

# ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

Report to	Finance Governance & Asset Management
Meeting date	22 July 2024
Report author	Dan Sancisi
Agenda item	7

## Report of Museum Manager

### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To inform members on status of the extended feasibility study for pre-planning application advice for the submission of a planning application to install a lift to the first floor of the Museum.
- 1.2. To request committee to recommend proceeding to install new perimeter lights to the County Hall Museum.
- 1.3. To inform committee of expected expenditure and options due to telecoms switch off in December 2025.
- 1.4. To inform members of failed interactive equipment at the Museum and present options that are being explored.
- 1.5. No decision required; this is an update report.

### 2. Summary

- 2.1. Members considered the Museum Manager's options following pre-application advice from Historic England regarding the **installation of a lift** to the first floor of the Museum.
- 2.2. Minute F9,24 states 'The committee agreed that the proposals should be considered at the strategy day as the whole council should be involved given the scale of the project.'
- 2.3. Many of the **perimeter lighting** units have now failed since installation in 2011.
- 2.4. Minute F9,24 requests further investigation into costs and means of resolving the issue.
- 2.5. It has come to light that the Museum does not currently have capability for fibre cabling access, which is necessary for all **broadband**, communications and data facilities after the 2025 switch off.
- 2.6. Your Officers are exploring options to resolve this issue.
- 2.7. Two important **Museum interactive exhibits** have failed coming to the end of their natural life span.
- 2.8. Your officers wish to make committee aware of possible expenditure to replace them and update on research into alternatives.

3. **Action required**

3.1. Your officers request that committee notes this report.

4. **Link to strategic plan and objectives**

4.1. Forward Plan – Museum Lift F3

4.2. Our key objectives:

3. *To manage the Council's assets efficiently and effectively to meet for the needs of the community now and in the future.* Improving the condition of existing buildings extends their function and facility for the community.
4. *To work with community partners to support those who are vulnerable and in need and to create opportunities to increase social inclusivity.* In line with a commitment to accessibility and inclusivity your Officers are developing a proposal for lift access to first floor of the Abingdon County Hall.

5. **Background**

5.1. **Preplanning advice and feasibility study for a new lift**

5.2. 22 March 2024 Historic England letter of pre-application advice received.

5.3. Committee considered the Museum Manager's report regarding options to move forward at FGAM 5 June 2024.

5.4. Committee agreed to postpone a decision until after Strategy Day allowing further consideration.

5.5. **Building related wear and tear** and unforeseen changes in technology have contributed to a need for upgrading the Museum's broadband, digital exhibits and perimeter lighting.

6. **Key information and options**

6.1. **Abingdon County Hall Museum lift access pre-planning status.**

6.2. Your Officers await guidance and council decision following strategy day, due for September 2024.

6.3. **Perimeter Lights**

6.4. There are 16 LED uplighters outside the building footprint and 8 under the arcade.

6.5. Following committee recommendation, the Museum Manager has requested three further quotes to consider.

6.6. Two quotes are stalled due to the contractors requesting exploratory works before quoting, estimated to be to the order of £500.00.

6.7. A third quote is outstanding as of 10 July 2024.

6.8. Your Officers will report to FGAM 30 September 2024 with costs and request for decision.

6.9. **Broadband**

6.10. In December 2025 analogue telecoms systems will be switch off and old infrastructure obsolete.

6.11. The Museum has ADSL phone lines into the building via overhead cable accessing the Sessions Gallery to the West of the building.

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- 6.12. The current lines supply all fire and security alarm systems, phone lines and very poor broadband service to the Museum.
- 6.13. It is a requirement to have cabling installed to a network point in the building to have all these services after the switch off date.
- 6.14. The Museum Manager is investigating methods and construction necessary to create access into the building via underground conduit.
- 6.15. He has liaised with English Heritage Trust regarding a potential need to drill through the historic fabric of the building to allow cables to enter.
- 6.16. He is also in consultation with structural engineers and the Town Council IT service provider to create an action plan.
- 6.17. **Museum Interactives**
- 6.18. During June 2024 both existing interactive exhibits in the Sessions Gallery failed to operate and after investigation are found to be out-dated, irreparable and redundant due to incompatibility with contemporary operating systems.
- 6.19. A quote to re-create them has been procured from the original designer, Clay Interactive, for the bespoke software and hardware replacements which totals £22,860 (excl.VAT).
- 6.20. Your Officers will explore alternatives at lower cost but recognise the specific nature of the content may prove difficult to replicate with 'off the shelf' software packages.

7. **Climate change/green implications**

- 7.1. none.

8. **Financial/budget implications**

- 8.1. No further financial implications, pending quotations.

9. **HR implications**

- 9.1. None at this time.

Dan Sancisi, Museum Manager, 10 July 2024