

Cabinet Meeting	
Meeting Date	17 th March 2021
Report Title	Sheerness Clock Tower Restoration
Cabinet Member	Cllr. Monique Bonney, Cabinet Member for Economy and Property
SMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services
Lead Officer	Dean Radmore, Capital Projects Manager
Key Decision	Yes
Classification	Open
Recommendations	That the Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services in conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property and The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance has delegated authority to award the contract for the renovation works for Sheerness Clock Tower and waive contract standing orders if three tenders are not received.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report discusses the current condition of the clock tower in Sheerness and the requirements for the Council to award a contract to carry out full restoration works.
- 1.2 The urgency of this decision has meant that it has not been possible to provide the 28 days' notice via the forward plan which are usually required for a key decision. Under Rule 20 of the council's access to information procedure rules, the chairman of the scrutiny committee has been advised of this. This report constitutes the notice required to be provided to the chairman of the scrutiny committee and made available to the public.

2 Background

- 2.1 As part of the Capital Projects work in Sheerness Town centre the council arranged for a full internal and external inspection of the clock tower in Sheerness ahead of any external painting works planned for later in the year. The inspection was carried out on 22nd Feb 2021 and during that inspection the structural integrity of the iron structure was found to be seriously compromised in a number of areas.

- 2.2 Following the inspection the council were advised to close off the area surrounding the clock tower to remove the risk of members of the public being hit by falling material/debris emanating from the tower itself.
- 2.3 The company that carried out the inspection on 22nd February 2021, Smith of Derby, are currently preparing a detailed report of their findings including costs to fully dismantle the tower, transport it to their warehouse in Derby for full restorative repair and transport it back to Sheerness to reassemble and leave in a fully restored and operational condition.
- 2.4 Other companies are being sought to provide quotes for this work however this is specialist works and therefore it may difficult to find alternative suppliers that are able to carry out the full suite of works required including dismantling and erection, dial and hand repairs, clock mechanism works, casting of iron sections for replacement, existing paint removal and full external paintwork.
- 2.5 Due to the urgent requirements to carry out this work and the timetable of Cabinet meetings scheduled. Delegated authority is requested to award this contract as early indications is the costs will exceed officer authority for awarding contracts up to £100k. Also due to the limited number of specialist contractors a waiver may be required if an insufficient number of tenders are submitted.
- 2.6 In addition to the restoration works there will also be the need to put in place more permanent hoarding until the works can be undertaken, to engage with the electricity supply company so that they can carry out a full disconnection of the supply prior to the tower being removed and also a full reconnection once the tower is reinstated. There will also be the need to remove the seating plinth around the base of the tower prior to removal, and reinstate it afterwards, and also arrange for the wires connected to the top of the tower and adjoining to the adjacent buildings to be removed prior to removal. The costs for the activities described directly above are currently unknown but are estimated to collectively be up to £25,000.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 That the Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services in conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property and The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance has delegated authority to award the contract for the renovation works for Sheerness Clock Tower and waive contract standing orders if three tenders are not received.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 To leave the clock tower barriered off and out of bounds to the public until sufficient funding can be found or a grant obtained sometime in the future.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Internal discussions have currently taken place with SBC's property team to determine companies suitable to carry out the work required and the conservation officer regarding the listed building consent and planning requirements. Sheerness Town Council and Town Team have been informed and will be updated once further progress has been made.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>The proposals in this report delivers against the Corporate Priority No. 2 'Investing in our environment & responding positively to global challenges' and specifically 2.3 and 2.4:</p> <p>2.3 Establish a special projects fund to provide much-needed investment in the borough's public realm and open spaces.</p> <p>2.4 Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.</p>
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>The Clock Tower in Sheerness Town centre is a listed structure of national importance. Although exact costs for the restoration project have yet to be received the financial implications are expected to be in the region of £160,000 for the restorative works (singular contract award) with up to a further £25,000 required for the supporting activities described in 2.6 above. These costs are to come from £20,000 from S106 and the remaining funds from the pooled business rate reserve which has been allocated to town centre improvements and economic regeneration.</p>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>As the structure is listed, formal listed building consent and planning consent will be required for any works undertaken. Legal advice will also be required for the contract award.</p>
Crime and Disorder	<p>None identified.</p>
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	<p>None identified.</p>
Health and Wellbeing	<p>None identified.</p>
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	<p>None identified.</p>
Risk Management and Health and Safety	<p>The tower is currently deemed unsafe and therefore has been barriered off to protect members of the public from the risk of</p>

	falling material/debris. The tower will need to remain closed off to the public until the restoration is complete.
Equality and Diversity	None identified.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified.

7 Appendices

7.1 None

8 Background Papers

None