

To: Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board

On: 15 June 2022

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Oakshaw Trinity Church Tower – Urgent repairs to Common Good property

1. Summary

1.1 This report provides an update on urgent repairs which are required at Oakshaw Trinity Church Tower and proposes to meet those costs from a combination of the Paisley Common Good Fund and the Place Based Investment Programme.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Board:

- (i) agree that the Paisley Common Good Fund meet the £11,597 costs of recent emergency repairs to the Oakshaw Trinity Church Tower, met to date from the Council's Property Repairs Budget.
 - (ii) agree to a 50% or £50,000 contribution, whichever is lower, to be matched by the Place Based Investment Programme, from the Paisley Common Good Fund to implement full repair works to the Church Tower.
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3. Background

3.1 The Oakshaw Trinity Church and Clock Tower are Grade A Listed structures in the Paisley Conservation Area. Rather unusually the Tower and Church are under different ownerships, with the Tower held on the Paisley Common Good and the Church owned and occupied by the Church of Scotland.

3.2 In late 2021, Council officers were alerted to significant water ingress and deterioration of the tower and weathervane by church staff.

An immediate physical assessment was carried out and a working group was created to develop a strategy for the required repairs and their funding.

- 3.4 By March 2022 the working group had found that the weathervane was moving from side-to-side and had displaced some of the stonework at the top of the tower. The church was advised of the risks this posed to the church staff and public. The decision was made to close the church and emergency repairs were carried out with an aim of securing the tower and weathervane.
- 3.4 The work undertaken has stabilised the upper section of stone masonry, but further works are required as it was not possible to fully stabilise the weathervane and therefore the church remains closed. The congregation is using the Wynd Centre for church service on a temporary basis.
- 3.3 Due to the listed status and complexity of the building, officers have engaged a specialist conservation architect and engineer to advise on the required works for both urgent and longer-term repairs to the tower.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Full extensive works are urgently required to repair the weathervane and tower structure to allow the church to reopen, prevent continued water ingress, and ensure the viability of this Grade A listed building.
- 4.2 The conservation architect has been asked to act as project lead to carry out the following:
 - Further necessary assessment of tower and weathervane.
 - Define required methodology and repairs plan.
 - Production of technical drawings.
 - Liaison with Historic Environment Scotland and submission of statutory consents.
 - Preparation of Cost Plan (to assist procurement process).
 - Contract supervision and recommendation (Renfrewshire Council to manage procurement).
 - Management / project lead for programme of works.

5. Funding

- 5.1 To date all works have been met from Environment and Infrastructure's property repairs budget. These have amounted to £11,597. The next phase of works, to fully resolve the issues, are estimated at £90,000 - £120,000. The potential for external funding for these repairs, from Historic Environment Scotland for instance, is very limited and therefore funding from within the Council needs to be identified to resolve the situation with the urgency required.
- 5.2 With the tower being Common Good property this report seeks approval for the emergency works to date to be met from the Common Good budget. For the next phase of works it should be noted that the Leadership Board of September 2021 considered how the Scottish Government grant fund, the Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP), should be prioritised in Renfrewshire.

Urgent repairs to strategic buildings was named as a key area for investment. It is therefore proposed that these next works are split between PBIP and Common Good, with the Common Good Fund paying 50% or £50,000, whichever is the lower figure.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – As detailed in Section 5 of the report.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
 - **Community Planning**
 - *Reshaping our place, our economy, and our future: Renfrewshire Council is working with stakeholders to maximise the opportunities for culturally led regeneration, providing support to make best use of heritage assets.*
 - *Building strong, safe, and resilient communities: working in partnership with local groups and organisations to achieve positive outcomes.*
3. **Legal** - A contract will be drafted with assistance from the Council's legal and insurance sections for the establishment of the conservation architect (project lead) and sub-consultants.
4. **Property/Assets** - Oakshaw Trinity Church Tower is held on the Paisley Common Good.
5. **Information Technology** – None.
6. **Equality and Human Rights**
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website. An Equality Impact Assessment is being prepared as part of the project requirements.
7. **Health and Safety** – A Health and Safety strategy would be developed for the project and will be applied at all relevant project stages.
8. **Procurement** – All professional and contractor appointments will be conducted in accordance with the Council's procurement processes.
9. **Risks** - A Risk Register will be produced for the project and will be managed and maintained throughout the project lifetime.
10. **Privacy Impact** – None.

11. Cosla Policy Position - Not applicable.

List of Background Papers – Report to Leadership Board, 15 September 2021
“Place Based Investment Fund 2021/22”

Author: Stuart McMillan, Regeneration and Place Manager
Stuart.mcmillan@renfrewshire.gov.uk
Tel: 07958 009520