

Harborough District Council



Report to Cabinet Meeting of 3 April 2023 (Appendix A – Exempt)

Title:	External repair work at The Symington Building (Appendix A – Exempt)
Status:	Public report with exempt appendix A not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972.
Key Decision:	Yes
Report Author:	Caroline Averill, Head of property services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Hallam, Finance and assets
Appendices:	Appendix A – Exempt

Executive Summary

- i. To ensure that The Symington Building remains fit for purpose, and to reduce further deterioration to the condition of the building from weathering it is necessary for repairs to the external elevations to be carried out.
- ii. Appointment of a contractor through the SCAPE framework is the procurement method most likely to achieve value for money whilst ensuring that the specialist workmanship is at the forefront when working sympathetically on the Grade 2 listed building.

Recommendations

1. That the Cabinet committee approve for the contract to be awarded to the preferred contractor as detailed in appendix A.
2. That authority to award, negotiate and finalise the contract for external works to The Symington Building be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Assets, Finance together with the Legal and Democratic Services to award, negotiate and finalise the contract.

Reasons for Recommendations

- iii. To ensure that the Council appoints a suitable contractor to undertake the specialist work to the external elevations and associated works of The Symington Building within the programme timescales.
- iv. The SCAPE framework is a public sector procurement authority which offers a suite of fully managed frameworks that are available to any public body in the UK, such as schools, councils and NHS trusts. Its direct award frameworks are fully compliant with UK and EU procurement law and are designed to accelerate projects and deliver them

to the highest possible standard. The frameworks are designed to be fair, transparent and offer value of money to the taxpayer.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To recommend the award of a contract that will secure the preferred contractor for the external repairs and associated work to The Symington Building, Market Harborough.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Symington Building is home to a number of public services including Council staff, Leicestershire County Council office space, Library Museum and Registrar services, Department for work and pensions, along with three retail units.
- 2.2 To ensure that the building remains in a fit state it is necessary to carry out essential maintenance to the existing masonry, water goods and windows to reduce any further deterioration to the external elevations through weathering.
- 2.3 Council approved a capital allocation of £472,000 in February 2022 for a two phased enhancement programme The Symington Building. Phase 1 is to the front elevation along with the west elevation and tower and Phase 2 is the remainder of the building. The scheme of works covers the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years.

3. DETAILS

Works required

- 3.1 This contract is for Phase 1 works to be completed to the front-face of The Symington Building and includes:
 - 3.1.1 essential specialist repairs to external masonry;
 - 3.1.1.1 including removal of spalling and defective face brickwork and replace with new all matching existing colour and finish,
 - 3.1.1.2 remove all loose and defective sections of the stone cornice details back to a stable surface,
 - 3.1.1.3 apply a stone repair mortar to the cornice details to shape and recreate the profile and mouldings,
 - 3.1.1.4 rake out and remove loose mortar to the joints of the coping stones forming the parapet walls to the roof level and repoint.
 - 3.1.2 overhaul and service all metal critical windows;
 - 3.1.2.1 including repairs/re-glazing/replacement re-align sashes to open & close correctly and fit tightly into aperture of frame,
 - 3.1.2.2 overhaul all window handles and fittings to operate smoothly, grind off where required, remove excess paint on leading edges where needed.
 - 3.1.2.3 thoroughly clean, prepare and redecorate the outside of the metal windows.

Procurement

- 3.2 This is a routine procurement exercise that represents 'business as usual' and is essential to maintain the Council's operations and function. Authorisation of the award by Cabinet is necessary because the value of the contract exceeds £200,000 (HDC Procurement SORP, 28.1).
- 3.3 Procurement through a Framework agreement is the most cost-effective method available to the Council. The alternative would be a tender under The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which would be unduly onerous for such specialist work.

Contract Management

- 3.4 Included within the contract price, is a third-party contract in respect of contract administration, design and Construction Design and Management advisors. This arrangement will monitor contract compliance

Mitigation Measures during work

- 3.5 Inevitably there will be some inconvenience for building users whilst the work is carried out, this will primarily be on erection /striking of the scaffold. Therefore, following consultation with other users of the building the following measures will be put in place to reduce the impact of the works.
- Agile working to be encouraged where possible.
 - Scaffold will be erected to allow for continued access to the building.
 - Other access / egress points to the building to be used where possible.
 - Scaffold will be alarmed and monitored throughout the work period when not in use.
- 3.6 As part of the planning for the scheme a bat survey has identified evidence of brown long eared bats within the tower area of the building, this will impact on the proposed work and will only provide a small period of time for completion of the work under the requirement of a licence. The Ecology team will work closely with the contractor to ensure compliance of the required licence.

Benefits/Efficiencies

- 3.7 Completion of the project will reduce the risk of injury, damage, and potential loss of life to members of the public and users of the building from falling pieces of masonry. Ensuring that The Symington Building is safe for staff, partners, and the public to use.
- 3.8 Work being completed will assist with the long-term health and good up keep of the grade II listed building and will reduce additional deterioration of stonework therefore reducing longer term future costs.
- 3.9 Repairs being carried out in a timely manner will provide a safe and decent place for people to visit.
- 3.10 The reputation of the council will continue to be positive.

- 3.11 Carrying out work to the windows in conjunction with the other work to make use of the scaffold and only have one cost for this element.

Alternative Options Considered

- 3.12 The Council could delay the decision regarding appointment of the preferred contractor; however, this would risk incurring increased costs at a later date as the building condition deteriorates further. Also, the impact of inflation in the current economic environment might will erode the value of the current capital allocation.

4. Legal

- 4.1 Appointment of the preferred contractor through the SCAPE framework will ensure compliance with procurement regulations.

5. Resources

- 5.1 The recommended actions offer the best means of achieving value for money.
- 5.2 Funding of £472,000 has been allocated within the Capital Programme for the project, as identified in the Capital Programme Report to Council in February 2022.
- 5.3 The budget framework provides for a 10% tolerance on the approved capital programme if fixed prices were to come in higher than the budget estimate. Costs more than this tolerance would need additional approval.

6. Equalities Analysis

- 6.1 Not applicable as this is routine property maintenance.

7. Risk Management

- 7.1 Failure to identify a suitable contractor could jeopardise the future operation of the building delivery of frontline services and contractual obligations with building Partners.
- 7.2 This could impact negatively on the reputation of the Council.
- 7.3 Not awarding the contract could have Health & Safety implications as detailed in the Health & Safety Policy where Harborough District Council acknowledges and fully accepts its responsibilities under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other relevant legislation.

8. Corporate Priorities

- 8.1 The recommendations will enable the Council to secure value for money and financial sustainability, whilst acknowledging the importance of creating a sustainable environment and carbon reduction and allowing action to support these goals throughout the programme of work.
- 8.2 To demonstrate robust plans are in place to ensure the long-term sustainability of the council, maximising the use of our resources and assets to create community benefits.

9. Environmental Implications including contributions to achieving a net zero carbon Council by 2030

- 9.1 Implementation of the recommendations will support the Council's commitment to become a net zero carbon Council by 2030. Whilst it is unlikely to have a big impact this essential work to the windows will help reduce drafts in the building which in turn will help reduce the energy used to heat the building. The reduction in energy use will not only help reduce the carbon footprint but will also help reduce energy costs.

10. Data Protection

- 10.1 None.

11. Consultation

- 11.1 Service managers and the relevant portfolio holder have been consulted about this contract.
- 11.2 Planning officers have been consulted regarding the work and potential implications of the grade II listing to the building. The contractor will continue to work with the planning team throughout the required work.
- 11.3 Consultation will be undertaken with partners and with Council officers regarding the proposed work and timescales.

12. Background papers

- 12.1 None