

KIDSGROVE TOWN HALL AND THE VICTORIA HALL

Submitted by: Executive Director – Regeneration and Development

Portfolio: Regeneration and Planning

Ward(s) affected: Kidsgrove

Purpose of the Report

To update members of the current situation in respect of negotiations that have taken place with Kidsgrove Town Council in respect of formalising the ownership of the Town Hall and the Victoria Hall.

Recommendation

That Cabinet approve the formalisation of the freehold ownership of the Town Hall and the Victoria Hall as set out in this report.

Reasons

1. To formalise the ownership of the Town Hall and the Victoria Hall and the associated facilities in the interests of both the Borough Council and Kidsgrove Town Council.

1. Background

- 1.1 At your meeting on 14th March 2012 you made resolutions relating to the terms which the Borough Council had proposed to Kidsgrove Town Council to formalise the ownership of Kidsgrove Town Hall and the Victoria Hall. The Town Council considered these terms at its meeting on 1st March 2012 and resolved not to enter into a joint ownership agreement with the Borough Council in respect of the ground floor toilets, corridor and the current Town Council office. Kidsgrove Town Council's view is that these rooms should belong to them with the Borough Council having rights to use this space/facilities.

2. Issues

- 2.1. The toilets serve the ground floor of the Town Hall building and the office is currently used by Kidsgrove Town Council. The only known reference to the transfer of the Town Hall/Victoria Hall buildings is the minutes of the Borough Council's Policy and Resources Committee of 13th March 1974 which indicates that the Victoria Hall was to be retained by Kidsgrove Town Council who were to have regard to the adjoining Town Hall which passed to the District Council. The Town Council were required to enter into an agreement to cover the joint uses of certain accommodations and the provision of common services. This minute does not refer to a specific plan which delineated the agreement between the parties as to the ownership or configuration of the rooms linking the two buildings together.

3. Options

- 3.1 To do nothing – this is not a reasonable option because it provides for ongoing uncertainty between the parties.
- 3.2 To seek formal recourse through the courts – this is likely to be wasteful of resources and divisive.

3.3 To achieve a mutually-agreeable compromise position – this option would expedite the matter and help to strengthen the relationship between the parties.

4. **Preferred option**

4.1 Option three is preferred; your Officers have considered the Town Council's response to the Borough Council's proposal and in order to bring this matter to a conclusion that is acceptable to the Town Council and to finally resolve the ownership issues, your Officers recommend that the freehold ownership of the toilets and office be registered to Kidsgrove Town Council subject to the Borough Council having a permanent legal right to use these rooms.

5. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

There are none.

6 **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The freehold ownership of these premises will be registered as set out in the report to Cabinet of 14th March 2012, as revised by the contents of this report.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 There are no significant resourcing implications arising from the recommended course of action.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 There are no significant risks arising from the recommended course of action.

9.2 If the recommended course of action is not taken there is a risk that both parties will suffer reputational damage and incur unnecessary financial costs by embarking on a legal process.

10. **Key Decision Information**

None

11. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

235/74

12. **Background papers**

Asset Management Strategy
MTFS and capital and revenue budget.