

SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL

Report

Subject : Crematorium Roof – Urgent Capital Project Request
Committee : Full Council
Date : 24 June 2024
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1. Report Summary:

- 1.1. Salisbury Crematorium is one of Salisbury City Council's (SCC) key assets in terms of the service provided to the community in addition it provides significant income with an annual target for 2024/25 set at £1.1m.
- 1.2. This report sets out the urgent case for Council to authorise unbudgeted capital expenditure to replace the Crematorium office roof and enhance this important property asset.

2. Background

- 2.1. In 2023/24 the copper roof on the chapel was replaced at a cost of £123,112. This was a planned capital project.
- 2.2. The section of roof that is currently failing is the flat roof that covers the administrative and support areas of the building. The severity of the problem can be seen in the photos below:



3. Specification

- 3.1. The current flat roof is mineral-felt. This is a budget roofing material that whilst cost-effective and easy to install, only has a life span of 10-15 years. Felt roofs are known for leaking and splitting at the seams.
- 3.2. The proposal from SCC's contracted architect is to replace the existing felt roof with an Alwitra Evalon VSK Membrane, which the manufacturer has guaranteed for 20 years. When applied by approved contractors, it has an expected service life of 40 years. This manufacturer has been selling this product in the UK for 40 years and there are examples of roofs that are still sound.
- 3.3. Therefore the proposed work, which is a higher specification, and replacement of the full roof and enhancement of the building asset is classed as capital expenditure, which can be funded from the Council's earmarked capital receipts. These receipts were recently boosted by the receipt from selling 47 Blue Boar Row (£338,000).

4. Cost

- 4.1. To replace the current flat roof with an Alwitra Evalon VSK Membrane will be a maximum net cost of £175,000. This includes a 10% contingency and a worst case scenario assumption of replacing 100% of the roof deck. The best case scenario if the roof deck is in good condition is that the project will have a net cost of £135,000. Until the existing roof is removed, the contractor will not know the full extent of the damage and so it is pertinent to go on a worst case scenario basis when considering this proposal, Cost will be capped at £175,000.

5. Impact & Mitigation

- 5.1. To carry out these urgent works, the customer facing side of the Crematorium will need to be closed in August & September for works to take place. This means that no services can take place on site.
- 5.2. Staff will still be able to access the site during works and the cremators will still be operational.
- 5.3. The works are proposed for August and September because of the expected favourable weather and historically these are quieter months in terms of bookings.
- 5.4. It is proposed that during this time that services are instead held at The Guildhall on a Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday. Tuesday's are to be excluded because of the inability to safely and easily access the site on Market Day.
- 5.5. It is proposed that there will be up to 4 services a day. This will allow for adequate time for the service, families to disburse and the staff to set up for the next service. This will be kept under review depending on demand.
- 5.6. For reference The Crematorium can accommodate up to 8 bookings a day, however it is extremely rare to have a full diary.

- 5.7. There is a risk that The Crematorium income will be affected during these works as the community may wish to choose to have their services elsewhere.
- 5.8. There is also a risk that future income will be affected if funeral directors get used to using alternative crematoria during the building works, and fail to return to Salisbury once we re-open.
- 5.9. Given the uncertainties it is very difficult to predict the potential loss of income due to the works, but officers estimate it will probably exceed £60,000-£70,000 this year. This figure is based on The Crematorium being shut for a similar time period in 2023/24.
- 5.10. There is minimal disruption to The Guildhall diary for paid bookings as the majority of events during August and September fall at weekends and will be unaffected. Internal Council meetings will have to be moved to other sites during this time.

6. Risk

- 6.1. If Council do not approve the proposed works the Crematorium Offices will not be usable during the forthcoming Autumn and Winter months as the associated Health & Safety risk could not be mitigated.
- 6.2. Either an alternative office space would need to be provided or The Crematorium would need to close until funding for works was identified from another source. The annual lost net revenue from closing the Crematorium indefinitely would exceed £500,000, which would be financially catastrophic for the Council, necessitating emergency action.
- 6.3. If untreated, the leak is likely to spread and cause deterioration to both roof structure and internal walls and floor, reducing the asset value of the facility and increasing the eventual repair costs over time.

7. Recommendations

7.1. It is recommended that the Committee:

- Approve the use of up to £175,000 capital expenditure for the replacement of the flat roof and enhancement of The Crematorium. It is proposed that the cost of the works would be met from some of the capital receipt of £338,474 received from the sale of 47 Blue Boar Row.

1. **Wards Affected:** All

2. **Background Papers:** Nil

3. Implications:

3.1. **Financial:** As outlined above.

3.2. **Personnel:** As outlined above.

3.3. **Environmental Impact:** Nil in relation to this report.

3.4. **Equalities Impact Statement:** Nil in relation to this report.