



VENTNOR CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

REPORT 11/17

13 FEBRUARY 2017

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on progress with the development of Ventnor Central and ask Members to agree a response to the management of the building in the interim stage and the future of its contents.

NO. DETAIL

1) BACKGROUND

- a) The Isle of Wight Council, Ventnor Town Council and Sovereign Housing Association are agreed on the plan to replace the old Youth Club building – currently known as Ventnor Central – with three floors of four one-bedroom flats over a lower ground floor Library.
- b) The funding for the development was initially committed – subject to a number of caveats – by Spectrum Housing Association but that has subsequently merged with Sovereign Housing Association.
- c) The sale of the site by the Isle of Wight Council to Sovereign Housing Association has been agreed subject to planning permission.
- d) The Town Council currently manages the building under a lease from the Isle of Wight Council that expires on 31 March 2017.

2) TIMELINE

- a) In an email of 30 January, Sovereign's Project Manager for the development Liz Evans confirmed their approximate timetable for it:
 - o *February*: surveys prior to planning application
 - o *March*: submission of planning application
 - o *June/July*: planning decision
 - o *July*: completion of purchase and start on site.
- b) A site meeting on 17 January involving the Isle of Wight Council, Ventnor Town Council and Sovereign's Project Manager, Architect and nominated builder provided the basis for this timeline.

3) INTERIM MANAGEMENT

- a) The Town Council took on the lease for the building when the Isle of Wight Council closed it on 30 September 2014 and provided for expenditure of £7,000 a year from the Precept against predicted income of £3,000.
- b) In the financial year 2015/16 the running costs totalled £7,459 with income received at £2,869, a net cost of £4,590
- c) In the current financial year to date, costs have totalled £7,970 with income of £3,925, a net cost of £4,045.
- d) The building is currently used on a regular basis for a number of activities:
 - o Music Groups: once or twice weekly
 - o Skateboarding Club: weekly
 - o Basketball: weekly
 - o Senior Friendship Table Tennis: weekly
- e) There is currently no clarity about the use of the building in the period between the end of the Town Council's lease on 31 March and the commencement of work on the site in July.
- f) The options are either that the Isle of Wight Council closes the building on 31 March or that agreement is reached on a basis for the continuation of the Town Council's management of it – including continued access by its present users – for the three months to 30 June.

4) EQUIPMENT

- a) The building contains a significant amount of equipment and supplies including Amplifiers and other musical kit, tables and chairs, four Pool Tables and catering and kitchen items.
 - b) Ownership of and responsibility for the contents of the building is far from clear.
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5) RECOMMENDATION

The Town Council is recommended to:

- i) determine its view of the use of the building for the interim period of 1 April – 30 June; and
 - ii) consider the ownership of and responsibility for the building's contents.
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