

**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2015**  
**THE GUILDHALL, CHIPPING NORTON**  
**REPORT OF FRANK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR**  
**(Contact: Frank Wilson: - Tel (01993) 861291)**

(The report is for information)

**1. PURPOSE**

As part of Work Programme the Committee expressed a desire to review the commercial arrangements surrounding the occupation of the Guildhall by Chipping Norton Town Council.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee notes the arrangements and makes comments to Cabinet should Members consider it appropriate to do so.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. Over recent years the issue of the commercial arrangements in respect of Chipping Norton Town Council's occupation of the Guildhall have been raised on a number of occasions. Officers have verbally advised on the background to the arrangements and the reasons for them. In accordance with this Committee's Work Programme this report explains in more detail the arrangements of the Town Council's occupation.
- 3.2. Of all the Town Council's in West Oxfordshire, Chipping Norton is the only one to occupy property owned by the District Council.
- 3.3. Chipping Norton Town Council occupy part of the Guildhall with the remaining parts occupied by this Council and a commercial tenant. The Town Council does not pay rent for its occupation but does pay a proportion of the running costs in respect of business rates; utilities and maintenance costs. It does not contribute towards any capitalised maintenance costs.
- 3.4. The original approval for their occupation is set out in an agreement made as part of the 1974 local government reorganisation which allocated assets and liabilities of the former urban and rural authorities to the newly formed District and Parish (Town) Councils.
- 3.5. Appendix A shows the minutes of the committee that agreed the arrangements and forms the foundation for the charging regime. There is no formal lease or licence document to occupy the premises as these minutes are considered appropriate authority for their occupation. .
- 3.6. The running cost charge is actioned by the accountancy team who, as part of the closedown of accounts, calculate the contribution by the Town Council. Until recently the Town Council contributed 16% towards the running costs but, due to an increase in occupational space, they now pay 29% of the costs.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The typical total running costs for the Guildhall are between £7,000 and £9,000 with the contribution by the Town Council being in the order of £2,300. Appendix B shows the 2013/2014 allocation. In addition an apportionment for some maintenance items that are capitalised as part of larger capital improvement schemes is made from time to time.

#### **5. RISKS**

The main risk associated with this informal occupation agreement relates to disputes in respect of appropriate allocation of costs.

#### **6. REASONS**

Work in partnership to sustain vibrant, healthy and economically prosperous towns and villages with full employment

Frank Wilson  
Strategic Director

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> June 2015

CONFIDENTIAL

SPECIAL MEETING OF REORGANISATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION

22nd April, 1972

AGENDA ITEM OF CORPORATION PROPERTIES

To consider a schedule of properties held by the Council with the exception of land and buildings held for housing purposes and charity property held by the Council as Trustees

IV 9.2 RESOLVED

that the future disposal of the property discussed as between the new District Council and the successor Parish Council should be as detailed in the schedule attached.

John Harris  
Chairman

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Chairman

## SCHEDULE OF ASSETS

<u>Property</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Future Responsibility</u>
Com Hall	Public Assembly Rooms Magistrates Court Council Chamber	Acquired by gift and public subscription	Parish Council
Millshill and Car Park (4 cars)	Parish Council Offices	Freehold	District Council subject to Parish Council being allowed the use of office accomod- ation if required
Swimming Pool " " Staged Area		Lease leased expires 1969 leased from D.C.C. expires 1978	District Council
Post Office	Public Bank	Acquired by gift	Parish Council
Recreation Ground The Common New Street		leased from Miss Hooper	District Council
Market Place		Annual Tenancy	County Council
West Street	Lock-up Shop on lease expiring 1968 Bus Waiting Room	Freehold	Parish Council

**Chipping Norton Town Council - Estimated Charge for use of Guildhall 2013-14****Calculation of Charge for Year**

	£	£
Total Est Expenditure on Guildhall 2013/14		9,109.66
less :-		
Equipment Furniture & Materials	13.70	
Postage	19.34	
Telephone	601.73	
Creditors	60.00	
Debtors	0.00	
Capital Costs	1,291.00	
		1,985.77
Total		<b><u>7,123.89</u></b>
Chipping Norton Allocation x .29		2,065.93
Total to be Recharged to Chipping Norton		<b><u>2,065.93</u></b>