

REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 10
DATE OF MEETING:	3rd SEPTEMBER 2015	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND PLANNING SERVICES	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	STUART BATCHELOR (EXT5820)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	MELBOURNE ASSEMBLY ROOMS	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	MELBOURNE	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM01

1.0 Recommendation

- 1.1 That approval is given to utilise remaining monies (£76,600) allocated to Melbourne Assembly Rooms from the sale of Bretby Crematorium in line with the Melbourne Assembly Rooms Board's latest strategic plan.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 This report seeks approval to utilise the remaining monies (£76,600) allocated to Melbourne Assembly Rooms from the sale of Bretby Crematorium in line with the Melbourne Assembly Rooms Limited Board's latest strategic plan.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Melbourne Assembly Rooms Limited (MARL) currently leases the premises previously known as Melbourne Leisure Centre for a term of 5 years from May 2012 with the tenant responsible for management and internal repairs. MARL offered to take over responsibility for the site from Melbourne Parish Council following a surge in community interest and a belief they could improve its use and make it a hub of Melbourne life.
- 3.2 Changing circumstances mean the MARL Board are now in discussions with the Council to obtain a seven year lease which will allow MARL to continue a programme of improvements and secure match funding from various grant funds.
- 3.3 The requirement for a 7 year lease is based upon a review by the MARL Board of their original strategy for the Centre and, in particular, the most effective means of spending the remaining monies allocated to this project from the sale of Bretby Crematorium. The strategic review paper is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.4 In 2011 the Council allocated £125,000 from the sale of Bretby Crematorium to what was then Melbourne Leisure Centre. The day-to-day management of the centre was since handed over to MARL, the Centres name was changed to Melbourne Assembly Rooms and to date expenditure of £48,400 has been sanctioned and spent on the

replacement of boilers, insulation, controls and other urgent heating work, leaving a balance of £76,600 from the original Bretby allocation.

- 3.5 The initial intention was to utilise the Bretby monies to help match fund large scale bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund and Landfill operators. However unsuccessful bids, a change in MARS Board personnel and skill sets and a subsequent review of priorities means the Board now believe a slightly different strategy is the best way forward.
- 3.6 The intention now is to commence on a staged plan of improvements using the Bretby monies and smaller matched funds with a view to submitting an HLF bid within 3 years. The planned improvements as detailed in Appendix 1 include further heating works, renovations to the kitchen and foyer and significant infrastructure improvements to doors and blinds etc.
- 3.7 The Board believe they have the human and financial resources to submit an HLF Stage 1 bid which is a necessary precursor to a full application. This remains a significant strategic aim but in a revised timescale and format to that originally envisaged.
- 3.8 Approval to release the remaining Bretby monies of £76,600 in line with MARL's strategic review will enable the immediate phased improvements. This in turn will build on MARL's successes to date and inspire further community confidence that benefits to the community promised by the change in management are being delivered.

4.0 **Legal Implications**

- 4.1 None

5.0 **Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The Council has already earmarked the Bretby monies for this project. The recommendation doesn't change this nor the intended end result of the investment, i.e. a robust and vibrant community facility although it does affect the timing and nature of initial plans re matched funding.

6.0 **Corporate Implications**

- 6.1 Property services and Cultural services have worked together and in conjunction with MARL to consider the best option to spend the remaining Bretby monies and generally progress the successful transfer of this community asset.

7.0 **Community Implications**

- 7.1 The approval to spend the remaining Bretby monies in line with MARL's strategic review will empower this Community Group to demonstrate continued progress to Melbourne residents and fulfil their short, medium and long term ambitions for the site. The transfer of this asset to the community and their success in managing its development is an effective illustration of the localism agenda in practice.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The approval to spend the remaining Bretby monies in line with MARL's strategic review will empower them to demonstrate continued progress to Melbourne residents and fulfil their short, medium and long term ambitions for the site. It will also demonstrate the Council's ongoing commitment to community asset transfer and the localism agenda.

9.0 Background Paper

Appendix 1 – MARL Strategic Review Paper