

Agenda item 6

For information - report on the upkeep of Frome Town Hall

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Summary

This report provides the committee with information about the upkeep of the Town Hall. It notes a selection of works already completed in the current financial year and highlighting the significant works scheduled between now and March 2019. The report also includes a table providing more complete information about the current and future years. This table is taken from a working spreadsheet that includes estimated costs for works through to spring 2022 and an early indication of costs further ahead.

Although some of this information has been referenced and mentioned in other reports about the Town Hall in the past, it hasn't been presented in this way before and the intention from now would be to present a similar update to Council Matters each year around this time. In doing this, the report will coincide with the budget-setting process and will allow us to look after what is the Council's most valuable and business-critical asset.

Introduction

Frome Town Council bought the Town Hall from Somerset County Council in 2015 for approximately £275,000. The building was then refurbished and significantly improved between autumn 2016 and early 2017, at a cost of approaching £750,000. This sum includes the purchase price above. We re-opened the Town Hall in February 2017.

Following all the work, the building is now valued at £3.5 million and even if it was for this reason alone, it would be essential that we look after the building properly. Added to this, however, the building is part of the history and heritage of Frome and we should look upon ourselves as custodians rather than owners. The building belongs to the town and it's important that we look after it and that we invest in it for future generations. It's also the Town Council's office and the Town Council is a landlord. This confers certain responsibilities as well. For these reasons then, the Town Hall is perhaps the Council's most valuable and business-critical asset.

How we look after the building

The management and upkeep of the building is shared by the Town Hall Steward, the Environment Manager, the Marketing & Communications Manager and the Town Clerk. Work is scheduled and completed based on priorities and categories:

Priorities	
Legal	Simply, there is legislation in place that means we must do something. Examples of this include all the checks relating to fire safety and things like electrical testing.
Business critical	Essential or important works to make sure the building remains open and that it functions safely, efficiently and in line with recommended and industry practice. Examples of this checking and clearing the guttering and downpipes, and servicing the boiler.
Upkeep & improvement	Where business critical works are generally about the functionality and safe operation of the building, this work is a mix of the aesthetic and best practice. As such, it remains important to the building and important to FTC's reputation, especially given the investment made in refurbishing the building. Upkeep & improvement work includes: painting rooms, cleaning the windows, some signage, the clock and looking after the external areas around the building.
Categories	
Planned	Planned work is work that has been scheduled based on the above priorities. Planned work necessarily informs the budget for looking after the building and in any given year, much of the budget for the Town Hall will be allocated to planned work. In slightly simplistic terms, the aim is for 80% of the year's work to be planned and to run to the schedule. The remaining 20% is there as a contingency that is always included to allow for reactive works.
Reactive	Things happen – meaning that sometimes work also must happen (and without it being planned). Although this could include reacting to an opportunity – perhaps making an improvement to the building – more typically this will be a repair that comes to light because of some event, for instance, repairing a broken window or fixing a toilet or a sink.

How the work is completed

There are contracts in place for much of the legal and business critical work. For example, the maintenance of the lift, servicing the air conditioning and fresh air ventilation systems and testing the emergency lighting. Alongside this, there is a lot of work that is simply completed on a routine basis. This doesn't really merit reporting to the committee, it just happens. But for the purpose of this first report some examples of this include:

- Painting door frames and walls
- Changing light bulbs

- Looking after the external areas around the building
- Completing daily checks of the building
- Cleaning the building

Quinquennial

The table below is taken from the quinquennial document ([Appendix 6.1](#)) that details all the planned work for five years; we are currently in year two. This document was authored by a local surveyor who worked with us on the refurbishment project and has expert knowledge of the building. Since then, the document has been added to by members of staff as the building has changed and evolved. The document is a daily reference and it is regularly updated to reflect what we're doing.

Spending to date

Financial year	2017/2018	2018/2019
Agreed Budget	£14,250	£17,500
Spend	£23,165.94	£6,566.43*

Notes by year

2017/2018

Last year's spend of £23,165.94 included the daily cleaning of the building, checks on the drains, buying additional tools and equipment for the upkeep of the external areas and works to the guttering.

2018/2019

- **Completed work**

Outside of the contracted work in the building, we've replaced two strip lights and spent money on plumbing and carpentry in the downstairs toilet following a leak. We've also built two new storage containers: one for FTC and one for Fair Frome.

- **Scheduled work**

The following work has been scheduled between now and the end of the financial year:

- Building a bin store for the external rubbish & recycling bins
- Checking the guttering and hoppers on the southern and western sides of the building

We're also going to cost a new back door and will be reviewing whether any stonework needs repair this year. The projected work on signage in the building is unlikely to be needed this year.