

SHIRE HALL LIFT

To: **General Purposes Committee**

Meeting Date: **7th October 2014**

From: **LGSS Director of Law, Property and Governance**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **Not applicable** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To consider a proposal to install a new compliant lift to all floors in Shire Hall.**

Recommendation: **General Purposes Committee is recommended to approve the installation of a new compliant lift to all floors in Shire Hall.**

<i>Officer contact:</i>	
Name:	James Wheeler MBA MBIFM
Post:	Head of Property Services LGSS
Email:	JWheeler@northamptonshire.gov.uk
Tel:	07540 672689

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Shire Hall/Octagon building is without the benefit of a passenger lift compliant with Part M of the Building Regulations. The council may have been open to challenge under S.19 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and now may be open to challenge under the Equality Act 2010. It is for building management to draw the council's attention to this as service providers and employers should not be inviting members of the public, elected members or employees to use non-compliant lifts or to deny access to all or some parts of the building.
- 1.2 The Castle Court Building will be closed in December 2014 and the Shire Hall/Octagon building will be used to full capacity with a desk ratio of five per ten employees. This aspiration can only be achieved by maximising the flexible use of the building in terms of horizontal and vertical circulation.
- 1.3 The installation of compliant passenger lifts could and should have occurred by October 2004 with the implementation of S.19 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 now Equality Act 2010. However this was deferred as a relocation of the seat of county governance was being considered.
- 1.4 In light of the planned intensification of the use of the Shire Hall/Octagon building, based upon flexible use, the view is taken that non-compliance should no longer continue.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 Two options were reviewed:

One. A platform lift from reception up to the first floor which would give public access to the democratic process. Members of the public would still need to enter the building via the Octagon disabled access and be accompanied by a member of staff for access through the swipe card control system. A platform lift will impact on the current reception area. Estimated cost £86,310 including fees and VAT.

Two. A new compliant lift to all floors in Shire Hall. Lift access will be adjacent to the front entrance at path level up through to the third floor. This provides compliant public access to the democratic process and opens up all floors to everyone. It would have a small impact to office areas on ground second and third floor and the Members' lounge on first floor. Estimated cost £353,628 including fees and VAT.

- 2.2 Advice from the Accessibility Officer is to provide a fully compliant passenger lift which would provide access for all from the principal entrance to all floors. Option 2.

Advice from Strategic Assets is that Option 2 is likely to positively reflect on the valuation of Shire Hall.

- 2.3 **Recommendation.** On the basis of the information and advice provided the preferred option is option 2. This will provide compliant access for all and ensure the fully flexible use of the building.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The inclusive design of the built environment in compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations provides access for all to education, training employment and community participation. A local authority should be leading by example.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

Access to and within the built environment enables independent mobility and lessens demand for medical services, social services, carer services and specialist transport.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

An environment that is not inclusively designed restricts access and increases vulnerability.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

There are no implications for this proposal.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

Please see accompanying Community Impact Assessment.

4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

Please see accompanying Community Impact Assessment.

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category

4.6 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category

Source Documents	Location
Equality Act 2010	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/content/s