall to be re-opened for Spring 2020.

**Recommended: that**

- (a) Cabinet support the recommendation from the Hersham Member Reference Group to reopen the Hersham Village Hall and a sum of £650,000 be made available to enable Hersham Village Hall to be reopened to the community;**
- (b) the funding to be allocated from capital receipts; and**
- (c) note that an annual revenue budget allocation will need to be included in the 2020/21 Budget and future years for the maintenance and operating costs of the Village Hall, currently estimated to be £100,000.**

**1. Background - Hersham**

- 1.1 In September 2018, Cabinet agreed for initial funding to be made available to enable the Council to evaluate potential options for the Hersham Community Centre and Village Hall, part of which was to develop a strategic document that would include master planning along with stakeholder engagement.
- 1.2 Following the appointment of a professional team, and the creation of a member reference group, a full public consultation exercise as undertaken which included surveys asking three main questions. Namely: what the local needs were, what facilities the community wished to see on site and whether the site could accommodate a residential scheme considering constraints and potential opportunities for the site. The survey was posted to 6000 residents and hard copies were made available at the Hersham Centre for the Community and the Hersham library. The exercise commenced on 4 January 2019 and ended on 28 January 2019. A total of 1,131 responses were received, with the overwhelming response being in favour of the reopening of the Village Hall for

hiring out and general community space. This was fully supported by the member reference group and, whilst the group acknowledged that new homes, including affordable, were essential, the Hersham area had already seen several new developments and some respite was due. In March 2019, the previous Administration supported the wish of the residents, and agreed to support the recommendation from the Member Reference Group for the Hersham Village Hall to be reopened.

- 1.3 In July 2019 at Full Council a climate emergency was called and subsequently ratified this resulted in this project being looked at in depth by members to guarantee that a re-opened village hall would meet energy regulations and ensure that the Council is complying with its promise to achieve carbon neutral status by 2030, The member reference group re-visited the site in August 2019 going through the independent survey undertaken by our consultants. This was subsequently followed by a member reference group meeting where it was unanimously agreed at this meeting that Option 1 of re-opening the hall be pursued with an aim to have it re-opened for public use by Spring 2020.

## **2. Refurbishment Options**

- 2.1 As part of the work undertaken by the professional team, three options were considered by the member reference group:

- **Option 1** Works required to reopen the hall, to an acceptable and fully functional standard.
- **Option 2** being comprehensive refurbishment and upgrading of the existing hall, and,
- **Option 3** being the redevelopment of the site.

Option 3 was wholly disregarded. The member reference group discussed Options 1 and Option 2, along with the key factors for each option which had been identified. The member reference group took the decision to pursue Option 1, with a view of undertaking works required to reopen a statutory compliant hall with guaranteed life expectancy of at least five further years. The decision was also taken that, during the five years, an assessment would be made to gauge the use of the building, along with community involvement for the Council to redetermine the future use of the hall, with the possible option for further extending the life expectancy of the building beyond the initial five years. Any enhancements, including the provision of new kitchen and toilet facilities, could be considered as Phase two of the project and an application in this regard could be submitted to the Esher and Hersham Local Spending Board for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding towards these enhancements, at a future date. It was also acknowledged by Members of the Group that the original reason for the closure of the Hall was not due to the condition of the kitchen /toilet facility but because it had not been statutory compliant (fire+health and safety).

The advantage of Option 1, over Option 2, is that it is the quickest way to ensure re-provision of the community building to the residents of Hersham, along with reflecting the cost element of Option 2, which was in the region of £1.4 m to achieve a full refurbishment and reconfiguration.

## 2.2 Option 1 – Estimated capital cost to reopen the existing building

Following agreement of the member reference group to proceed with Option 1, estimated costs for rectifying the current defects/repairs to the Hersham Village Hall are estimated at £650,000 exclusive of VAT. These figures include pre-construction surveys, professional fees and contingency, along with reconnection costs for the utilities. An urgent action was agreed by the previous administration agreeing to spend up to £150,000 of the £650,000 (excluding VAT) to be allocated to enable officers to appoint consultants to commission the design/specification work and reconnect the utilities to the Village Hall. This work is now underway.

## 2.3 Programme for Hersham Village Hall

It is anticipated that the following programme is deliverable: -

Site investigation and design work	May 2019 – July 2019
Preparation of Specification	July – September 2019
Procurement of Contract	October – November 2019
Contract Works to be done	December 2019 – Spring 2020

The works will be project managed by officers in Asset Management & Property Services (AMPS) throughout the whole refurbishment process along with the day to day maintenance aspects of the site thereafter. The cost of running the facility is estimated to be in the region £100,000 per annum. This does not include any staffing costs in respect of the opening and shutting of the facility.

## 3. Proposed Running arrangement for Hersham Village Hall

The village hall previously formed part of the Places for People Leisure contract for public halls and up until 2017 they undertook the day to day management of the building including taking bookings, maintenance and cleaning of the hall. As the hall is contiguous to the Centre for the Community and they have a visible presence on the site, it is proposed that the Community Support Services team at Hersham, supported by the wider team at the Civic Centre, undertake the bookings for events/facilities at the village hall. The Head of Community Support Services has confirmed that this process can be incorporated into the day to day running of the Centre for the Community, with bookings being managed through the Council's existing room booking software. The maintenance of the infrastructure, including cleaning and health and safety will be managed by AMPS, with an additional revenue growth of £100,000 per annum being required. The net cost of managing and maintaining the four existing Public Halls is currently around £300,000. This excludes the Hersham Village Hall.

At the Member Reference Group meeting on 19 June 2019, it was acknowledged that the aim should be to increase the usage of the Village Hall particularly over the next 2 to 3 years. It was also acknowledged that at the time of closing the hall the usage was only 31%. Increased usage of the hall should generate additional income and help reduce the running costs of the hall.

### 3.1 Linking the Centre for the Community and Village Hall

Following questions by the member reference group and the Head of Community Support Services officers have investigated the possibility of linking the two buildings together, a review of the site has identified as not being possible without significant investment and disruption due to the location of the village hall staircase and community centre's plant room.

Linking the buildings would also have the following impact:

- The cost highlighted in this report would increase due to having to interlink the mechanical and electrical aspects of the buildings, i.e. fire alarm and intruder alarm. The implementation of a building management system would also need to be considered to ensure running costs are effectively managed, as the cost of running one building partially occupied would lead to significant utility costs.
- As part of the original option appraisal, it was identified that the Display Energy Certificate rating of the village hall was already very poor.
- A full health and safety review would be required, specifically in relation to safeguarding.
- The security of the Centre for the Community would be exposed and the risk of hirers accessing the Centre could be problematic.
- Affect the Council's partial exemption on VAT – leading to adverse cost implications.

The Member Reference Group at their meeting on 19 June 2019, discussed the above and acknowledged the complexities around linking the two buildings.

#### **Financial implications:**

It is recommended that the sum of £650,000 to be funded from the capital receipts. The ongoing revenue cost is estimated to be £100,000 per annum and will need to be reviewed on an annual basis. This will need to be included as a Budget Growth in the 2020/21 Budget.

#### **Environmental/Sustainability Implications:**

As part of the original project brief, environmental and sustainability options were considered and identified that although the building met the minimum energy efficient ratings and scored a 'D' rating under the Energy Performance Certificate, it was actually performing significantly worse under the Display Energy Certificate (rated as a G) when taking into account actual energy usage.

Consideration will therefore be given to ways of improving the energy consumption of the building as part of the reopening scope of works.

It is worth noting that the rating of Centre for the community under the DEC a 'F' and during the five-year review once the village hall is reopened, consideration should be given to how best to improve this rating.

**Legal implications:**

The appropriate procurement process will be undertaken throughout the exercise and the necessary legal documentation namely a building contract will be put in situ prior to any works commencing on site.

**Equality Implications:**

The project will provide a fully compliant facility in regard to the relevant articles of the Building Regulations and Equality Act and an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

**Risk Implications:**

At the time of writing, pre-construction surveys are still being conducted, so the full extent of repairs are yet to be identified. A contingency has been included within the budget provision, however, there remain several project risks that could increase the estimated figure, and, until these surveys have been completed, there is the possibility that additional monies may be required.

The project will have a risk register that will be maintained throughout the process and which will assist the tracking and resolution of the risks as part of effective project management protocols.

**Community Safety Implications:**

We will work closely with our Police colleagues to adopt safer by design principles which will result in positive implications for community safety.

**Principal Consultees:**

Hersham Member Reference Group, including Ward Councillors  
Council Management Board  
The Leader, Portfolio Holders for Resources, Housing and Community & Corporate Development.

**Background Papers:**

None.

**Enclosures/Appendices:**

None.

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