

# **Tolbury Mill Hall, Bruton – Update on SSDC’s Contribution towards the roof replacement project**

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## **Purpose of the Report**

To update members on the progress of the project and SSDC contribution towards roof replacement at Tolbury Mill Hall, Bruton

## **Public Interest**

Community Kids is a charity running a pre-school at premises adjacent to Bruton Primary School. The bespoke eco building created for the charity used roofing material that was relatively short life and has not proved as durable as hoped for. It is now necessary to replace the roof as it is starting to fail. The facility also offers before and after school care and is a vital part of the childcare system in Bruton.

## **Recommendation**

- (1) Members note that a Business Plan is being drawn up with assistance from SCC. This will include a sum set aside annually for further repairs & renewals on this building to protect the asset in the long-term
- (2) To ring-fence £1786.10 underspend for a period of up to three years to form a sinking fund to be paid to Community Kids, to be released on receipt of an acceptable Business Plan from the charity.

## **Background**

The opportunity to relocate the playgroup adjacent to the School was achieved by setting aside land for the building and a new car park. This was achieved as part of the wider Tolbury Mill development in the early 2000's. The building opened in 2002 and Community Kids Playgroup was involved through a joint working group in the commissioning of the building, which was designed with many innovative sustainability features.

Community Kids obtained a receipt from the disposal of their own premises of £68k. This was a major contribution towards the building costs, which were in excess of £140k. They then entered into a full repairing lease with SSDC on a 30-year term. No rental is paid under the lease terms to reflect their capital contribution. Area East Committee made a substantial capital contribution to secure the hall and car park adjacent. Further contributions came from Bruton TC and other grant sources.

The design and delivery of the original building, which includes an asymmetric roof, was managed by the Area East Engineer, who acted as Project Manager, oversaw the snagging period on the building and liaised with the Architect and builders. The building forms part of SSDC's property portfolio.

We were made aware of some problems with the roof which has deteriorated in the last couple of years and can leak in heavy rain. Following advice from roofing experts and discussions with the original structural engineer, the preferred route was to re-roof the whole building. SSDC accepted some responsibility for promoting the existing corrugated roofing solution, which has not proved a suitable long-term material for this building.

Three competitive quotes were obtained for 3 different roofing types (corrugated fibre sheet £15,400 plus VAT, fibre cement slates £17,750 plus VAT and profiled metal sheet £19,000 plus VAT) The SSDC Surveyor discussed materials with the Planning Department who advised that all solutions would need planning permission. Of the 2 most suitable materials, the preferred solution in terms of aesthetics and durability was fibre cement slates. This will give a long-term roofing solution and marry in well with the existing building and its surroundings. A planning application has been prepared and submitted by the charity, with SSDC help.

In order to expedite this situation, property services offered to manage the re-roofing contract for the charity. A realistic funding formula has been put together to cover these costs. The charity secured £7,900 to meet the cost of reroofing the front section of the roof. SCC has awarded a sum of £5,000 to the charity as a third party contribution. Together this would meet £12,900 to cover they balance on which VAT will be payable. The situation is summarised in the table below

<b>Total cost</b>	<b>SSDC contribution (VAT reclaimed)</b>	<b>SCC contribution</b>	<b>Charity contribution</b>
17,750 plus VAT	£7,000 (Balance to find 10,750 + 20% VAT £12,900)	£5,000	£7,900

The balance of £7,000 was met by Area East Committee as a direct contribution towards the reroofing project. The Property Service team met the cost of the various professional fees incurred as part of these investigations, including the Planning and Building Control fees.

Sarah Love, SCC Early Years Manager, worked closely with the group to assess their business plan and revise their charging structure, fundraising and costs in order to generate a sufficient surplus to be viable in the long-term. This would mean generating a surplus for a repairs & renewals fund.

## **Update**

It was agreed that the best time to undertake the re-roofing would be the Easter holidays, which run from 24<sup>th</sup> March to 11<sup>th</sup> April. In this way, whilst the re-roofing is underway, there will be no children or staff in the building, which will be optimum in safety terms.

The work programme started on schedule in March 2016 and finished in mid-April 2016 with no encountered problems or delays thanks to the project management of the SSDC property services team. The successful completed project has however provided a net cost of works to the Council of £14,177.80, which is a considerable saving compared to the £17,750 the project team had originally budgeted for (Underspend of £3,572.20).

Part of the conditions of the SSDC Area East grant was the recommendation that any funding put into the building by the AEC is conditional on the organisation coming up with a credible business plan for 2016-17 and beyond, which would include a realistic sinking fund for future building maintenance

Although SSDC have been told that a sinking fund is in place, no SSDC officers have seen a copy of the business plan or evidence of a financial sum linked to the maintenance sinking fund.

With this in mind, the Neighbourhood Development Officer would like to recommend a refund of 50% of the savings to the project equaling £1786.10 to go back to the Community Kids Charity on the condition that the charity submits a business plan and evidences the use of a maintenance sinking fund account.

The repairs and the installation of a new roof has been a fantastic success, the charity now have a dry environment from which to operate and are very happy with the outcome.

### **Financial Implications**

The potential refund (on condition) of £1786.10 to the Community Kids charity and the returned capital sum of £1786.10 to SSDC Area East capital reserve.

### **Corporate Priority Implications**

Focus Four: Health & Communities: encouraging communities to be healthy, self-reliant and with individuals who are willing to help each other.

### **Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications**

Providing local access to a range of activities and services reducing the need to travel which therefore reduces carbon emissions.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

The loss of services designed to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged in target communities is likely to have a significant effect over time.

**Background Papers:** *Community Kids file*