

**BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

LJ/2019

11 Nov 19

REPORT TO TOWN COUNCILLORS

AGENDA ITEM 15 – COUNCIL MEETINGS/ OFFICE RECONFIGURATION

AIM

1. *To receive a report that summarises the discussion on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov 19 surrounding College House office space and the potential of holding Town Council meetings in the Annex to College House.*

BACKGROUND

2. At its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov (confidential session) part of the discussion considered the need to reconfigure the available office space in College house for administrative staff. This included a trial / temporary option of holding Council meetings in the Annex of College House.

DISCUSSION/ COMMENT

3. Members were mindful of the need to create some more isolated workspace for the financial function of the Council. Furthermore, there was insufficient office space to hold private meetings (most notably but not exclusively around cemetery matters).
4. Freeing up the current Mayor's parlour for additional regular work space would likely be helpful. Albeit, the room is occasionally hired out to external agencies for meetings and used by councillors in carrying out their audit and governance functions.
5. A reconfiguration of some office space might incur some small direct costs, most likely around IT connectivity in repositioning computers.
6. The Annexe is of a suitable size to house Council meetings – it would allow the current meeting table to be extended to its full capacity (it currently has an unused leaf) that would allow 16 seats around the table – it currently sits only 14.
7. The Annexe is a little threadbare at the moment but with some minor redecoration, hanging of civic photographs and paintings it could be made to be adequate with little effort. Moving the current meeting table in to the Annexe is likely to create some gravitas to the room. The wi-fi connection can be picked up in the Annexe and there would be more space for the public to view proceedings.

8. The Annexe is not well served by heating however neither is the Mayor's Parlour and the doors are less secure than college house (which benefits from having security by nature of their being a tenant on the third floor) and therefore attractive items should not be kept in the Annexe until sufficient security plans are in place.
9. The Annexe is being rented out more often now than it has been in recent years and provides a small but steady stream of income. It is also used as a polling station. Purchasing some mix'n'match/ modular conference tables that can be moved around to suit varying formats for meetings might make the venue more versatile. With the right configuration there is probably room to install a drop down screen (the Council has acquired a spare). New tables in the Annexe could allow the Council to revert back to the current situation (meetings in the Mayor's Parlour) at an instant (image of example **attached**). There would probably be a need to buy some suitably matching chairs.

## FINANCIALS

10. There is a small amount (£600) available in the current budget for the Annexe (under repairs) that might be used to procure any furniture. However, the income to date is some £1500 better than the Council budgeted for and that leaves a net surplus of around £2,000. The RFO has likely counted this surplus in her budget calculations for next FY and any additional spend might affect it.
11. Some small IT costs (re-route cables) are likely to be able to be absorbed within some small underspends in the College House budget.

## RECOMMENDATION(s)

12. It is recommended that the Town Council RESOLVES:
  - a. For a trial period hold Council meetings in the College House Annexe.
  - b. To delegate authority to the Town Clerk to incur expenditure (within current set budgets) that is necessary to ensure the Annexe and Mayor's parlour are suitably equipped and that IT is available.



Lee Jakeman  
Town Clerk

