

COMMITTEE REPORT

Subject:	<i>Guildhall Redecoration: Banqueting Hall and Crown Court Design Options</i>
Committee:	<i>Full Council</i>
Item Number:	<i>15</i>
Date:	<i>13 July 2026</i>
Author:	<i>Luke Harris, Operations Manager, lharris@salisburycitycouncil.gov.uk</i>
Report status:	<i>Decision</i>
Confidential / Exempt:	<i>No</i>

1. Report Summary

1.1 This report provides Councillors with a clear narrative and explanation of the design options for the upcoming redecoration of the Banqueting Hall and the Crown Court. It outlines the commercial considerations, historic context, and the recommended aesthetic path to maximise venue hire yield.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to ask Full Council to decide upon the final interior design schemes for these two primary spaces.

1.3 The Guildhall operates as a commercial venue within the Council's portfolio. To maintain our competitive edge in the corporate and private hire markets, the upcoming redecoration must balance heritage preservation with modern event utility.

1.4 The redecoration works are scheduled for Q4 of this financial year. The project specifications are currently being drawn up; confirming these design decisions now is important to ensure there are no project hold-ups or delays once final pricing is accepted.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Full Council:

2.1 Approves Option 1(a) (Deep Teal) as the design scheme for the Banqueting Hall.

2.2 Approves Option 2(a) (Dark Green) as the design scheme for the Crown Court.

3. Background

3.1 Full Council has previously allocated a capital budget for the ceiling of the Banqueting Hall to preserve the historic fabric of the building while enhancing its commercial viability.

3.2 The Council's Operation Manager and Currie Brown, the overall Guildhall works consultant, have produced an array of colour and finish options for the primary hire spaces. These have been commercially vetted and refined down to two viable options per room to present to the Committee. Consideration has been given to the primary bookings these rooms host, and what portion of revenue these bookings contribute to. The recommended choices are brave and focus on capturing the recent popularity for vibrant Georgian styling that came with media like *Bridgerton*.

3.3 All works, including decorative, will go through the relevant regulatory procedures such as listed building consent and planning permission where necessary.

4. Proposal

4.1 It is proposed that the Full Council select the final colour schemes for the Banqueting Hall and the Crown Court from the shortlisted options detailed in Section 5.

4.2 The proposal is brought forward to finalise the visual brief for the upcoming Q4 work beginning January 2027.

4.3 The intended outcome is to deliver a premium, high-yield environment that appeals directly to the lucrative daytime corporate conference sector and the evening private event market, thereby increasing revenue generation from the Council's asset.

4.4 Action is needed now to allow the final specifications to be completed without delaying the Q4 implementation timeline.

5. Options Considered

Banqueting Hall

5.1 Option 1(a) – Preferred Option

Deep Teal, Panel Mouldings with Inner Wallpaper, Increased Gold Decorative Features

Teal acts as a sophisticated, brand-neutral backdrop that does not clash with corporate AV setups or pop-up branding during daytime conferences.

Crucially, it transitions under evening chandelier lighting into a highly exclusive, upscale environment, capturing the premium private hire market. Darker finishes on high-friction areas should reduce long-term scuffing and maintenance costs.

The new mouldings create 'super panels' around our artwork with inner, colour matched, wallpaper enhancing the room with and exciting but traditional 18th Century styling. Additional gold finishes increase the feeling of luxury and grandeur.

5.2 Option 1(b) – Alternative Option

Sage Green, Panel Mouldings with Inner Wallpaper, Increased Gold Decorative Features

This option provides a safe, traditional aesthetic. It maximises daytime light reflection but lacks the premium, high-contrast impact expected in the modern luxury events market, particularly for evening dinner dances.

5.3 Option 1(c) – Do Nothing

Delay in finalising a design choice could lead to delay in the overall Guildhall works. A certain timeframe has been allocated for these works to have the least financial impact; delay could cause greater impact than budgeted.

5.4 The preferred option is recommended because it best enables the Banqueting Hall to maximise its revenue potential. Modern corporate clients and premium evening event organisers look for vivid, high-end backdrops that photograph well for social media and marketing. Teal gives us that luxury evening aesthetic and eschews the drawbacks of a plainer room. It remains a flexible neutral that won't clash with a client's company colours during daytime conferences. It maximises our sellable hours in both daytime and evening sectors.

Crown Court

5.5 Option 2(a) – Preferred Option

Dark Green, White Detailing, Feature Wall

The dark green provides a sharp, complementary contrast to the display cabinets, making the historic maces, silver, and paintings visually "pop" as a premium focal point. It transitions the space into a high-end executive boardroom aesthetic, significantly broadening its appeal to corporate clients.

This space needs a slightly different strategy to the Banqueting Hall due to its history as a court room and unusual layout. Additional decorative paintings and complementary lighting rig have already begun this process. Boldness is required for clients but in a more postmodern style than purely traditional. A feature wall gives the 'Instagram Factor'.

5.6 Option 2(b) – Alternative Option

Neutral/Tan, White Detailing

A safe, highly neutral approach that maximises light reflection in keeping with the room's current styling. A feature wall in a safer colour current users of the building are acclimatised to adds some interest.

However, commercially, it strips the room of its historic character and risks the space feeling like a generic, unbranded conference room. This approach fails to capitalise on the building's unique heritage, which is our primary unique selling point, thereby limiting our ability to command premium hire rates from the private and executive sectors.

5.7 Option 2(c) – Do Nothing

Delay in finalising a design choice could lead to delay in the overall Guildhall works. A certain timeframe has been allocated for these works to have the least financial impact; delay could cause greater impact than budgeted.

5.8 The preferred option is recommended because it provides a sharp, high-end contrast that makes the room's artifacts stand out, elevating the perceived value of the room while entirely avoiding the generic, clinical feel of standard neutral meeting rooms. It transitions the space from feeling like a static museum into a premium executive environment, which is exactly what our daytime corporate and private evening clients are willing to pay for.

6. Financial Position

6.1 The cost of the Banqueting Hall ceiling works is to be funded within the allocated capital budget. The existing maintenance budget will be used for the wider Guildhall redecoration.

6.2 There is no request for additional funding attached to this decision.

6.3 The recommended options represent the strongest value for money by targeting higher occupancy rates across both daytime and evening markets. Some darker tone sections will mitigate scuff redecoration costs but general upkeep on high traffic areas will need to be provided to keep the asset at peak level. This is within existing budgets.

7. Legal and Governance Considerations

7.1 The building's listed status will be fully respected, with all paints, fabrics, and finishes adhering to conservation guidelines. This is within the brief of the consultants Currie Brown alongside the ceiling repairs.

8. Consultation and Engagement

8.1 The proposed visualisations have been shortlisted by the Operations Manager in dialogue with the Head of Business and Chief Executive Officer.

9. Strategic and Policy Alignment

9.1 This proposal directly supports the Council's strategic priority to utilise its portfolio and assets to generate revenue, ensuring the Guildhall remains a financially sustainable, premier venue within Salisbury.

10. Implementation and Next Steps

10.1 Subject to Full Council decision, the next steps will be as follows:

- a. Finalise project specifications incorporating the approved design schemes.
- b. Design specifics inform the final pricing of the works and accept final pricing.
- c. Commence works in Q4 2026/27.

10.2 The anticipated timetable is:

Milestone	Date
Committee Approval of Design	06/07/2026
Finalise Specification & Pricing	Q2 2026/27
Redecoration Works Commence	Q4 2026/27

10.3 Responsibility for implementation will sit with the work's chosen contractor, under management from the Council's Estates and Guildhall teams.

11. Additional Relevant Information

11.1 It should be noted that the decision presented to Councillors is to pursue one of the two design ways for each room. The exact colour, detailing, soft furnishing, and finishes may not appear exact as in the proposed imagery. This change will be dictated by the limitations of budget and material available on the market. Any significant changes would be returned to Councillors for consideration or decision.

12. Implications

Implication Area	Impact	Comments / Mitigation
Financial	Low	The capital budget for the ceiling in combination with maintenance budgets is intended to account for the cost of the Banqueting Hall redecoration. The redecoration of the Crown Court will be contingent on the level of these budgets once the cost of the Banqueting Hall is fully known.
Legal	Low	All works must strictly comply with Listed Building Consents due to the Guildhall's heritage status. Standard Council procurement rules will be followed to ensure full compliance with internal

		financial regulations. There are no anticipated legal hurdles provided the specified paints and materials meet standard conservation and fire safety requirements.
Risk	Low	Delaying this design decision risks pushing the works outside the Q4 implementation timeline, potentially causing disruption to mid 2027 commercial bookings. Approving the designs now mitigates this operational risk and secures contractor availability. Phased works will also mitigate the risk of total venue closure during the project period.
Personnel	None	There are no direct staffing implications or restructures associated with this decorative work. Guildhall-based staff will be briefed on minor operational adjustments and access during the Q4 works period.
Environmental Impact	Low	The environmental impact is minimal and contained strictly to standard redecoration activities. All waste materials from the project will be disposed of responsibly via established commercial recycling frameworks.
Equalities Impact Statement	None	No structural changes affecting physical accessibility are proposed, as the works are purely decorative. The high colour contrast in the proposed schemes (particularly the dark green against white detailing in the Crown Court) may actually provide minor visual improvements for visually impaired users. A full EIA is not required for these aesthetic updates.
Community / Public Impact	Medium	This project enhances a key civic and public asset, ensuring the Guildhall remains an attractive, premium centerpiece for Salisbury. Maintaining the building to a high aesthetic standard fosters civic pride and ensures the space remains a viable, welcoming environment for community functions alongside our commercial bookings.
Procurement / Contractual	Medium	The procurement of decorating contractors will be handled securely via established Council frameworks. Currie Brown will assist in vetting the tender returns to ensure the selected contractor has proven, rigorous experience working within listed heritage assets. This guarantees quality control, value for money, and strict contractual accountability.
Property / Asset	Medium	The planned works directly enhance and protect the historic fabric of the Guildhall. Upgrading the finishes - specifically by specifying treatments in high-friction areas - preserves the asset's lifespan and reduces the frequency of future maintenance interventions. This safeguards the Council's physical portfolio long-term.
Data Protection	None	There are no personal data implications associated with the physical redecoration of the building. Standard commercial confidentiality will apply to the contractor tendering and pricing process, but no public or staff personal data is processed. Therefore, a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is not required for this project.

12. Appendices / Background Papers

12.1 Appendix A - Visual Renders - Banqueting Hall Options (Deep Teal & Sage Green)

12.2 Appendix B - Visual Renders - Crown Court Options (Dark Green & NeutralTan)

Option 1(a) *Deep Teal*

Moulding
creates
'super panel'

Two tone
damask
wallpaper
inside panels
elevates
design



Additional
gold detailing
adds to
grandeur

Option 1(b) *Sage Green*

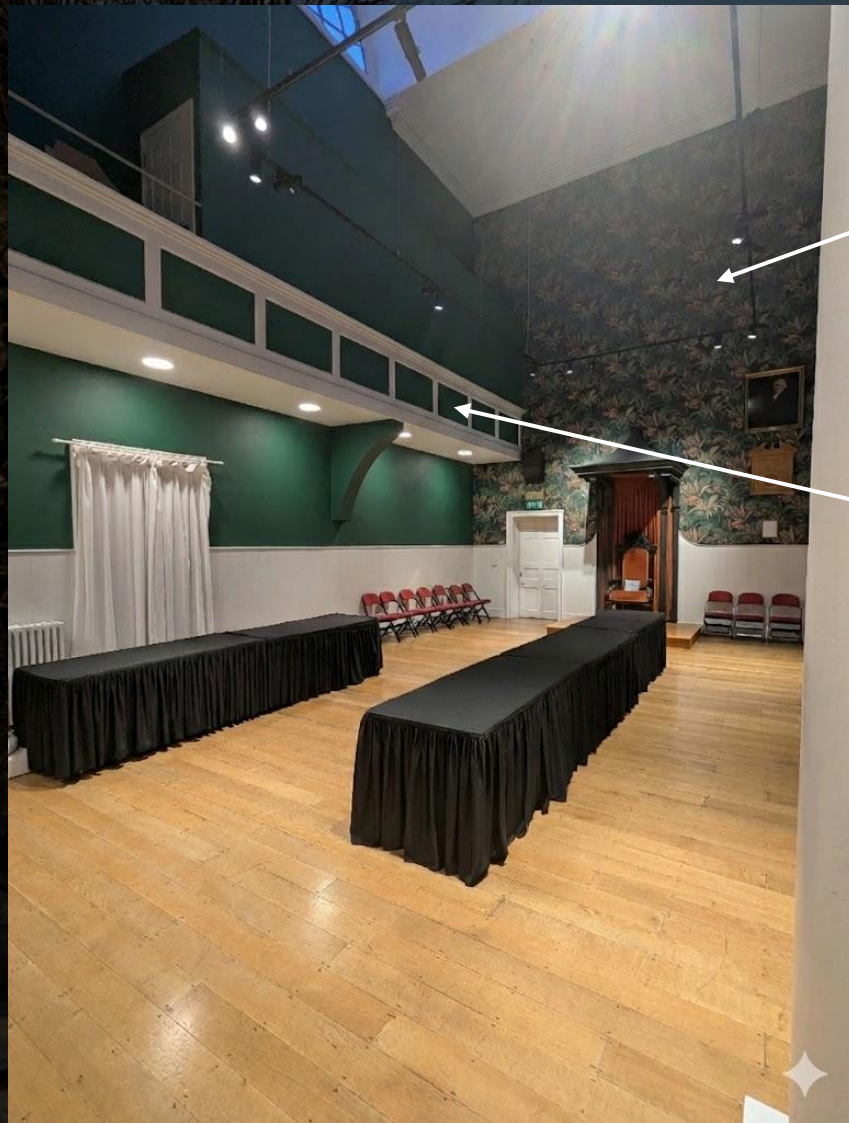
Moulding
creates
'super panel'

Two tone
damask
wallpaper
inside panels
elevates
design



Additional
gold detailing
adds to
grandeur

Option 2(a) *Dark Green*



Feature wall
elevates
room's appeal

White detailing
'pops'

Heritage
radiators
feature instead
of being hidden



Option 2(b) *Neutral/Teal*



Feature wall
elevates
room's appeal

White detailing
'pops'

Heritage
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