

REPORT

To: CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE	Subject: CIVIC CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS - ADDITIONAL SCREEN LINKED TO COUNCIL CHAMBER	
From: HEAD OF CENTRAL SERVICES		
Date: 6 December 2007	Ref: JAF/AC	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report advises the Committee of proposals to provide an additional plasma screen at the foyer of the Civic Centre linked to the Council Chamber to provide a facility for persons to view and hear meetings of the Council and its Committees.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations requires arrangements to be put in place to deal with evacuation from premises of persons at work. Current fire safety legislation requires an emergency fire action plan specifying the evacuation procedures for everyone, including disabled persons, likely to be within a building. The Council has in place advice and guidance on the emergency evacuation of persons from the Civic Centre, including disabled persons.
- 2.2 This report refers particularly to the access provision for those with a disability to areas of the Civic Centre beyond the main entrance and basement floor where access is available only by way of a passenger lift. Access into premises for disabled persons to allow them to have full use of the premises needs to be matched with their safe egress in the event of a fire.
- 2.3 Passenger lifts within the Civic Centre cannot be used in the event of an emergency evacuation of the Civic Centre and it is not possible to upgrade the passenger lifts to make them fire-proof without extensive costs.
- 2.4 In the circumstances, public access to meetings of the Council and its Committees, given that the Council Chamber public gallery is on the 2nd floor and the Committee Rooms are on the 1st floor is restricted.

3. Considerations

- 3.1 In order to meet the needs of persons who wish to attend public meetings of the Council or its Committees or who are required to participate in meetings, it is proposed to provide a new plasma screen and speakers at the reception area of the main entrance.
- 3.2 In consultation with the contractor who originally supplied the audio and visual facilities within the Council Chamber, a proposal to link the facilities in the Council Chamber to the ground floor can be achieved. The data and display information now available by way of the processes within the Council Chamber for audio and visual information during meetings can be extended to an area on the ground floor to provide this public participation in the democratic process.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The cost of the proposal to supply and instal a plasma screen with speakers is £4,285.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 The Committee is asked to note the proposal and to agree to proceed with the proposal at the cost stated which can be met from within existing budgets.

J. O. Fleming

Head of Central Services

Members seeking further information on the contents of this report should contact John Fleming, Head of Central Services on Extension 2228.