

**Meeting:** Cabinet

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

**Report Title:** Oldway Mansion, Estate and Gardens

**Cabinet Member Contact Details:** Councillor Long, Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing, 07419 111618 [swithin.long@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:swithin.long@torbay.gov.uk)

**Director/Assistant Director Contact Details:** Kevin Mowat, Director of Place, 01803 208433 [Kevin.Mowat@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:Kevin.Mowat@torbay.gov.uk)

---

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet with an update regarding the situation with Oldway Mansion, the estate and gardens.
- 1.2 To remind Cabinet of the previous decisions made by the Council in respect of Oldway Mansion, the estate and gardens.
- 1.3 To seek approval for the Oldway Trust to be confirmed as the Council's primary community partner in respect of Oldway Mansion, the estate and gardens.

## **2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits**

- 2.1 On 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018 the Council received a report and a set of recommendations from the Oldway Mansion and Estate Working Party. The Council meeting agreed to note and support paragraphs (i), (ii), (iv) and (v) of the Elected Mayor's decision of 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018, which are set out as (a) to (d) below :-
  - a) that a Project Manager be appointed, on a 12 month contract, to prepare a works specification, procurement strategy and cost estimate for the limited improvement works identified in Phase 1 of the DCA Consultants report. That a stage report be submitted to full Council in approximately nine months' time when the Council sets its 2019/20 Revenue Budget, Capital Plan and Medium Term Resources Plan;
  - b) that the Council consults further with conservation accredited professionals to identify a strategy for the immediate management of the dry rot outbreak, so as to minimise further damage during the 2018 dry rot active season with any decision on these works being taken in accordance with the Council's Constitution;
  - c) that the Project Manager investigates options to establish a café concession at Oldway and possibly other amenities but without committing further to the existing ongoing operating costs;
  - d) that the appointment of a Project Manager, stage report and dry rot investigation identified above be funded to a maximum of £125,000 from the existing Oldway Mansion Reserve.

2.2 Progress against these recommendation can be seen below :-

- a) A Project Manager has not yet been appointed and therefore the Council does not have a works specification, procurement strategy and cost estimate for the limited improvement works identified in Phase 1 of the DCA Consultants report. Given the significant pressure placed on the Council's in-year revenue budget for 2018/19, a decision was made during that financial year to use the Oldway Mansion Reserve Fund to meet the ongoing running costs of Oldway Mansion and Estate. These costs included high levels of spend to upgrade the Fire Alarm, Intruder Alarm and Emergency Lighting, all of which was considered essential, but prevented the Reserve Fund being used to fund a Project Manager. A stage report was submitted to full Council in February 2019.
- b) The Council did consult further with conservation accredited professionals to identify a strategy for the immediate management of the dry rot outbreak.
- c) Although a Project Manager hasn't been appointed the Council has collaborated with a range of volunteer groups to investigate options to establish a café concession at Oldway and possibly other amenities but without committing further to the existing ongoing operating costs. The refurbished Tea Rooms and the grounds maintenance improvements are two high profile examples of progress.
- d) The £125,000 from the existing Oldway Mansion Reserve was used to help fund the stage report and the dry rot investigation.

2.3 Between February 2019 and July 2019 the Council commissioned DCA Consultants to undertake the following work, which was subsequently delivered :-

1. Project Director appointed
2. Help set up a new 'Oldway Trust' (CIO)
3. Prioritise and break down stabilisation works
4. Develop funding strategy and bids
5. Bid for set-up funding
6. Produce timeline
7. Produce structure chart
8. Attend Friends of Oldway AGM
9. Prepare EOI bid for major National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) Enterprise Fund
10. Prepare routine maintenance schedule

2.4 A further DCA commission was instructed in the autumn of 2019 to prepare a bid into the National Lottery Heritage Fund 'Heritage Horizons' (HH) grant programme by 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019. They achieved this by :-

- Revisiting the original scheme elements and defining a proposed scope for the new (larger) phase 1 that would have been the subject of the HH grant. This included the Rotunda and more landscape works than previously planned.
- Updating the cost estimate for these works and prepare a proposed economics of the scheme.
- Preparing and submitting an 'Expression of Interest' via the on line portal.

- 2.5 Unfortunately, in November 2019 the Council were informed that the Expression of Interest for the NLHF Heritage Horizon Awards was unsuccessful.
  - 2.6 Having closed down all funding applications from March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the NLHF reopened for funding bids in early February 2021.
  - 2.7 In January 2021 DCA Consultants were instructed to prepare a resilience fund application to NLHF but the Council are keen to demonstrate that we are sequencing our heritage projects. To this end, and based on NLHF advice and practicalities, Council officers agreed to submit 'expressions of interest' (EOIs) for Torre Abbey at the end of April 2021 and the EOI for Oldway shortly thereafter.
  - 2.8 To coincide with the above NLHF application for resilience funding Purcell have been instructed to undertake an updated condition review, along with revised costings and recommendations. The outline of the proposed EOI application to the NLHF resilience fund can be seen at Appendix 1.
  - 2.9 In dealing with the various volunteer groups that are working hard to support Oldway it has become clear that it would be helpful to identify a primary community partner. It is recommended that this should be the Oldway Trust who have already entered into a specific memorandum of understanding (MOU) that allows the Trustees to have access to the main Mansion building, subject to clear conditions, risk assessments and training requirements. A further MOU is under discussion see Appendix 2 if Cabinet agree to accept the Oldway Trust as the Council's primary community partner in respect of Oldway Mansion, the estate and gardens.
- 

### **3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision**

- 3.1 That 'The Oldway Trust', a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), which is now registered with the Charities Commission, be confirmed as the Council's primary community partner in respect of Oldway Mansion, the estate and gardens.
- 3.2 That the Council will collaborate and consult with the 'The Oldway Trust', seeking advice and funding support, as the Council leads on the repair, restoration and redevelopment of Oldway Mansion, the wider estate and gardens.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1: NLHF Resilience Fund – Outline of proposed expression of interest (EOI)

Appendix 2: Draft Memorandum of Understanding with the Oldway Trust

### **Background Documents**

- Council meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018 - [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 21 June 2018, 5.30 pm](#)
- Council meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019 - [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 21 February 2019, 2.00 pm](#)

- Preliminary Outline Repairs Schedule – Purcell, February 2018
- Oldway Mansion – Options Appraisal – DCA Consultants, May 2018
- Timber Decay Survey – Timberwise, November 2018
- Oldway Mansion Indicative Programme – February 2019
- Timber Decay and the Environment at Oldway Mansion – Ridout Associates – March 2019
- Oldway Mansion Condition & Maintenance Report/Guide – March 2019
- HLF Heritage Horizons Funding Bid – October 2019

# Supporting Information

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Although the Council supported the ambitions for the future restoration of Oldway Mansion, including the ideas contained in the DCA report of 2018, it recognised that it was not currently in a position to commit to funding its restoration, beyond that which was needed to deal with the dry rot. As a consequence, in terms of significant decisions in respect of Oldway, the Council has only agreed to prepare a works specification, procurement strategy and cost estimate for the limited improvement works identified in Phase 1 of the DCA Consultants report.
- 1.2 Although the works specification was outlined in the 'Preliminary Outline Repairs Schedule', prepared by Purcell in February 2018, the detailed works specification, procurement strategy and cost estimate did not progress due to the limited availability of funding. As stated in 2.8 above, Purcell have been instructed to undertake an updated condition review, along with revised costings and recommendations.
- 1.3 These works are detailed in the 'Preliminary Outline Repairs Schedule' but they can be summarised as follows – ***“the significant and immediate repair challenges in respect of the Mansion which, if not addressed immediately, will lead to further deterioration, likely loss of internal detail and significantly rising costs over time as rot and general deterioration take hold and accelerate”***. The package of work was mainly intended to make the Mansion water/weather tight and did not address the Rotunda or other buildings on the Oldway estate.
- 1.4 The DCA 'Options Appraisal' report from May 2018 also identified the option for a 'pop-up café' and the Friends of Oldway, working alongside the Oldway Trust, have collaborated with the Council and are on the verge of re-opening the Tea Rooms to the public.
- 1.5 The 'Friends of Oldway' are working with the Oldway Trust and the Council to secure the future of Oldway. They also work on funding bids with the aim to renovate, refurbish and ultimately reopen to buildings to the public. Recently they have been the driving force behind the reopening of the Tea Rooms.
- 1.6 The 'Oldway Gardens Volunteer Group' is made up of volunteers working to restore the wonderful outside spaces within the Oldway grounds. They have worked very hard and have been very successful, with nearly one thousand members on their Facebook page. This group also contribute to the work of the Oldway Mansion and Estate Working Party.
- 1.7 Demolition of the Squash Courts was successfully completed in early 2021 but came at a cost of £69,500, with ongoing costs of £312 per week (£16,224 per year) linked to traffic lights and partial road closure. Further work is required to undertake temporary repairs to the East Tower, West Tower and Stables/Carriage Room to make safe and to allow Oldway Road to re-open to two-way traffic. These works are estimated to cost circa £110,000.

- 1.8 It can be seen from Appendix 1 that if the NLHF Resilience Fund application is successful the Council would be asked to commit £30,000 as matched/contributory funding. However, one of the outputs would be the appointment of a Project Coordinator for 14 months, for three days per week, to help develop the right package and put together a Round 1 NHLF capital bid in late 2022. This bid would most likely be for up to £5 million towards phase 1 of the restoration project.

## **2. Options under consideration**

- 2.1 None

## **3. Financial Opportunities and Implications**

- 3.1 Purcell's original indication of the cost for the priority repair package, along with additional works to achieve temporary uses, was £1,967,000 (February 2018).
- 3.2 The application to NLHF for resilience funding is likely to be in the region of £140,000, with a possible revenue contribution from the Council by way of some match funding. Any match funding is expected to come from the £100,000 Oldway revenue budget for 2021/22 and should not exceed £30,000 and can be spread over two financial years.

## **4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 None of significance.

## **5. Engagement and Consultation**

- 5.1 The Oldway Mansion and Estate Working Party is well established and is well attended. Nearly all of the engagement and consultation is undertaken via the key stakeholders who attend the Working Party.
- 5.2 Wider consultation and engagement exists via direct meetings with partners like Historic England and the Devon Gardens Trust, as well as normal community engagement delivered via the planning application process, as and when required.

## **6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services**

- 6.1 Not applicable.

## **7. Tackling Climate Change**

- 7.1 When considering the repair, restoration and redevelopment of Oldway Mansion, the wider estate and gardens, the Council will take into account all relevant opportunities to make a positive impact on the climate and to reduce carbon wherever possible.

## **8. Associated Risks**

- 8.1 There is a significant risk of a loss of community good will if progress is not made on the future of Oldway Mansion, the estate and gardens.

8.2 The asset will continue to deteriorate if funding cannot be secured to begin restoration work.

## Equality Impacts

| 9.  | Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups |                                      |                                 |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|   | Positive Impact   | Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions | Neutral Impact                  |
| Older or younger people   |   |                                      | There is no differential impact |
| People with caring Responsibilities   |   |                                      | There is no differential impact |
| People with a disability  |   |                                      | There is no differential impact |
| Women or men  |   |                                      | There is no differential impact |
| People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) <i>(Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)</i> |   |                                      | There is no differential impact |
| Religion or belief (including lack of belief)   |   |                                      | There is no differential impact |
| People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual   |   |                                      | There is no differential impact |
| People who are transgendered  |   |                                      | There is no differential impact |
| People who are in a marriage or civil partnership   |   |                                      | There is no differential impact |
| Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave   |   |                                      | There is no differential impact |



|             |   |      |  |                                 |
|-------------|---|------|--|---------------------------------|
|             | Socio-economic impacts<br>(Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)  |      |  | There is no differential impact |
|             | Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)   |      |  | There is no differential impact |
| <b>10..</b> | <b>Cumulative Council Impact</b><br>(proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen the impacts identified above)  | None |  |                                 |
| <b>11.</b>  | <b>Cumulative Community Impacts</b> (proposed changes within the wider community (inc the public sector) which might worsen the impacts identified above) | None |  |                                 |