

## Policy Committee – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2017

# SKIPTON TOWN HALL – BAR AND CATERING PROVISION



Report of Strategic Manager Planning and Regeneration

Lead Member; Councillor Myers

Ward(s) affected: All Wards

### 1 Purpose of the Report

To update members on the outcome of the expression of interest process to seek a partner to establish bar and catering provision in Skipton Town Hall and to set out an interim approach to create bar provision.

### 2 Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the outcome of the expression of interest process to seek a partner to provide bar and catering services.
- 2.2 Agree the interim option for the provision of interval bar facilities in the Town Hall and authorise basic works to go ahead.
- 2.3 Agree a supplementary estimate of £18,500 to construct the interval bar facilities.

### 3 Introduction

- 3.1. Skipton Town Hall is of significant historical importance, located in a prominent position on the High Street in Skipton and restoring the Hall as a sustainable and vibrant community venue is a key priority in the Council Plan. Once its future is secured the Town Hall will be a destination for the use and enjoyment by the whole of the Craven District, improving the economic and social vitality of the area.
- 3.2 The Main Concert Hall is at the heart of the next phase of development. Members of September 2016 Policy Committee were presented with findings from a feasibility study that concluded in order to generate and sustain the potential audience levels identified a number of improvements were required to modernise the Concert Hall. In response Members approved the commencement of a second major phase in the re-development of the Town Hall to significantly upgrade the Main Concert Hall,

backstage rooms and explore the potential to extend the rear of building, animating the rear of the Town Hall and the ginnell leading from Jerry Croft. Design work is now underway and on track to consult with members in June 2017 in advance of public consultation.

- 3.3 The feasibility study also highlighted the current limited bar and catering provision which is only provided if requested by the hirer. Its current location is not ideal and provision of permanent pre/post and intermissions bar and catering facilities are considered pivotal to the future sustainability of the Hall.
- 3.4 The study recommended any bar / catering provision should be considered in addition to existing front of house space which is under pressure and proposed the front corner unit of the Town Hall be used to create a crush bar and daytime café. This unit is in an ideal position and would complement the flow throughout the building, relieve the pressure on the narrowness of the entrance hall which would need to manage audiences of around 280 and could be designed as a crush bar, café, meeting space where creative people could meet and network, or provide more intimate performances when the Concert Hall is not in use – this not only encourages creative development and nurturing of new artistic talent in the area, but also provides further secondary spend opportunity.
- 3.5 The location and how the bar complements the flow within the Town Hall has been considered as part of the design work now underway.
- 3.6 Following assessment of five potential delivery models for the provision of bar and catering facilities within the Town Hall, Members of November 2016 Policy Committee agreed to Officers seeking expressions of interest from potential commercial partners.

#### **4 Update on progress**

- 4.1 In early February the opportunity to express interest in the commercial partnership was advertised through YORtender and in catering industry press. The opportunity was viewed and enquired about by several companies/organisations, but only two submissions were received. Both submissions were incomplete and therefore void.
- 4.2 The majority of parties who viewed the opportunities and/or asked questions in the initial process were from outsourced catering companies and it is thought chose not to proceed due to this opportunity being a development partnership rather than a straight tender with confirmed value attached.
- 4.2 Potential partners from the soft research phase were also invited to express interest, however, though two are still very enthusiastic and complementary about the Town Hall development scheme, they have both recently embarked on new areas of development within their core businesses and cannot commit to development of a new partnership at this time. It is understood that both wish to remain informed of developments and future opportunities.

## **5 Next Steps**

- 5.1 We are still moving ahead with plans for programming performances and events as we continue to develop the venue, and therefore do require a suitable crush/interval bar space imminently. It is suggested that we employ an interim solution to take us through the next phase of development work to the building.
- 5.2 This would entail undertaking a basic fit-out of the space, to make it a functional room with heat, light and flexible counter area with small amount of portable seating/tables, plus fridge, glass washer and prep area.
- 5.3 It is proposed we then use the space to run an interval bar provision in the evenings and during matinee performances with our own casual front of house team.
- 5.4 When we are not using the space for this purpose it can be rented out as an additional private hire space.
- 5.5 Additional income could be derived from wall decoration provided by way of work by local artists, which would be for sale at a commission to Skipton Town Hall.
- 5.6 This solution would allow us flexibility during our next phase of building work, giving us opportunity to continue to offer private hire space to both new and regular hirers when phase two of the HLF development of the museum, gallery and annexe space goes ahead.
- 5.7 Once works are complete in the rest of the building and tenants are in place at 17-19 we will revisit the bar/café partnership opportunity, offering a more established venue to work with.

## **6 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The costs of a basic fit out of the space, including electrical, plumbing & heating works is estimated at around £18,500.
- 6.2 It is proposed that this expenditure is taken from the overall £180k set aside for commercial development of the space, as it will contribute to the finished development.
- 6.3 Interim arrangement running costs would be covered from the Town Hall casual staffing budget and bar stock covered by extending existing arrangements to provide bars to hirers; only bottled stock from wholesaler, managed by Town Hall staff.

**7 Legal Implications**

None arising directly from this report

**8 Contributions to Corporate Priorities**

The development of Skipton Town Hall into a vibrant cultural community venue is a key action in the Council Plan and contributes towards the objective to improve the economic vitality of Craven's market towns and villages under 'Enterprising Craven'.

**9 Access to Information: Background Documents**

Skipton Concert Hall Feasibility Study

**10 Author of the Report**

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**11 Appendices**

None