

## **Extraordinary Full Town Council Agenda Items 5 to 9**

### **Library refurbishment works**

In 2018 Cornwall Council reviewed the level of library service provision throughout Cornwall as part of Cornwall Council devolution programme. Saltash library was one of the sites within the devolution programme and the Town Council were given the option of transition from Cornwall Council to Saltash Town Council.

The future of Saltash Library was safeguarded after being transferred to Saltash Town Council on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 as part of a devolution transfer from Cornwall Council.

The Town Council reviewed the recruitment of staff and increased the opening hours within the first few months of transition in support of the community.

The number of library members as at 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020 who chose Saltash as their home site and have a PL12 postcode is 6,155<sup>1</sup> and it is anticipated that the membership will continue to rise due to the Town Council continuing to provide all key services essential to a modern library, plus various events and activities, to improve wellbeing and promote equality through learning, literacy and cultural activity.

The Town Council recognised the importance of the library as an established current and ongoing asset for its community, and identified the refurbishment works<sup>2</sup> required to enable the service to continue in the long term.

The Town Council view the library as a long term asset and investment for the town and seek to identify and generate income streams where any opportunity may present itself.

The Library Sub Committee reviewed the refurbishment and window replacement works in June 2019, and since considered all aspects, researched, and sought advice concerning the works required, taking all necessary steps to ensure the Town Council are fully aware of all the implications and the benefit to its community.

It has become even more evident over the months of the pandemic how vital the library service is to its community, with footfall figures of up to 100 per day for the use of the click and collect, IT service, and small browsing section.

Prior to lockdown, Saltash library welcomed on average, 3,500 to 4,000 customers per month, not only to use the library service as we know it, but to take part in the community activities and events for all ages.

It is considered that the proposed refurbishment and window replacement works will enable the library to become a community hub now and in the future with a significant increase on the footfall.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to page 2 of the Library Business Plan for further details on the library membership

<sup>2</sup> Refer to page 8 of the Building Consultants Repairs, Future Uses and Alterations Report for a list of works and costs

Harrison Builders and Devon and Cornwall Windows are on standby to commence works in February 2021. There is a possibility the start date may vary due to scheduled works and delayed response from the PWLB.

Length of the project is estimated at approximately 12 weeks.

It is anticipated that the two contractors are to agree to run their works together on site. If this is not the case, there will be an estimated delay of approximately 15-16 weeks on the completion of works.

Programme of works and commencement date to be confirmed at the pre contract meeting chaired by the Building Consultant in conjunction with the contractors.

Building consultant to visit site on a weekly basis to hold site meetings and produce minutes.

Council need to be aware that due to unforeseen circumstances such as Brexit and market fluctuation and any delay in the PWLB there could be a potential increase in the project cost.

Tenders received include a 10% contingency however, **it is recommended that council approve to drawdown an additional 10% contingency from General Reserves to cover any potential increase in cost.**

## Public Consultation Results

The initial public consultation held in August 2020 was to seek residents' views on the proposed library refurbishment and window replacement works and provision of café creating a multiuse hub facility for its community.

Advertising took place in the Town Council noticeboards, website, social media, banners, leaflets and the Saltash Observer.

Consultation periods:

1. Initial consultation held August to September
2. Second consultation held November to December

431 people responded to the initial consultation but did not answer all the questions.

Details as follows:

Q1. How often do you visit Saltash Library?

- |                          |            |        |
|--------------------------|------------|--------|
| • Daily                  | 1 person   | 0.23%  |
| • Weekly                 | 97 people  | 22.51% |
| • Monthly                | 113 people | 26.22% |
| • Less than once a month | 161 people | 37.35% |
| • Never                  | 59 people  | 13.69% |

All 431 people responded to the question.

Q2. Do you support the refurbishment and modernisation works?

- Yes 372 people 86.71%
- No 57 people 13.29%

2 people skipped the question.

Q3. Do you consider the refurbishment and modernisation works will enhance your visitor experience?

- Yes 352 people 82.82%
- No 73 people 17.18%

6 people skipped the question.

Q4. Following the refurbishment and modernisation works is it likely you will visit the library on a more regular basis?

- Yes 304 people 71.19%
- No 123 people 28.81%

4 people skipped the question

Q5. 313 people added additional comments and can be viewed here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-P89TPGDY/>

118 people chose not to leave additional comments.

To date 443 people have responded to the second consultation. An updated figure in terms of responses will be provided at the Extraordinary Full Town Council meeting to be held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 following the closing date of the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

Details as follows:

Q1. Are you in favour of Saltash Town Council proceeding with the library refurbishment works at a council tax precept increase of 2% which is the equivalent of an additional £4.00 per year for a Band D equivalent dwelling.

- Yes 311 people 70.20%
- No 132 people 29.80%

The responses for both consultations are very similar in terms of numbers received.

Upon return of the public consultation results and tenders received, it enabled the council to reaffirm its decision to proceed with the loan application.

## Current Full Council resolutions:

Full Council held on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 resolved to approve that:

1. Harrison Builders be appointed to carry out the refurbishment works at the Library at a cost of £103,405.80 subject to approval of funding from the Public Works Loan Board.
2. The Building Consultant be appointed as the Project Manager at an agreed sum of 6% of the contract figure subject to approval of funding from the Public Works Loan Board
3. The Building Consultant be appointed to carry out the CDM Regulations at an agreed sum of 1% of the contract figure subject to approval of funding from the Public Works Loan Board.
4. Devon and Cornwall Windows be appointed to carry out the replacement of windows and doors at the Library at a cost of £102,300.00 subject to approval of funding from the Public Works Loan Board.
5. The Building Consultant be appointed as the Project Manager at an agreed sum of 6% of the contract figure subject to approval of funding from the Public Works Loan Board.
6. The Building Consultant be appointed to carry out the CDM Regulations at an agreed sum of 1% of the contract figure subject to approval of funding from the Public Works Loan Board.

Councillor Dent reminded Members of funds to be received from Cornwall Council of £15,000 to contribute towards the replacement of the curtain walling at the Library therefore a deduction of £15,000 from the above total of £220,105.21 leaving a final figure of £205,105.21.

Councillor Dent proposed that a Public Works Loan Application of £200,000 be submitted. Councillor Lennox-Boyd seconded Cllr Dent's proposal.

Councillor Phillips proposed that the shortfall of £5,105.21 be included in the Precept for the year 2021/2022. Councillor Fox seconded Councillor Phillips' proposal.

It was **RESOLVED** to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for the PWLB Loan as detailed below:

1. Loan of £200,000 for the refurbishment works and replacement of windows to the library building.
2. Fixed interest rate of around 1.95% over a loan period of 10-years.
3. The annual loan repayment will come to around £21,156.50 and total repayment will come to around £222,143.25.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The shortfall of £5,105.21 for the completion of the works be included in the Precept for the year 2021/2022.

### Approve submission of the PWLB application for funding

On the basis of the report and results of the second consultation it is recommended that the council continue with the borrowing application process and resolve to:

1. **Seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for a PWLB loan of £200,000 up to 10 years for the refurbishment and window replacement works at Saltash library. The annual loan repayment will come to around £222,143.25.**
2. **And to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 2% which is equivalent of an additional £4.00 a year.**

### Library Sub Committee

**It is recommended that the council delegate to the Library Sub Committee to undertake referrals received from the PWLB and to facilitate the management of the project works.**

End of Report