

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Abergavenny Town Hall Refurbishment</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>County Council</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> September 2018</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>

**1. PURPOSE:**

To seek agreement to proceed with the Abergavenny Town Hall refurbishment proposals to enable the facilitation of a community hub and undertake improvements to the Borough Theatre.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1** That Council agrees to proceed with the Abergavenny Town Hall refurbishment scheme utilising the capital funding already allocated within the Capital Programme.
- 2.2** That decisions relating to the management of the scheme and award of any contracts are delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Chief Officer, Resources.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

- 3.1** Members agreed in September 2016 to ring fence a budget of £2,283,000 to the provision of a hub in Abergavenny which was the residual sum remaining from the replacement library capital budget and this figure has been subsequently included within the Councils Capital Programme.
- 3.2** Following this decision a design team has been appointed through a Sell2Wales procurement process, which is led by GWP architecture. They undertook a review of the indicative proposals for the hub and have produced a revised design that has regard to the listed nature of the building, the competing uses, the need to improve accessibility and broaden its flexibility and improve energy performance.

- 3.3** The final design proposes the creation of a 6m extension at first floor level and internal alterations to create a flexible hub space. In addition a new mayor’s parlour will be provided on the first floor and a town clerk’s office on the ground floor. A new passenger lift at the front of the building will facilitate access to all levels of the building, including the theatre. The existing theatre air conditioning unit will be re-located to the roof and the market space will be re-configured and improved. The hub will also continue to operate on the ground floor within the existing one stop shop floor area to provide a service for
- 3.4** The Arts Council for Wales have been working with Officers regarding the possibility of grant funding improvements to the theatre space on the basis of a 75% intervention rate. These improvements will include re-provisioned seating and improvements to the internal configuration. It is proposed that £80,000 of the existing budget is ring-fenced as this Council’s match funding to lever in the grant funding thereby providing wider benefits beyond the hub provision.
- 3.5** The market hall will be re-configured to accommodate the mezzanine structure and improve the existing layout and infrastructure for the benefit of traders and users alike.

#### **4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Do nothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No capital expenditure required which would release the funding for other projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revenue savings would not be met</li> <li>Abergavenny would continue to have an inferior service</li> <li>Would need to incur capital expenditure repairing the existing library building</li> </ul>	We are not in a position where we can do nothing as this would be the most inefficient option, would continue to provide operating difficulties and provide an inferior service to the community.
Re-furbish the Town Hall to provide a new hub facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will be able to deliver a hub service to Abergavenny</li> <li>Will enable the provision of a lift within the Town Hall to improve accessibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital cannot be utilised on other Council priorities</li> <li>Period of disruption whilst the works are undertaken</li> </ul>	This proposal will honour a commitment made to provide an improved library service to the community through the

Option	Benefits	Risks	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The works are upgrading the energy infrastructure to improve efficiency.</li> <li>• The theatre will benefit from improvements</li> <li>• The market service will benefit from improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abergavenny Town Council will lose its council chamber and instead share the new space for council meetings.</li> <li>• The works will impact on a grade II listed building.</li> </ul>	creation of a new hub service and increased floor space, which will in turn provide the forecast revenue savings.
Re-locate the hub service to a different venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We previously considered the acquisition of the former Richards building, but this was discounted due to cost issues and the communities wish to focus activity within the Town Hall.</li> <li>• The existing library does not have sufficient floor space, is in need of works and does not meet accessibility criteria.</li> </ul>	This alternative was considered in the last report and it was agreed by Council that the hub would be sited within the Town Hall to consolidate its community value, improve accessibility and provide a focal point to draw footfall from the new Morrison's development and into the town centre. It is not recommended that this option is progressed.

## 5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

An evaluation assessment has been included in Appendix 1 for future evaluation of whether the decision has been successfully implemented

## 6. REASONS:

- 6.1 In March 2015 it was agreed that as a result of the implementation of the hubs, £300,000 of ongoing savings would result through reduced staffing and operating costs. Abergavenny is currently running stand alone dual provisions and is therefore unable to achieve their apportioned element of the revenue savings without the development of an integrated team in a single venue.

- 6.2 The Friends of Abergavenny Library have repeatedly expressed their concern over the inequality of the floor space provision within the Baker Street library compared to the facilities in other towns. Operationally the space is difficult to manage and is no longer fit for purpose.

	Catchment (2011 census figures)	Floor space m <sup>2</sup>	Floor space ft <sup>2</sup>
Abergavenny Library	15,200	222	2,340
Abergavenny OSS		147	1,582
Caldicot Hub	19,000	426	4,585
Chepstow Hub	12,350	466	5,016
Monmouth Hub	10,100	302	3,251
Usk Hub	2,800	238	2,562

- 6.3 The community is expressing concern that Abergavenny is lagging behind the other Monmouthshire communities where the hubs have now been operating since October 2015.
- 6.4 The design proposals have been the subject of consultation with key stakeholders including CADW and Abergavenny Town Council and the designs have been amended to accommodate requirements where possible.
- 6.5 It is intended that the works will be phased to maintain access to the services wherever possible, there will however be periods of disruption and closures to facilitate works such as the lift installation. We are working with GWP and their design team to minimise disruption and will ensure effective communication with service providers.

## **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

- 7.1 At its meeting in September 2016, County Council agreed to ring fence the remaining replacement library budget of £2,283,000 to the Abergavenny Hub proposals and also authorised expenditure to be incurred in finalising the designs. The budget remaining within the Capital Programme is £2,168,204.
- 7.2 The proposed works are subject to a tender exercise, however the indicative cost funding envelope is estimated to be £2,100,000, to include the market hall works. The contribution required to match fund the Arts Council grant is expected to be £80,000 and it is intended that this will be funded by this programme. Following the receipt of tenders

the anticipated shortfall in funding of circa £12,000 will be met through value engineering.

**6. FUTURE GENERATIONS AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 The evaluation demonstrates that the proposals have considered the well being principles and contribute positively to improving long term outcomes.

**7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

None

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

.None

**9. AUTHORS:**

Debra Hill-Howells                      Head of Commercial and Integrated  
Landlord Services

[Debrahill-howells@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:Debrahill-howells@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1 – Evaluation Criteria

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Abergavenny Town Hall Refurbishment</b>
<b>Date decision was made:</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> September 2018</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Debra Hill-Howells</b>

### **What will happen as a result of this decision being approved by Cabinet or Council?**

It is intended that a physical refurbishment scheme will be undertaken that will improve access to the building, the creation of a hub space at first floor level and improvements to the theatre and market hall spaces.

*Was the desired outcome achieved? What has changed as a result of the decision? Have things improved overall as a result of the decision being taken?*

### **What benchmarks and/or criteria will you use to determine whether the decision has been successfully implemented?**

User feedback, delivery within budgets, drawdown of a grant from Arts Council for Wales and footfall.

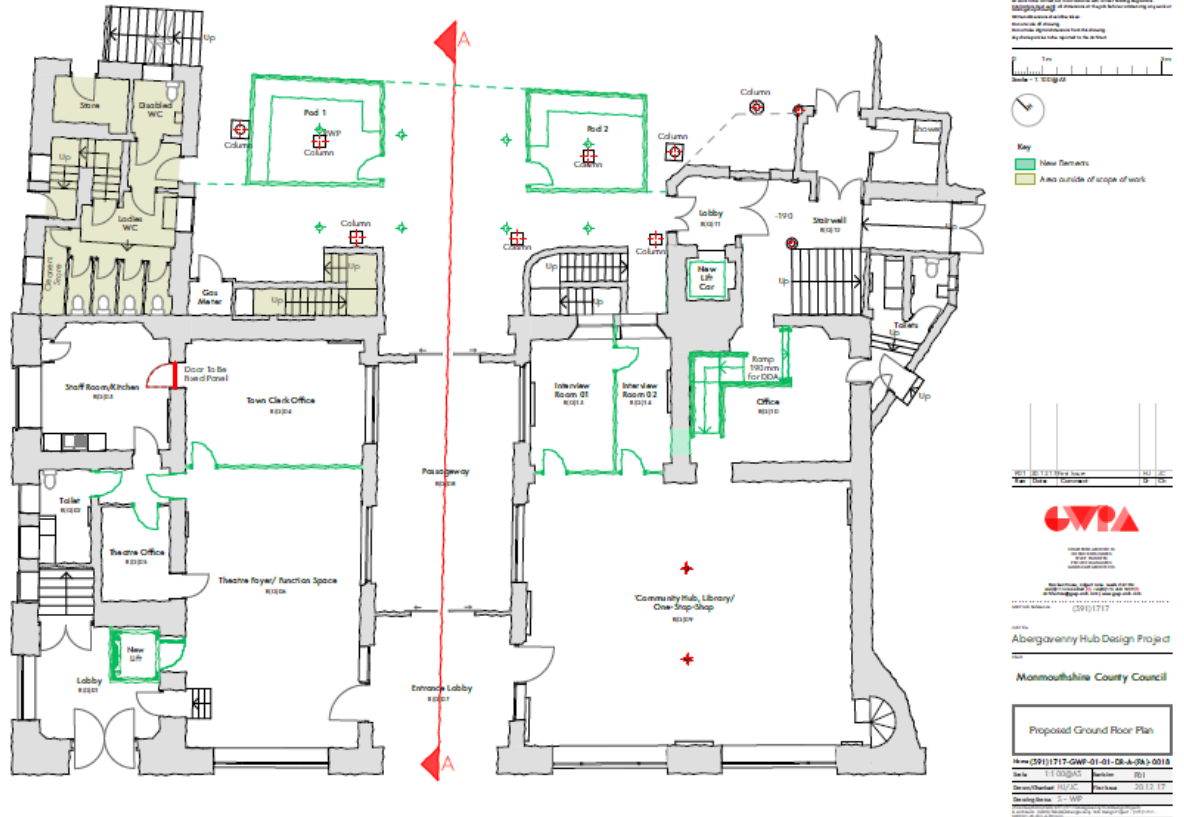
*Paint a picture of what has happened since the decision was implemented. Give an overview of how you fared against the criteria. What worked well, what didn't work well. The reasons why you might not have achieved the desired level of outcome. Detail the positive outcomes as a direct result of the decision. If something didn't work, why didn't it work and how has that effected implementation.*

### **What is the estimate cost of implementing this decision or, if the decision is designed to save money, what is the proposed saving that the decision will achieve?**

£2,168,000 capital cost. Annualised revenue savings of £300,00k for the hubs service

*Give an overview of whether the decision was implemented within the budget set out in the report or whether the desired amount of savings was realised. If not, give a brief overview of the reasons why and what the actual costs/savings were.*

# Appendix 2 – Proposed floorplans – Ground Floor



# First Floor

