

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

8 DECEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	TENDER REPORT FOR BIRKENHEAD PRIORY AND ST MARY'S CHURCH TOWER PROPOSED STABILISATION AND IMPROVEMENTS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	THE BIRKENHEAD AND TRANMERE WARD, BUT DUE TO ITS UNIQUE STATUS IS OF INTEREST TO ALL MEMBERS
REPORT OF:	THE DIRECTOR OF LAW HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR CHRIS MEADEN CULTURE TOURISM AND LEISURE
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet Members of the outcome of the two stage tender process for the project to stabilize, restore, protect and improve Birkenhead Priory And St Mary's Church Tower. The report seeks ratification from Members to the selection of the Constructor named on Appendix 1 as the Councils 'preferred constructor' for the scheme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Constructor who submitted the most economically advantageous tender, as detailed in Appendix 1, be accepted as the Councils 'preferred constructor'.
- 2.2 The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to execute an appropriate construction contract with the preferred constructor in due course based upon a partnering philosophy, subject to them developing a satisfactory Health & Safety Plan.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 A Scheme and Estimate report fully detailing the proposals for this site was presented to Cabinet on 2 September 2010 and Cabinet resolved that the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to seek tenders and all statutory approvals for the works (minute 123 refers).

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The existing features at the site of Birkenhead Priory owned by Wirral Council include:

The North Range, comprising the restored Refectory, Undercroft and Buttery, complete with two external timber stairs,

The West Range, comprising the roofless ruin of the former Guest Hall and accommodation above. The West Range includes an open storage area for various mediaeval stone artefacts.

The Cloister between the North Range, West Range, Chapter House Chapel and site of the former Priory Church. The Cloister includes areas of mediaeval pavings with largely 19th century gravestones and tombs, St Mary's Tower and ruins of St Mary's Church,

Car Park, comprising a gated-off area formerly part of Church Street. The Car Park has over the years become a storage area for predominantly 19th century large artefacts.

Boundary walls, railings and gates, and internal stone steps, walls, railings and gates.

20th century landscaping features including tarmac driveway, pavings, grassed areas, trees and shrubs.

- 4.2 Late in 2009 a Conservation Management Plan, Condition Survey and Gazetteer were undertaken by consultants Lloyd Evans Prichard on behalf of Wirral Council, with financial support from English Heritage. The proposals for capital investment on the site of Birkenhead Priory emanate largely from the recommendations within the Conservation Management Plan.
- 4.3 The Conservation Management Plan (CMP) has been shared with the Diocese of Chester, and discussions have been held with representatives of the Diocese and officers of the Chapter House Chapel, who are separately addressing the recommendations within the CMP that relate specifically to the Chapter House Chapel and former Scriptorium over.
- 4.4 A bid for Heritage Lottery Fund support has been submitted in regard of the recommendations within the CMP relating to the West Range, improved visitor facilities and improved interpretation across the site. In anticipation of the success of this bid, an appropriate element of match funding has been included in the Financial Implications within this report.
- 4.5 This Scheme has therefore concentrated on proposals for the stabilization, restoration, protection and improvements to:

The North Range, including structural repairs, archaeological survey, improved access including a new covered staircase and lift,

St Mary's Tower and ruins of the Church, including structural repairs and stabilization, rebuilding pinnacles, lime-rendering to exposed bare brickwork to former internal façade of nave, repair to cast-iron and wrought-iron window frames and tracery, and refurbishment of toilet accommodation,

The Cloister, including relaying mediaeval pavings to avoid trips, improved drainage to avoid ponding in front of the Chapter House Chapel, and pruning the over-mature trees within the site of the former Priory Church,

Boundary and internal walls, including removal of invasive vegetation, removal of hard cappings, removal of redundant metalwork and railings, overhauling remaining railings with new additional railings and gates as appropriate, stabilization, repair, and new sacrificial lime mortar cappings,

Site Drainage generally, including ensuring that drains are all running adequately,

Car Park, including removal of inappropriate artefacts and construction of new pedestrian ramp to the main site level,

Mediaeval artefacts, grave stones and tombs, including recording, cataloguing and the construction of a new protective artefacts store.

4.6 It is intended that the works above be tendered as a single contract of works to maximise procurement and operational efficiencies. The programme will be dependent on Listed Building Consent, Scheduled Monument Consent and the result of archaeological investigations but, once these have been obtained, is anticipated to be able to start on site in January 2012, with a view to completion in September 2012.

4.7 The construction of a new stair enclosure and lift to the Refectory will require the closure of that facility for approximately 12 weeks; the works to St Mary's Tower will require a closure of the Tower for approximately 6 weeks; and works within the Cloister will require a closure of the Chapter House Chapel for approximately 4 weeks. It is anticipated, however, that no extended closure of the site as a whole will be required to undertake the above works, although short-term closures may be required between stages of development for public safety reasons.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 Subject to final approval the scheme will be funded by a combination of local and national capital

5.2 Due to the time constraints for completion and the technical and operational complexity, the project will be managed under a 'partnering contract' arrangement whereby the contractor's expertise is maximised and an early start on site can be achieved. A key principle within the contract is that there will be a pain/gain mechanism whereby the contractor can claim a limited financial bonus for completing the works within an agreed maximum price, which will be set within the available budget, and hence will help manage financial risks appropriately. Should unexpected additional work be encountered this will be managed through engineered savings which may result in minor changes to the specification or scope of the works. All contractor costs will be on an 'open book' basis and will be monitored by the Design Consultancy in the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management and overseen by Internal Audit in the Department of Finance.

- 5.3 A full risk management exercise in accordance with Council procedures will be undertaken for this project owing to the complexity and limited financial resources involved. This will be developed with the preferred constructor as a detailed risk register containing all critical project risks and monitored on a regular basis by the project team.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The other option is to delay the restoration work but this delay will only incur far greater costs at a later date.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 A Conservation Management Plan, Condition Survey and Gazetteer were undertaken by consultants Lloyd Evans Prichard on behalf of Wirral Council, with financial support from English Heritage. This report was shared with the Diocese of Chester, and discussions have been held with representatives of the Diocese and officers of the Chapter House Chapel, who are separately addressing the recommendations within the CMP that relate specifically to the Chapter House Chapel and former Scriptorium over.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 The building improvements will assist in providing an integrated approach to children's education, and open up cultural awareness for the entire community.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 9.1 Ainsley Gommon Architects have been appointed to provide the Architectural input and the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management will provide all other Professional Services.
- 9.2 Ainsley Gommon Architects in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 will carry out the role of CDM Coordinator.
- 9.3 There are no additional staffing implications with these proposals.
- 9.4 Stage 1 Tender submissions were received on 28th October 2011 have been scored by a panel of officers from The Department of Law, HR and Asset Management. Stage 2 interviews were held with the three best scoring tenderers from stage 1 with a panel including officers from Law HR and Asset Management Department, Technical Services Department and Ainsley Gommon Architects on 11th November 2011. Details of the selection process and relevant scoring of tenderers is included at Appendix 1. The model used to determine the most economically advantageous tender was lodged with the Council's procurement team in the Department of Finance prior to receipt of tenders.
- 9.5 The agreed maximum contract price will be set within the available budget reported to Cabinet on 2nd September 2010.

9.6 The scheme is to be funded from the Capital Programme which includes investment in Cultural Services assets with £2 million specifically for works to the Williamson Art Gallery and the Birkenhead Priory.

AGREED MAXIMUM COST FOR BUILDING WORKS	£ 613,730
Departmental Charges @ 16% including: Professional Fees, Clerk of Works salary, CDM Coordinator, Planning & B Regs fees	£ 98,197
Surveys, including: Feasibility costs, Structural surveys, Drainage surveys, and Archaeological investigations	<u>£ 23,073</u>
TOTAL	<u>£ 735,000</u>

Total Funding Available		
Capital programme	2010/11	£ 262,000
Capital programme	2011/12	£ 1,738,000
DDA Access Fund PPM	2011/12	£ 30,000
Heritage Lottery Funding		<u>£ 20,000</u>
		£ 2,050,000

Less the costs committed to the Williamson Art Gallery:

• Cost of work carried out to date	£ 341,000	
• Anticipated work required to complete including fees	<u>£ 974,000</u>	<u>£1,315,000</u>
	Funding remaining	<u>£ 735,000</u>

9.7 There will be some additional revenue costs associated with scheme, including the maintenance and servicing of the proposed lift, and the maintenance of the staircase enclosure, ramp from the car park, and additional drainage, which can be provided for from the Department's existing property maintenance budgets.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Legal and Member Services Section within the Department of Law, Human Resources and Asset Management will arrange for the completion of the contract.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

At present non-ambulant access is available to the Buttery, Undercroft , West Range, Cloister and site of St Mary's Church. As part of this scheme non-ambulant access will also be provided from the Car Park to the main site, and to the Refectory.

Access up the Tower will remain by stairs only. Should the HLF bid be successful, virtual access to the tower will be provided by positioning a web cam on the tower and accessible viewing points at the bottom and/or in the proposed new visitors centre.

The existing accessible WC within the base of the Tower will be refurbished to DA recommendations.

There are no implications in this report specifically for women, ethnic minorities or the elderly.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Low energy electrical fittings, light fittings, heating controls, water saving devices and high levels of insulation will all be used to help reduce the consumption of natural resources and contribute to the councils CO2 reduction objectives. The 2010/11 carbon budget target for the Priory is 54.082 tonnes of CO2 (CRC).

12.2 The successful constructor will be encouraged to employ local labour and source materials from local suppliers as far as possible.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Planning permission for St Marys Tower granted APP/11/00637 and Listed Building Consent for St Marys Tower granted LBC/11/00641 both on 26 July 2011

13.2 Planning, Listed Building Consent, Scheduled Monument Consent and Building Control approval will be required for this project.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Tenderers' evaluation scores

REFERENCE MATERIAL

The information used in the preparation of this report was obtained in consultation with Cultural Services – Arts and Museums Department and with reference to their bidding documents. No other background papers have been used in the preparation of this report with the exception of the Architects files and BO2400 and the Quantity Surveyor's working papers.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet report - Scheme & Estimate	2 nd September 2010
Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Wirral Museum Service Business Development Plan	10 th March 2011