

Manor House Project

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Report To:	All Councillors
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Supporting Documents:	Floor Plans attached Project Programme attached
Delivering Council Aims:	Promote RWB, Forward Thinking and Provide Effective Leadership
Delivering Council Services:	Quality Services, Supporting Staff, Sustainable and Balanced Future
Wards Impacted:	All Wards
Strategic Fit:	Yes

Purpose of the Report:

This report sets out the background to the purchase of Manor House, the project so far, the financing of the project, and next steps to deliver the redevelopment of Manor House by May 2024.

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The Council is asked to RESOLVE to seek approval from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to apply for a Public Works Loan Board loan of £1.1million over the borrowing term of 25 years for the Manor House project.

The annual loan repayments will come to around £74,574.10 (as at 26th January 2023 - subject to change). It is also intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 6.835% which is the equivalent of an additional £15.74 a year on Band D equivalent.

Members are asked to review this business case report, public consultation responses, loan application and budget documents to then decide whether they wish to vote in FAVOUR or AGAINST the resolution to borrow to move this project forward.

The Council is also asked for their instructions for the next phase of the Manor House project, and to approve delegated authority to the Town Clerk to act as Sponsor for the project, through to completion, opening of the new building and the decant process from our existing premises, with updates at each Full Council meeting.

Background Information:

In the British History Online, it records that the late nineteenth century saw some building and rebuilding at the north end of the High Street including Troy House which is now known as Manor House. In the twentieth century, this building was home to the Cricklade and Wootton Bassett Rural District Council until the creation of the North Wiltshire District Council in 1975.

Since this time, the building has been used for a variety of purposes including Magistrates' Court, Social Services' offices and most recently The Enterprise Network. In late 2018, owners of the building; Wiltshire Council, declared it surplus to their requirements and in late January 2019 instructed property services to dispose of the asset.

Acquisition of this property by the Town Council has always been seen as facilitating provision of the highest quality services for the community in years to come. Whether in use by the Quartermasters Regiment in the Second World War, home to the Cricklade and Wootton Bassett Rural District Council, Social Services or the Magistrates' Court, Manor House is known as a venue from which public services in the town are delivered.

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The Town Council has always wanted to secure this building and make it an essential part of public service provision in the decades to come.

The location of Manor House, despite not being on the High Street, is just 0.2 miles from the High Street; about a five-minute walk away. It is also very close to the leisure centre, the police station, and the secondary school. There are bus stops very close to the site.

The internal area of Manor House ground floor is 3,392 square ft and the first-floor area is 2,005 square ft, making the total area 5,397 square ft. The forecourt also provides approximately 29 car parking spaces.

The present Town Council office at 117 High Street was purchased at a cost of £231,160 in 1997 and is the Council's main office. This existing Town Council office is already at capacity and does not fulfil the access requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010, introduced to help ensure businesses treat everyone fairly.

The Town Council wants to provide more community space and regularly receives requests from local groups who cannot be accommodated in other venues across the town, and as more responsibility is moved to local councils from Wiltshire Council (devolved services) the need for more space will become increasingly pressing. We have looked at alternative sites previously but decided against these as they were too far away from the High Street.

Manor House was purchased on 30th July 2020 at a cost of £591,019 and it requires substantial improvement work and hence the Town Council is seeking to borrow money from Public Works Loan Board.

The previous council office at the Civic Centre, Old Court, Station Road was sold in 2015 for £412,114 and monies were used to purchase Merchant House in the High Street, to the right of the walkthrough to Boroughfields Shopping Precinct.

Merchant House was purchased in 2015 as an investment to generate income for the council. It consists of 7 retail units and 2 residential flats, was purchased on 30th October 2015 at a cost of £636,442 and the council has spent £207,130 to improve it, making total cost of Merchant House to be £843,572. This is a freehold property and there are no loans secured on it.

Merchant House is now fully occupied both in retail and residential units. It generates approximately around £55,000 in rental income, which helps to keep the precept down.

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A project manager and architect have been appointed and the outline floor plans includes community space, meeting rooms, an exhibition venue, office space and the CCTV suite. Plans are available for residents to view in the reception area of the Town Council office, 117 High Street, and on our website.

For information, the Church Street Allotments were purchased on 4th November 2020 at a cost £147,817 consisting of 170 allotment plots and 16 car park spaces. The allotment generates around £6,300 per annum income and all the income is spent to maintain the allotment and car parking spaces. This is a freehold property and there are not loans secured on it.

Description of Issues:

The project comprises the refurbishment an alteration of the existing Manor House to provide multipurpose space for community use, meeting rooms, an exhibition venue, office space and the Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) suite.

To achieve this, the building will undergo significant internal refurbishment and remodelling, with structural and mechanical and electrical services (M&E) implications. There will also be fabric repairs/replacement, the roof will be fully replaced, and some minor repairs will be made to the existing façade. The project also comprises external works, providing Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points, bike store and reworked parking including the provision of disabled parking bays.

It is already clear that the Town Council cannot face further expansion or consider devolution of services from Wiltshire Council without the security of an asset such as Manor House.

The Town Council currently operates from a High Street office which was considered spacious 20 years ago but is now already at capacity. Without additional office accommodation both efficiency and productivity will be restricted, especially as the devolution of services from Wiltshire Council continues.

This existing Town Council offices does not fulfil the access requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010, introduced to help ensure businesses treat everyone fairly. It protects anyone who is disabled, is thought to be disabled, or is with someone who is disabled. It gives these people rights to access goods or services in a way that means they are not treated less favourably than people without a

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disability. The Manor House will have lift access to the first floor for those who have access requirements.

Outcomes and Benefits:

Once the building is refurbished and ready to occupy, it will provide multipurpose space for community use, meeting rooms, an exhibition venue, office space and the Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) suite. The exhibition area will contain all the memorabilia items that have been received during the repatriation years, other historic items, and photos about Royal Wootton Bassett.

Alternatives:

In accordance with paragraph 1(b) of Schedule 13 to the Local Government Act 2003, a Parish or Town Council may borrow money. The Public Works Loan Board provides competitive loans for local councils.

The Public Works Loan Board lending facility is operated by the UK Debt Management Office on behalf of HM Treasury. The facility provides loans to local authorities, and other specified bodies, from the National Loans Fund, operating within a policy framework set by HM Treasury. This borrowing is mainly for capital projects.

This body can loan up to a 50-year period with a fixed rate for the duration of the loan. Parish and Town Councils cannot get this type of long-term loan from a commercial bank. Having a fixed sum to pay over a set period will provide certainty about repayments and help to set future budgets.

The council currently have two properties that have no borrowing on them and they are 117 High Street Office and Merchant House

Town and Parish Councils can only borrow money from Public Works Loan Board as they are the right vehicle to lend money for the capital projects carried out by the Councils.

Borrowing money from the High Street Banks is not practical and appropriate for the following reasons:

- No High Street Bank will lend money up to 50 years for capital projects with the fixed interest rate and fixed amount of repayment for the duration of the loan

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- Maximum the bank may lend the money for may be 5-10 years with the fixed interest rate and after that, the Council must renegotiate the loan
- The Bank will have a charge on the asset they are funding, comparing to PWLB, they will not put the charge on the asset
- Fixed rate of interest for the duration of the loan will help with the Budget planning process whereas variable rate of interest will not help, and it will make it more difficult to make provision in the Budget
- It would not be prudent or practical to re-mortgage or sell a income generating property, which helps to keep the precept down. In this case, borrow money on the Merchant House, to support a property where there is no plan to generate income and still end up paying the loan instalment and where repayment of loan instalment is more than income at the same time.
- The Council has not made any plan for the future use of 117 High Street office. If the council decides to dispose of the property, the money generated from the sell, cannot be used for any other purpose other than capital projects in the future. This money can be used to repay the partial loan but there will be a heavy penalty for an early repayment, so it will have a little benefit to repay the loan early.

Currently the Council has provided various reserves in their accounts, which are very specific, and they cannot be used for any other project. So, it is not recommended to divert the fund from other reserves to fund the refurbishment of the Manor House. Diverting fund from other reserves, would seriously affect the other projects.

Ability to Realise the Improvements:

A project team is already in place, including;

Client and Project Sponsor – Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council

Architect – Kendall Kingscott Limited (KKL)

Project Manager, Quantity Surveyor and Contract Administrator – MEA

M&E Consultant Engineer – Collina MEP

Structural Engineer – E&M West

Principal Designer (CDM Regulations) – Kendall Kingscott Limited (KKL)

The consultant team has been procured via a quotation process. The team was procured on the basis of Phase 1 only. The introduction of Phase 2 has resulted in the need to agree additional fees. MEA have concluded this process and advised officers accordingly. MEA have chosen not to seek additional fees themselves for the inclusion of Phase 2.

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The following surveys have been carried out;

Building Survey and Roof Condition – AL Associates were previously procured by RWBTC to carry out a pre-acquisition condition survey. The report identified several issues, such as the requirement for the re-roofing works. These are being considered by the design team and, where appropriate, will be included in the project's scope.

Existing M&E Services – Qoda were previously procured by RWBTC to carry out a pre-acquisition survey of the existing mechanical and electrical services. The report highlighted several issues and suggestions which have been considered by Collina and, where appropriate, are being incorporated into the M&E design.

Asbestos Survey – ACMS were procured by MEA on behalf of RWBTC and carried out an R&D asbestos survey which established the presence of both notifiable and non-notifiable asbestos. The removal and/or management of the known asbestos is to be undertaken as part of the project works in an enabling works/strip out project. Some 'discovery' risk will remain.

Existing below ground drainage – Jet Rod were procured by MEA on behalf of RWBTC to carry out a drainage CCTV survey/report. The survey highlighted several issues which will require localised repairs which will form part of the project works.

The topographical and measured building survey was previously procured directly by RWBTC and is being used by the design team.

Bat Survey – Ethos Ecology were procured by MEA on behalf of RWBTC to carry out the bat surveys which has confirmed that there is no evidence of roosting bats.

Sustainability, Carbon Management and Biodiversity:

The options around sustainability are being explored by the design team and will be presented to the client in due course. However, due to the Part L compliance baseline assumption and the budgetary constraints (capital spend) any scope/cost beyond the baseline requirement will need additional funding.

Grants may be an option to consider but timing may be a constraint with application processes.

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The approach to capital spend and running costs could be considered. The 'cost in use/lifecycle costing' process could be carried out and an additional consultant will need to be brought in to carry out that specialist work.

The following options are due to be considered and reported upon:

- Re-roofing
 - During the re-roofing works additional insulation could be installed to improve the thermal efficiency of the roof beyond normal standards
- PV panels
 - PV panels will be considered as an option to identify whether they are a viable option due to the roof structure and orientation
- ASHP/GSHP
 - Both options will be reviewed however a new mains gas boiler system was recently installed and the scope assumes retention and re-use of these. Future proofing may be an option too.
- External windows and doors
 - The current building has single glazed sash windows which offer low thermal efficiency. It is proposed to retain and repair these windows. The option to upgrade these to more thermally efficient windows will be explored.
- EV chargers
 - The current scope includes for 2nr double outlet EV chargers, with the ducting installed for a further 4nr double outlet EV chargers. Installing the additional chargers will add capital cost.

Other items will also be considered and engagement with RWB Environmental Trust, part of a Town Council Working Group, has already started.

Equalities and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration:

Our current Town Council office is not compliant with the Equality Act 2010 as stated before, the Manor House plans include a lift, to make this building compliant to ensure people have access to the first floor of the building, and disabled parking at the front entrance.

The design plan for the offices on the first floor provides sufficient accommodation for all the existing staff, allowing integration of the team working together.

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Once the building is refurbished and ready to occupy, it will provide multipurpose space for community use including meeting rooms and exhibition venue, consideration will be taken to ensure the pricing structure, yet to be agreed, will support the development of new and existing community groups.

Workforce Implications:

All office staff will continue to operate from 117 High Street until Manor House is fully refurbished, and the decant process takes place. Detailed plans will be put in place to provide continuity whilst the move takes place with some possible disruption to services, with appropriate communication to residents.

The CCTV suite may need to have a short break in coverage whilst the cameras are relocated to Manor House, and optical cabling moved.

Once in the new building, the administrative team will be split between the ground floor and first floor. The reception area will be managed with at least 2 members of staff, no lone working permitted, and the team will work on a rota basis to cover reception.

Staff office space will be provided on the first floor and will provide sufficient accommodation for all the Town Council's existing staff and additional space to cover for future recruitment and services.

Impact on Crime and Disorder and Considerations on Safeguarding:

The Town Council acknowledges its duty to consider crime and disorder within the town. One of the Council's strategic priorities is to "improve safety in the Town".

The Town Council are responsible for the management and operation of a sophisticated CCTV system and work in partnership with the police.

Our CCTV suite currently has 22 cameras which will be relocated to the first floor of Manor House by our current supplier, to guarantee the safety of our 20 volunteers. An additional camera will also be installed outside Manor House, with internal security cameras, and access control system.

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Risk Management:

Funding risks;

A delay in the approval of the application to the Public Works Loan Board will impact existing reserves. We have £700,000 to start the project but any delay in approval of the loan will delay the funding of the project.

Currently the loan process takes anything between 8 to 12 weeks and sometimes longer due to complex requirement from the PWLB in support of the application.

We must submit the planning application, which takes considerable time to get from the Planning Authorities and any delay in getting the planning application will delay the loan application as it has to be submitted with the loan application.

To manage this risk, we must put the planning and loan application in as soon as possible.

Programme risks;

The project programme has been forecast as a best-case scenario with no float. There are several risks to the programme:

- Stage 4 design period becoming prolonged due to client brief/scope creep
- Possible party wall award process with the police station separation
- Discovery during the enabling works/strip-out contract causing prolongation
- Planning consideration period
- Tender period
- Lead-in/mobilisation period
- Construction period

Cost risks;

The costs are currently estimated based upon Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Stage 3 information. Whilst contingency has been included there is still residual risk to the project budget.

- Scope creep
- Design creep
- Enhancements beyond Part L compliance (see Sustainability)
- Greater extent of works for police station separation
- Discovery during enabling works
- Discovery during construction

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- Tender prices higher than expected due to market forces and inflation (current prices have been used for the estimated cost)
- Post tender and/or build period changes

Planning risks;

- Planning risk for this project is considered to be low due to scope.
- The project will require planning due to the small extension and the proposed elevational changes. This is deemed to be low risk by the project team. The application is due to be submitted during the w/c 13th February 2023 subject to approval of this report.

Building Control risks;

- The project scope and budget assumes no upgrade for Part L compliance due to the building being existing and there being no change of use. Should fabric upgrades and/or renewable technologies be required, this could add significant cost. The imminent dialogue with LABC will clarify this risk.

The project team and client will continue to collaborate to review and mitigate risks as necessary.

Assumptions:

The following assumptions have been made;

- Planning application will be approved within time scale.
- The loan application will be approved within time scale (currently it takes up to 8-12 weeks).
- No disruptions in supply chain of materials and labour.
- There will be no sudden increase in the interest rate before the loan application is made, so it increases the repayment cost.

Financial, Investment Appraisal and Value for Money (and appendix):

The estimated construction cost including fees and contingency is £1.8 million and an expected build time of 12 to 15 months.

To finance the project, the Town Council will use £700,000 from allocated reserves as well as seeking borrowing approval from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for £1.1 million.

The cost of borrowing £1.1 million would approximately be £74,574.10 per annum over a 25-year term on a fixed interest rate with the Public Works Loans

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Board, this figure is based on the London Inter-Bank Offer Rate (LIBOR) which changes daily.

The above figure is the interest rate obtained on 26th January 2023. Subject to public consultation, the Town Council intends to increase the council tax precept from 2024 – 2025 to meet the borrowing costs. This amount has reduced due to change in the interest rates since we had obtained the initial quote on 20 October 2022. This repayment amount can and will change till the date the Council signs the loan document and interest rate at that time will be applied to the loan. Therefore, this should amount be used as guidance only.

The current estimated project cost for the project including construction costs, fees, contingency and client direct costs is £1.8m, the breakdown is shown below. VAT is in addition.

Manor House RWBTC Project Budget			
Construction Costs	£		983,440.00
Contractor Preliminaries	£		144,000.00
Contractor OH&P	£		113,000.00
		Sub Total	£ 1,240,440.00
Contingency	£		124,040.00
Fees, inc contingency	£		212,800.00
Client Direct Costs	£		225,000.00
Total Project Cost (Excl. VAT) Rounded	£		1,800,000.00

The construction costs are an estimate at this stage based upon the current stage 3 design. As the design progresses, MEA will continue to monitor the estimated budget as the design progresses.

It must be noted that scope creep or design creep will cause the estimated cost to increase so this must be resisted unless additional funds will be made available.

The estimated cost works on the assumption that the building will not require any significant fabric upgrade nor the introduction of any renewable technologies to comply with Part L of the Building Regulations (energy consumption). This is due to the building being existing and no change of use is proposed.

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The 'Client Direct Costs' are a high level estimate advised by RWBTC and includes for CCTV relocation costs, furniture, fire extinguishers, a new fibre connection, comms systems and decant costs.

VAT will be claimed back by the Town Council.

The enabling works/strip-out project is being procured on a quotation basis with suitably experienced specialists.

The main works will be competitively tendered following completion of the Stage 4 design. This will follow either the 'Find a Tender' process or an alternative 'standing orders compliant' tender process. A 6-week tender period has been allowed in the programme. The submitted tenders will be reviewed by MEA as QS and a recommendation will be made. Assuming the recommendation is accepted, RWBTC will then enter into a contract with the selected contractor.

Once the Council resolves to borrow the money, a loan application will be made with all the supporting documents required, along with the copy of the planning approval to Public Works Loan Board via WALC (Wiltshire Association of Local Council).

Legal Power, Access to Information and Call In:

This section sets out the decisions by the Town Council.

February 2019 discussed at Full Council

Councillors discussed the potential of Manor House, and that the Council needed more community space and office space. RESOLVED to seek acquisition of Manor House and to set up a working party to include councillors.

August 2019 discussed at Full Council

The Council authorised purchase of the property at £550,000 in accordance with the valuation agent's report.

July 2020 discussed at Full Council

The Council was reminded that Manor House is considered a strategic purchase, identifying it as having a key role to play with its interaction with the community and future development of the Council.

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Wiltshire Council imposed a formal 30-day deadline (end of July 2020) for the contract documents to be signed and returned. If after the 31st July 2020 the documents are not received, then Wiltshire Council would request the contract documents back and resume marketing the site on the open market.

RESOLVED to proceed with the purchase and authorise the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to sign the contract papers.

Purchase completed on 30th July 2020 at a cost of £591,019. This purchase was carried out under the General Power of Competence set out in the 2012 Regulations

March 2022 discussed Full Council

RESOLVED to approve the recommendation that MEA be appointed as Project Manager, Quantity Surveyor and Contract Administrator.

June 2022 discussed at Full Council

RESOLVED to appoint Architects Kendal Kingscott.

October 2022 discussed at Full Council

MEA Consultants provided members with a copy of the progress report and estimated project costs. To complete phase 1 (new Town Council offices and Council chamber) and phase 2 (community space) at the same time (rather than delayed construction for phase 2) the estimated cost is £1.8 million. The Town Council has £700,000 in the bank account for this project (earmarked reserves) so would therefore require borrowing approval of £1.1 million from the Public Works Loan Board over a 25-year term. It is the Town Council's proposal to increase the precept to meet borrowing costs from January 2024.

Members RESOLVED to undertake a public consultation seeking support for the project, explaining fully the costs, the impact on the precept and benefits to the town.

Also RESOLVED to note that borrowing approval will require further resolution of the council at a future meeting with copies of the application form, business case report, budget and results of the consultation being circulated.

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Estates and Facilities

Currently the Council operates from 117 High Street. This building also holds the CCTV suite, a small meeting room and a car park with 6 car parking spaces.

The site area is 0.028 hectares / 0.069 acres and net internal area is 1,967 sq. ft which is 182.72 sq. m.

On the 29th October 2020, the Council instructed Carter Jonas to carry out a market valuation of the building. The market value of the property was £240,000, freehold with vacant possession

The rental value was £20,000 per annum, assumed 5 year FRI lease, subject to a break option at year 3; standard conditions and no unduly onerous terms.

The council have two options based on the above:

1. Sell the building and keep the sale value as capital receipt to be spent on any future capital expenditure.
2. Lease the building at the current market rent

If Council selects the second option, the property will require some internal modifications as it has small rooms that are being used as offices and will need work carried out to make it more attractive and appealing to a prospective tenant. The costs of improvements have not yet been sought.

Options for 117 High Street will be presented to the Council around March 2024 as we approach the completion of the Manor House redevelopment, along with a updated valuation.

KKL have progressed the design towards the latter part of RIBA Stage 3 which includes the progression from conceptual design to more detailed design. During Stage 3 the structural and the mechanical and electrical designs are being co-ordinated.

The project will progress into RIBA Stage 4 imminently so that the detailed design will progress for the tender process.

Please see the attached floor plans.

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Building Regulations - Wiltshire Council's Local Authority Building Control have been appointed. Engagement with the design team, particularly in respect of fire strategy and Part L compliance, is about to commence.

The project will require planning due to the small extension and the proposed elevational changes. This is deemed to be low risk by the project team. The application is due to be submitted during the w/c 13 February 2023.

The ground floor plan shows a greyed-out area. This space belongs to the police station and the project scope will create the necessary separation by infilling the current opening.

MEA will be engaging with the police estates team shortly to discuss the formalities around the separation works.

Council Policies:

The project fulfils the following policies from the Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council Policy Plan 2016-2021.

Policy 2 – To determine and monitor the level of income and spending by the Town Council to ensure the appropriate level of funding for the provision of its services.

Policy 3 – To develop and facilitate partnerships which assist in building a sound, stable yet diverse community.

Policy 4 – Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council will make every effort to conduct its business in accordance with affordability and value for money principles.

Policy 13 – To ensure sufficient provision of community hall space.

Policy 18 – To protect, conserve, improve and enhance the built environment of the town when fulfilling its development control role.

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Communication, Consultation and Engagement:

A public consultation questionnaire was distributed to all residents of the town advising of the cost, financing and asking for feedback by 21st December 2022. (See Appendix A)

The questionnaire was made public in the following ways:

- Hand delivered to every household in the town
- Displayed posters on all our noticeboards around the town, on our office windows and on a display board situated in the reception area of our Town council office
- Advertised on our social media sites
- Website, where residents were able to complete on line
- Advertised in our local community magazine and the Royal Wootton Bassett and Lyneham Advertiser (delivered to every household)

A further publication consultation event was held at the Memorial Hall on Saturday 26th November 2022. Inviting residents to speak with our local Councillors for further details on the project and a chance to view the architects designs. Questionnaires were also made available for residents to complete at this event.

The Consultation has taken place and resulted in 851 completed forms, this is 8% of 10,297 residents in the town eligible to respond to the public consultation;

- 732 valid responses – 86%
- 119 spoilt responses (No postcodes provided) – 14%

The results of the consultation are as follows;

Post Codes provided (Valid response) - 732 received

	Question	Yes	No
Question 1	Are you in favour of Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council proceeding with the Manor House project	414 56%	318 44%
Question 2	Are you in favour of Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council proceeding with the Manor House project if it includes a tax precept increase of 7.3% from 2024-2025 which is the equivalent of an additional £16.68 per year, for the purpose of the annual loan repayments? (Band D equivalent)	290 39%	442 61%

4 responses were received after the closing date, which are not included

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Executive Summary

- **by Cllr Andrew Matthews, Chair of Manor House Working Group**

Manor House provides the council with the opportunity to modernise its working environment including giving better access to people with disabilities and give scope for future devolution of services and the increase in personnel this may require.

In addition, and of most importance, Manor House will give additional community space that has been missing in the town since 2015 with the sale of the civic centre.

The Town Council will have its offices in a prominent location on the approach to the high street, and at the “entrance” to our town.

Funding through the public works loan board gives the council stability on repayments over the duration of the loan with fixed interest and repayments thus not causing future issues due to fluctuating interest rates.

The project and its success will rely on swift action and decision making.

Next Steps and Timeline:

If the Council resolves to borrow the money, a loan application will be made to the Public Works Loan Board with appropriate supporting documents, and following due process, early February 2023.

Phase 2, community space, now included in project scope so the project is to be procured as a single phase. Estimated project cost increased accordingly.

Enabling works/strip out, including asbestos removal, is now a separate package to the main project works in order to reduce project risk.

Updated estimate of total project cost.

Programme revised to reflect public engagement and RWBTC approval process.

Design progression from RIBA Stage 3 into RIBA Stage 4 is imminent.

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Programme Timeline - the detailed project programme has been revised and the current key dates are listed below, and full programme timeline is attached;

Programme Stage	Start	End
Stage 3 design	02.01.23	03.02.23
Planning permission submission	13.02.23	13.02.23
Stage 4 technical design	13.02.23	24.03.23
Enabling / Soft strip tender	23.01.23	03.02.23
Enabling / Soft strip period	27.02.23	31.03.23
Main works tender	10.04.23	19.05.23
Main works period	24.07.23	26.04.24
Project completion	26.04.24	26.04.24

The enabling works tender is slightly behind programme to allow the most suitable scope to be concluded.

The overall programme contains no float and assumes design/procurement work concurrent with the planning application consideration process.

Recommendation:

The Council is asked to RESOLVE to seek approval from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to apply for a Public Works Loan Board loan of £1.1 million over the borrowing term of 25 years for the Manor House project.

The annual loan repayments will come to around £74,574.10. (as at 26 January 2023 – subject to change). It is also intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 6.835% which is the equivalent of an additional £15.74 a year for a Band D equivalent.

The Council is also asked for their instructions for the next phase of the Manor House project, and to approve delegated authority to the Town Clerk to act as Sponsor for the project, through to completion, opening of the new building and the decant process from our existing premises, with updates at each Full Council Meeting. The Working Group will be dissolved from the date of this resolution.