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**TOWN HALL CANOPY**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Don Bristow, Resource Management Portfolio**

**Responsible Director - Paul Wildsmith, Director of Corporate Services**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To request funding to replace the canopy at the front of the Town Hall.

**Information and Analysis**

2. The Town Hall canopy was built as part of the Town Hall over 35 years ago. It has been retaining rainwater on its roof for a number of years. A recent inspection by the Council's Structural Engineer has found that the water outlets are higher than the general roof level and the rainwater is unable to drain away and is ponding in the central area of the roof.
3. The inspection has also revealed that the construction of the roof (felt on chipboard, on joists that are cross battened to support an expanded metal sheet, finished with a cement-based screed) shows signs of significant deflection and indicates that the joists are overstressed by 166 per cent. In time, the deflection and overloading of the roof with excessive rainwater will increase and may lead to a possible collapse of the roof joists and the heavy suspended ceiling.
4. The Structural Engineer recommends that the roof and the suspended ceiling are replaced as a matter of urgency. In the interim, for public and employee safety, arrangements are in place to remove excess rainwater.

**Options**

5. In addition to the replacement of the canopy consideration has also been given to two other options, i.e. the demolition of the canopy with no replacement; and replacing the canopy with a glass fronted entrance.
6. Advice from Development and Environment Department is that the canopy needs to be replaced to provide some form of shelter to the main front entrance as the front of the Town Hall is in an area subject to high local wind conditions. A replacement canopy would also protect staff and visitors in the main reception area from inclement weather without the need to provide additional overdoor heaters. A glass-fronted entrance has been discounted because of increased cost. The recommendation is, therefore, to replace the existing canopy like for like.

## **Costs**

7. The cost for replacing the canopy is £20,000. The work would be undertaken over a period of six weekends to enable the Town Hall to remain operational from the main front entrance.

## **Financial Implications**

8. The Scheme is not included in the Capital Programme. Cabinet is, therefore asked to approve the release of additional corporate capital resources to fund this scheme.

## **Outcome of Consultation**

9. No consultation, other than advice from Development and Environment Department, was undertaken on the compilation of this report.

## **Legal Implications**

10. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

## **Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

11. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

## **Council Policy Framework**

12. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework.

## **Decision Deadline**

13. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

## **Recommendation**

14. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the release of Corporate Capital Resources of £20,000 to replace the Town Hall Canopy.

## **Reasons**

15. To ensure the safety of those accessing and egressing the Town Hall.

**Paul Wildsmith**  
**Director of Corporate Services**

## **Background Papers**

- (i) Reports from Structural Engineer dated 15th August and 6th October, 2006; and
- (ii) Estimates from Community Services Department dated 5th September and 13th October, 2006.

Linda Todd : Extension 2354  
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