



The purpose of this Report is to provide an update on several aspects of the development of Salisbury as the basis for the Town Council to consider the related recommendations in section 7 below.

No. DETAIL

1) BUILDING WORKS

- a) Councillor Jim Toogood will report verbally on progress with the major programme for which we now have a detailed Gantt Chart through to completion and an A4 copy of this is attached for Members' information.
 - b) The Roof Facia Boards restoration and repainting has been completed to a high standard and the internal decorators are making good progress with rooms on the upper two floors and the two stairways.
 - c) It is expected that the Town Council's offices will move to their new location in the two rooms on the building's ground floor southern side in the week commencing 22 September.
 - d) In view of the substantial amount of extra works that have been required and could not have been anticipated before the works began, a request for an extension of the rent free period allowed within the Lease has been submitted.
 - e) The installation of the Communications Cabinet by Navigate IT and its connection to the cat 5 cabling already within the building is nearing completion and expected to go live by 15 September.
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2) LEASE

- a) Negotiations on the lease of Salisbury Gardens to the Town Council are nearing completion and the Town Council has good reason to be appreciative of the work of its Solicitors, Glanvilles, in this regard.
 - b) The letter setting out the remaining issues to be resolved, together with the current draft of the lease documentation, has been circulated on a necessarily confidential basis to Members in advance of this meeting.
 - c) Members of the Public Buildings Working Group are aware of the stages of redrafting leading up to this stage.
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3) UNDERLEASE

- a) An Underlease for the relationship between the Town Council and its tenants has been developed by the Town Council's Solicitors and been approved by the Public Buildings Working Group.
 - b) As with the Head Lease, it has been circulated on a confidential basis to Members in advance of this meeting.
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4) ROOM LETTINGS

- a) Only three of the building's 18 rooms on the three floors above the lower ground floor remain without a tenant at this stage.
 - b) The Public Buildings Working Group discussed the further marketing of these opportunities at the last meeting and agreed to recommend that they be advertised when the building programme is nearer completion and has some tenants in place.
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5) COMMUNITY AREA

- a) It is this area that has proved to require the most work – and cost – to rescue it from damp and decay and provide fire and sound proofing for it.
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- b) However is now taking its final shape and planning for the preparation for its important future role is in progress: the kitchen area has been professionally planned, an order has been placed for the room divider between the two meeting rooms and a quotation requested for the projection equipment.
 - c) As Members will recall, the room divider and projection equipment are separately funded through the My Life a Full Life programme.
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6) ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL CHARGES

- a) Two unexpected invoices have been received in respect of electricity costs and business rates, originated by the Isle of Wight Council (IoWC) and both pre-dating the signing of the lease.
 - b) The invoice for electricity charges from 21 May to 12 August in a total of £2,468 plus VAT was particularly surprising since it came directly from Southern Electric with Ventnor Town Council as the payee with an account number that the Town Council has never signed up for and turned out to be the IoWC's account number.
 - c) On enquiry, Southern Electric stated that they had been instructed by the IoWC to re-address it to Ventnor Town Council!
 - d) It took several email exchanges for it to be accepted that instructing a supplier to directly charge costs incurred on its own account to another, and without that organisation being either asked about or aware of that instruction, is unusual business practice.
 - e) The second invoice was from the IoWC's Business Rates section for payment of the Business Rates due for the whole of the building for the whole of the current financial year in a total of around £5,500.
 - f) An attempt to discuss this with the section by phone was refused with the statement that they would only consider the matter on receipt of an email: that was sent on 26 August asking why:
 - o the invoices related to the whole year when the lease had yet to be signed?
 - o the matter had not been discussed with us prior to raising the invoices?
 - o The invoices had, for the third year, been sent again to the home address of the Assistant Town Clerk in spite of assurances by the office on each of the two previous occasions it would not happen again?
 - g) At the date of this report- 5 September – no response has been received.
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7) RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- i) authorise the Town Clerk to sign the Lease for Salisbury Gardens from the Isle of Wight Council subject to the Public Buildings Working Group being satisfied with the resolution of the matters identified in the letter on the subject from its Solicitor dated 5 September 2015 and raised by Members at this meeting; and
 - ii) adopt the Underlease for its relationships with its tenants as circulated to Members on 5 September 2015.
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