

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Executive – October 1st 2014

Subject: Town Hall and Albert Square Maintenance Programme

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive (Growth and Neighbourhoods)

Summary

1. The Town Hall Complex is one of Manchester's greatest cultural and civic assets, which makes a significant contribution not only to the heritage but the identity of the City. Six years ago, the City Council made the decision to commit a significant amount of resources to protect the Town Hall Extension and Central Library by approving a transformation programme which delivered both exceptional conservation works and innovative engineering and construction solutions which have facilitated their business transformation.
2. Manchester Town Hall and Albert Square are without doubt the most important of the buildings and public realm within the complex in terms of significance and there is now an urgent need to undertake essential works to protect and make them safe and where possible enhance space utilisation for the benefit of users.

Recommendations

1. To approve the Project Initiation Works set out in this report and receive a further report once these are completed in summer 2015 setting out a proposed programme of maintenance works.
 2. To authorise the City Treasurer to make the necessary adjustments between capital and revenue resources within the Council's approved capital and revenue budgets.
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Wards Affected:

City Centre

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	The Town Hall Maintenance Project will help to support the local economy in terms of supply chains and access to local labour. The refurbishment of the Manchester Town Hall will add significant value to the Civic Quarter, attracting new audiences to the City and new commercial opportunity, with the increased expenditure contributing to the sustainable economic growth of the City region.
Reaching full potential in education and employment	Building on the success of the Town Hall Complex Transformation Programme, the maintenance works to Manchester Town Hall will result in an increased audience capacity and greatly enhanced facilities, broadening the appeal and improving the educational offer. During construction it will address key areas of Council strategy such as apprenticeships, long term unemployed and the young unemployed.
Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	Undertaking this essential maintenance work to the Town Hall and Albert Square will continue the Town Hall Complex transformation and improve the Council’s service delivery environment.
Neighbourhoods of Choice	The refurbishment of Manchester Town Hall will help to provide services that meet and exceed the needs of all residents, putting customers at the heart of all that the Council does and supporting the Community Strategy.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue / Capital

The overall costs of the initial phase of works is £2.2m which is split between revenue costs (£1.2m) and capital costs (£1.0m). It is proposed to fund the capital costs of the works from within the existing Asset Management Plan (AMP) budget. It is proposed to switch resources of up to £1.2m between capital and revenue from within the overall Council budget to fund the revenue costs. This will ensure that both the capital and revenue elements of the planned works can be funded with no overall increase to the Council’s budget.

A further report will be brought back following the completion of this initial phase of the works which will set out details of both the capital costs of any future works, along with details of the forecast ongoing running costs.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Manchester Town Hall (the Town Hall) is a Grade I listed landmark of international significance which is highly regarded for its exceptional craftsmanship and architectural quality. It is cherished by the people of Manchester having been the civic, political and administrative centre of the city since 1885. Located in the heart of Manchester, it is the focus of the civic complex which includes the Town Hall Extension and Central Library. The buildings are framed by two of Manchester's most significant public spaces; Albert Square to the west and St. Peter's Square, which is undergoing significant refurbishment, to the east. For 130 years the building has been central to the governance of Manchester, and is now a valued heritage asset with significant levels of ceremonial, municipal and commercial uses.
- 1.2 The Town Hall Extension and Central Library have recently undergone a programme of refurbishment. The key result has been to transform the way that the citizens of Manchester access council services, and also the working behaviours and cultures of the City Council's officers. This was achieved through significant structural and construction works which included the complete replacement of the M&E systems within both buildings, together with the introduction of new ways of working to deliver council services. The Town Hall did not fall within the scope of these works.
- 1.3 Whilst the Town Hall Building and Albert Square have been maintained, they have never, in their long life, had a comprehensive Repairs, Maintenance and Upgrade Programme carried out. Instead, the adopted strategy has been to carry out annual repairs on a priority basis to ensure the building and square remain operational and safe to use.
- 1.4 Earlier this year, investigative works were carried out on the Town Hall by City Council officers, alongside a specialist heritage construction team. This work has identified the fact that the Town Hall is in urgent need of Mechanical and Electrical Systems upgrades and essential works to parts of the fabric of the building. This is because there is a substantial risk that parts of the building may need to be vacated as they do not meet operational and safety requirements.
- 1.5 In order to protect this vitally important part of Manchester's heritage and address these issues, it is now necessary to undertake detailed and intrusive surveys to produce a fully costed and prioritised schedule of works.
- 1.6 In addition to the Town Hall building, the investigative works considered Albert Square, the findings of which, as with the Town Hall, are that there are a number of maintenance works to the hard landscaping and also the drainage that need to be completed so as to ensure continued usage.
- 1.7 This report seeks approval to undertake the Project Initiation works that are required to identify a scheme that is deliverable, realises the potential of the building and square, ensures they are safe for users and extends their operational life.

2.0 Observations from the initial investigative works

- 2.1 The surveys from earlier this year identified that if the urgent works are not undertaken this would result initially in increased running and maintenance costs, failing to address the issues presented by the current condition of the building, and leading to areas becoming redundant as using them becomes unsafe. There would be the potential for a significant risk, particularly around the heating and electrical systems, below standard fall protection system, or damaged high level stone work being realised. Continuing without addressing the backlog of issues would ultimately lead to the building becoming unusable, resulting in the extensive replacement works, redundancy and even potentially disposal.
- 2.2 In addition to the works within the Town Hall, the replacing of the drainage system and hard landscaping (the cobbles) to Albert Square is necessary. This reflects heavy traffic use from the many events hosted by the space annually, and the resulting incremental damage that generally is not corrected, In addition to improving the safety of pedestrians using the space, refurbishment works to the public realm would link key spaces such as St. Peter's Square and Spinningfields, creating a fluent and connected civic quarter.
- 2.3 While the investigative works carried out have provided a robust baseline for initial recommendation on the essential works, the extent of the works was restricted to visual surveys only – this is due to the restrictions on what is acceptable to carry out without English Heritage and Listed Building consent. Thus, it is now necessary to undertake detailed and intrusive survey and project planning work to properly specify and quantify the works required ensuring that the decision making on the final scheme is based on robust information and the essential works included within the scope are exhaustive.

3.0 Drivers for Improvement

- 3.1 One of the key drivers for this work is the protection and management of a heritage asset of regional, national and international significance. Manchester's Town Hall has not had a planned programme of work carried out in 150 years of it functioning as a the political, ceremonial and administrative headquarters for the City Council, and it is clear that this work can no longer be delayed.
- 3.2 Albert Square is the most prestigious square in the City. Not only does it frame the Town Hall, it is also home to so many successful events at the heart of our vibrant City, and as such the Square needs to be both fit for purpose and also aesthetically complementary with its heritage surrounding.
- 3.3 For both the Town Hall and Albert Square, the overall strategy is to ensure the wellbeing of users of the building through carrying out essential backlog maintenance works. Through carrying out these works there is also an opportunity to make significant space efficiency gains by making better and

greater use of the building. This will have a number of improvements in key areas, such as minimising energy consumption which would lead to reduced running costs and carbon outputs.

4.0 Summary Proposals for the Manchester Town Hall and Albert Square

4.1 The Town Hall is a Grade I listed building of extreme interest, it is considered to be of international significance. Less than 2.5% of listed buildings are Grade I. Therefore, the possible works within the building will be tightly controlled through the Planning restrictions imposed by the listing. However, consultation with English Heritage during the investigative works carried out earlier this year has confirmed support for the proposed programme of essential maintenance works. It is recognised that such works are necessary to sustain the fabric and use of the heritage asset and will provide a more modern, flexible and efficient workspace whilst improving access for customers, and enhanced connectivity with the newly refurbished Town Hall Extension and Central Library.

The works that have been identified at this stage relate to achieving what would be described as basic compliance with the intention to maintain the building and the Square to an operational and safe standard. The lifespan of those elements of work would be around 25- 30 years. The proposals include:

- Replacement of the heating and electrical systems,
- Addressing the backlog of essential fabric works, including the repair and refurbishment of windows, high-level stonework and localised areas of the roof.
- Replacement of drainage to Albert Square
- Replacement of the cobbles on a suitable sub base reflective of its use (once the transport infrastructure works on the Square are complete).
- General treatment with street furniture and lighting to enhance the space and buildings.

5.0 Project Initiation Stage

5.1 The Project Initiation stage for which this report is seeking approval will clarify the scope of potential works to assist the Council and the key stakeholders to define a deliverable scheme that meets the Council's objectives. The selected team will assess the existing condition and feasibility information both technically and financially and model the options so as to deliver a recommendation on the optimum scheme. The Project Team will analyse the component parts of the recommended optimum scheme, in order to understand the risks and achieve the best value for money, as well as reviewing potential contract and delivery models.

- 5.2 In addition, a number of surveys and investigations will be carried out to validate the assumptions made within the 2013 investigative works, to ensure that recommendations and ultimately decisions are based on reliable and robust information. These will include detailed condition, asbestos and some specialist surveys.
- 5.3 The procurement activity at this stage will look to commence all procurement of the design and management services, necessary to deliver the proposed works to the Manchester Town Hall. It is likely that procurement activity will adopt a Framework and also OJEU restricted approach.
- 5.4 The conclusion of the initiation process will be to deliver a detailed project plan with mutually agreed objectives, delivery models and timings that meet the requirements of all the stakeholders so that the City Council can commence the detailed design activities. It is anticipated this plan will be available in summer 2015.

6.0 Costs

- 6.1 The overall costs associated with the completion of the Project Initiation Stage works described within this report are estimated to be £2.2m. (see Financial Consequences at the beginning of the report).
- 6.2 The purpose of this stage is to identify the full extent and cost of the work required to complete the essential refurbishment. It is likely that significant investment will be required to meet the Council's maintenance responsibilities and a number of possibilities regarding funding will be evaluated. This could include the Council's capital funding and third party funding where feasible or appropriate which will include grant funding.
- 6.3 As part of the evaluation, consideration will be given to the future running costs of the building. This will include lifecycle maintenance costs, planned preventative maintenance costs and energy costs. Details of the future running costs will also be brought back as part of any future report.

7.0 Governance

- 7.1 In order to progress the project initiation stage, core governance and delivery teams will be assembled. A Project Board will be established and meet on a minimum bi-monthly basis during this initiation phase. The Board will be supported by an advisory panel, including senior officers and professional advisors. Officer and external skills would be needed to progress the initiation stage, including FM service transformation, finance, stakeholder engagement and communication plus Health and Safety, Quantity Surveying, heritage, space planning, survey supervision, IT and Project Management.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The Town Hall Complex is one of Manchester's greatest cultural and civic assets, which makes a significant contribution not only to the heritage but also

the identity of the City. Six years ago, the City Council made the decision to commit a significant amount of resources to protect the Town Hall Extension and Central Library by approving a transformation programme which delivered both exceptional conservation works and innovative engineering and construction solutions which have facilitated their business transformation.

- 8.2 Manchester Town Hall and Albert Square are without doubt the most important of the buildings and public realm within the complex in terms of significance and there is now an urgent need to undertake essential works to protect and make them safe and where possible enhance space utilisation for the benefit of users.

9.0 Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

- 9.1 The delivery of all activities relating to the recommendations made within this document will be fully compliant with the City Councils equal opportunities policies.

(b) Risk Management

- 9.2 A programme wide detailed risk management strategy based upon the requirements included within recognised Council processes will be developed and included within the Project Execution Plan document. A risk workshop facilitated by the City Councils risk expert will be scheduled at the start of the programme.
- 9.3 An initial Project Risk Register has been produced by the Programme Team and Transformation team. An 'early warning' register will also be implemented as applicable. During the initiation phase, the programme team will produce a site-specific risk register, all risks which are considered high impact (red risks) will be reported to the programme team and also project board on a monthly basis and escalated for mitigation where appropriate. The reporting strategy ensures that the risks are identified and assessed by those with the immediate responsibility for delivering that element of the project.
- 9.4 The Risk Register will be reviewed at regular intervals with the Project Team and be updated by the nominated member of the Project team. Actions will be allocated to Team Members to undertake the necessary mitigation activities identified. The Project risk register format will be based upon that contained within the project filing structure. The live risk register will be kept up to date with a monthly snapshot report in the City Councils Standard formats and templates. The City Council's Risk Manager will facilitate these workshops and reviews with the Programme team and all relevant stakeholders. A separate Executive Risk Workshop will be undertaken relative to Corporate Risks to enable identification and evaluation and plans agreed to transfer, reduce, accept or manage the risks.