



**RECOMMENDED that:**

- a) A virement of £18,810 from the 2021/22 capital contingency budget is agreed; and
- b) Approval is given for an exception to contract standing orders due to the urgent nature of the works required.

**Purpose**

To approve a virement from the 2021/22 capital contingency budget and an exception to contract standing orders to allow the installation of a new boiler system at Lowewood Museum.

**The Project**

The boiler at Lowewood Museum has been condemned due to a gas leak on the flue and combustion chamber that has made it unsafe to use and uneconomical to repair due to the age of system.

A replacement boiler will need to be installed and commissioned before the end of September 2021 to ensure that it is ready and in place for winter 2021/22 and that the Lowewood Trust are able to meet health and safety guidelines for room temperature. There is also the matter of keeping the museum items at a constant temperature to ensure that they do not degrade or become damaged.

The location of the current boiler system presents an issue and will need to be re-located outside in a suitable building constructed to house the equipment. Currently the old boiler is located in the basement near the pottery room alongside three kilns used by the pottery class. This area has a negative effect on the system and has likely added to the failure of the boiler.

Due to urgency an estimated quote for the boiler works of £8,600 has been received from Zimtech who provide boiler and plumbing services to the Council at other properties. As a contractor they also have the experience and knowledge of the site and can ensure that existing temperature controls will be utilised and any modifications made meet compliance standards.

In order to locate the boiler outside the building a suitable small plant room will need to be constructed on a concrete base. It is proposed to locate this at the side of the building on an unused area of land with no direct sight to the street or entrances to the museum. An estimated quote of £7,500 for the construction of a suitable vented out building has been received from PJS building services who carry out ad-hoc building works at other Council properties. Due to the listed status of Lowewood Museum it is proposed to construct with bricks rather than blocks to keep in fitting with the conservation area in consultation with planning. There may be an increase in cost dependant on what bricks are chosen in the final finish. A final sum of £1,000 has been assigned to extending an electrical supply to the new area.

Capital expenditure to complete the project is based on provisional estimates of £17,100 to build an external plant room, electrical supply, install and full commissioning of new boiler system. A 10% contingency figure of £1,710 will be added to make an overall budget of £18,810. There may be other unforeseen additions or alterations that are required when the project begins, but this will need to be coded to the relevant maintenance code.

## **Works Programme**

To restore the heating a standalone gas fired boiler is to be installed and any existing pipework and flue modified or replaced with certification upon completion of the work.

A suitable concrete base and brick built vented plant room will be constructed at the side of the building on an unused area of land. This will be out of sight from any visitors of the centre and is not visible from the road or entrances to the building. It will need to fit within the conservation area and listed status of Lowewood and it is proposed to be of a brick construction.

Projected timeline is estimated at 4-5 weeks. 2-3 weeks are assigned to construct a suitable plant room to house the equipment. One week to isolate, drain and strip out the old boiler equipment and a final week to install commission and certify the new system.

## **Financial, Legal and Risk Management Implications**

The replacement of the boiler by the Council is in accordance with the SLA in place between the Council and Lowewood Museum Trust.

There is a risk that the building and services will be closed if cold weather were to set in before the work is approved as there is no heating to any parts of the building. A replacement system will need to be installed and commissioned before winter 2021/22.

All items to be replaced are beyond economic repair and the best option is to carry out the works as soon as possible to avoid further issues. Given this, an exception to contract standing orders is requested to allow Zimtech and PJS Building Supplies (both existing contractors with the Council) to be engaged to carry out the works required.

The works budget is an estimated £18,810 which has not been forecast in the current 2021/22 financial year and therefore, a virement is requested from 2021/22 capital contingency which currently has a budget of £48,000.

## **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Considered all options.

## **Contribution to the Council's Objectives**

Manage the Council's assets efficiently to maximise returns and contribute to Council priorities.

Meet the Council's obligations under Health and Safety legislation.

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Action reported to the Cabinet on:

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