

Building Survey – including roof assessment

To consider commissioning a building survey and solar suitability assessment at a proposed fee of £1,875 excl. VAT and appointing Andrew Mills Surveyors to complete this survey.

Author: Town Clerk

1. Purpose of the Report

To inform the PHC of a proposal to commission a general appraisal report on the Public Hall, to assess the current condition of the roof and buildings and identify maintenance and repair requirements.

2. Background

The Town Clerk has received a proposal to undertake a general appraisal of the Public Hall. The purpose of the appraisal is to provide an overview of the building's condition, both externally and internally with particular attention to the roof. This will be used to assist the PHC in planning future maintenance works and budget allocations and to further inform decisions regarding any installation of solar panels when preparing a proposal for consideration by the Full TC

3. Proposal

Received from Andrew Mills Surveyors

The appraisal would involve:

Inspection: One day spent at the Public Hall inspecting the external and internal fabric of the building.

Report Preparation: A further day preparing a written report which will: Briefly describe the construction and condition of the various building elements including an assessment of the roof's ability to support solar panels and a bullet-pointed schedule of maintenance and repair requirements, categorised as short, medium, **and** long term.

4. Financial Implications

£1,875.00 (exclusive of VAT) .

5. Recommendation

The Town Clerk recommends that the PHC consider the proposal and, if satisfied, submit this proposal for agreement at Full TC

PUBLIC HALL 2026 HIRE RATES

Prepared by Alan Chaplin

The current hire rates have been frozen since April 2022 and are to be increased for 2026.

What does the Council increase the rates to and what is the evidence for such an increase ?

We need to be fair and realistic in our assessment.

So let's start with the current position dealing with weekday hirings

Non commercial (NC) is £11.75/hr

Commercial (CO) is £21.00/hr

Inflation from April 2022 to September 2025 is calculated at 21.4% (using Hargreaves Lansdon inflation calculator).

We would need to add an estimate for October 2025 to December 2026, let's say .6% (October to December 2025) & 3% (January to December 2026).

So $21.4 + 0.6 + 3.0 = 25\%$.

Adding this to the rates would result in

NC $£11.75 + 25\% = £14.69/\text{hr}$

CO $£21.00 + 25\% = £26.25/\text{hr}$

We have in the past (and still are) setting up for our users at no additional costs.

So if we increased our rates to

NC £20.00/hr

CO £30.00/hr

This would include the user setting up for themselves.

If the user required us to set up/take down then this would be an additional cost (see later under extras).

In order to reduce the “ pain” for our existing regular users of these increases we could offer a loyalty discount and these could be

NC less 25% which would reduce their rate back to £15.00, just slightly above the £14.69 incl inflation rate.

CO less 10% which would reduce their rate back to £27.00, just slightly above the £26.25 incl inflation rate.

New users would qualify for the loyalty discount after regular use of 6 months.

The question of minimum hours is still open for discussion as I believe its not implemented at the moment but we do need to regularize this and I believe a minimum of 2 hours is to be implemented with the new rates in January 2026.

Moving onto “extras”

SETTING UP AND TAKING DOWN.

In June 2025 for example, we charged users £94.00 for the use of the PH and Steve (caretaker) has cost us approx £70.00 to set up/take down. On another occasion we charged users £76.00 for the use of the PH and Steve has cost us approx £70.00. So £26.00 plus £6.00 towards the costs of running the PH for a total of 14 hrs thats £2.28/hour for lighting, rates, water, admin, toilets, wear and tear, etc, etc.

So in 2026 all setting up and taking down will be by the user unless they request and pay for Steve to carry out these tasks at a fixed rate of NC £ 40.00 (2 hrs of Steve's costs) and CO £60.00.

We must be aware of the risk of damage to chairs, tables etc. How do allow for this ? Ask for a deposit to be returned once Steve has inspected ?

HEATING is currently charged at £7.75/hr.

Using the price cap as our benchmark from Ofgem

Up to April 2022 the cap was £1277.00 the price cap until December 2025 will be £1755.00 an increase of 37%. Let's assume that 2026 movement is uoP and down but overall a small 3% increase (pure guess) that would be a overall increase of 40 %.

So £7.75 + 40% = £10.85/hr.

SOUND SYSTEM incl microphones would be included in the rates at no extra charge.

BAR is currently charged at £15.00 to avoid the user having to apply for a Temporary Event Notice which currently costs £21.00. This saves the user £6.00 plus the hassle of the time to complete the forms etc, and we are not charging for any cleaning etc of the bar area even if the users clean it themselves.

I believe the “license” required costs us £ 200.00/yr (line 530 of the finances).

How many events in the last 12 months have we charged for ?? Did we recoup our the costs ?? Is it worth paying for the license ?? Do the Council use it ??

If we are to keep it then the charge should be at least £20/25.00.

Based on the current income for lettings in the PH and Norman Centre up to and including 20-08-25.

PH £7454.03

NC £ 785.00

So £8239.03 divided by say 20 weeks multiply by 52 weeks equates £21421.48.

So increasing the rates by 25% will generate in the order of £5000 additional income in 2026 using the current letting levels. If lettings increased then the extra income would increase.

The additional income figure does not take into account any of the “extras” contributing to the income as they are unknown quantity.

We may need to change the NC and CO names to something more suitable ?

Alice has raised the point regarding Premium Nights eg New Years Eve where we charge the standard rate.

SUMMARY

NEW RATES (minimum 2hrs rental)

Non Commercial £20.00/hr

Commercial £30.00/hr

DISCOUNTED RATES (minimum 2hrs rental)

Non Commercial £15.00/hr

Commercial £27.00/hr

SETTING UP/TAKING DOWN

Non Commercial £40.00

Commercial £60.00

HEATING

Non Commercial £11.00/hr

Commercial £11.00/hr

SOUND SYSTEM

Non Commercial included

Commercial included

BAR LICENSE

Non Commercial £20/25.00 per event

Commercial £20/25.00 per event

Agenda Item 8 Precept Requirements 2026 -2027

These figures are based on an increase of 3% for expenditure and 5% for income
2026 inflation according to the OBR is predicted to be 2/3%

The PH and NC rates have not been increased since before 2019.

Projected 26/27		
Public Hall	Income	£34,552.50
	Expenditure	£108,978.00
	Precept	£74,425.50
Norman Centre	Income	£2,362.00
	Expenditure	£3,700.00
	Precept	£1,338.00

see over for details

Precept Calculator

Start of year 01/04/25

Heading	Last year's net	Actual net	25/26 Revised	26/27
Public Hall Committee Income				
400 EDDC Contribution	£2,576.00	£0.00	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
410 Lettings	£27,713.64	£10,509.59	£27,500.00	£29,100.00 26/27 figure based on 24/25 net plus 5%
411 Heating	£2,309.75	£279.00	£2,000.00	£2,200.00
412 Bar	£570.00	£180.00	£400.00	£400.00 26/24 based on £15 per application
413 Electricity	£293.54	£132.43	£250.00	£252.50
414 Bunting	£15.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
416 Internet re-charge	£100.00	£20.00	£100.00	£100.00
417 Sound System (Microphone)	£292.50	£97.50	£150.00	£0.00
430 Miscellaneous	£0.00	£20.00	£0.00	£0.00
Public Hall Committee Income Total	£33,870.43	£11,238.52	£32,900.00	£34,552.50
Future Income				
Total Income	£228,629.93		£249,000.00	
Public Hall Committee Expenditure				
500 Rates	£3,746.25	£3,729.61	£4,000.00	£5,308.00 2025 + 3% inflationary rise. 2025 rate is £468 x 11 months
501 Gas	£2,634.29	£958.99	£4,000.00	£4,000.00 to reflect actual projected cost 25/26
502 Electricity	£3,652.10	£1,816.59	£7,000.00	£7,000.00 to reflect actual projected cost 25/26
503 Water	£1,814.39	£468.15	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
505 Insurance	£9,187.27	£9,865.93	£9,865.93	£11,000.00 paid in full for 2025/26
510 Wages	£15,819.00	£7,212.73	£18,000.00	£18,000.00
515 Cleaning	£3,514.47	£3,296.03	£4,000.00	£500.00
517 Consumables	£6,451.61	£1,275.22	£9,000.00	£9,300.00
520 Maintenance	£11,647.14	£2,844.16	£12,000.00	£12,500.00 pending review of 26/27 maintenance plans
521 Major Repairs/Renovations	£300.00	£7,634.95	£7,500.00	£10,000.00 Roof, Nc end?

Precept Calculator

Start of year 01/04/25

Heading	Last year's net	Actual net	25/26 Revised	26/27
522 Hall Improvements	£18,545.06	£9,167.76	£35,000.00	£20,000.00
523 Clock Service	£312.00	£0.00	£350.00	£370.00
530 Licence	£180.00	£224.50	£250.00	£250.00
535 Performing Rights	£2,019.71	£2,247.44	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
540 Marketing	£0.00	£0.00	£750.00	£750.00
590 Miscellaneous	£300.78	£0.00	£500.00	£5,000.00
Public Hall Committee Expenditure Total	£80,124.07	£50,742.06	£117,215.93	£108,978.00
Future Expenditure				
Total Expenditure	£283,401.20		£345,366.93	
Net Expenditure	£54,771.27		£96,366.93	£158,495.50

Precept Calculator

Start of year 01/04/25

Heading	Last year's net	Actual net	25/26	26/27
Norman Centre Income				
700 Lettings	£3,347.50	£1,130.00	£2,250.00	£2,362.00 5% increase
710 Miscellaneous	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Norman Centre Income Total	£3,347.50	£1,130.00	£2,250.00	£2,362.00
Future Income				
Total Income	£228,629.93		£247,000.00	
Norman Centre Expenditure				
750 Rates	£459.08	£306.08	£600.00	£600.00 £51 per month x 11 month, No change
751 Gas	£337.29	£94.63	£1,000.00	£600.00 to reflect projected cost
752 Electricity	£507.43	£242.96	£2,000.00	£1,000.00 to reflect projected cost
770 Maintenance	£314.22	£135.37	£1,000.00	£1,500.00
771 Major Repairs	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
790 Miscellaneous	£0.00	£0.00	£250.00	£0.00
Norman Centre Expenditure Total	£1,618.02	£779.04	£4,850.00	£3,700.00
Future Expenditure				
Total Expenditure	£283,401.20		£359,850.00	

Precept Calculator

Start of year 01/04/25

Heading	Last year's net	Actual net	25/26	26/27
Net Expenditure	£54,771.27		£112,850.00	£162,833.50

Station Road Toilets – Reconditioning of Cubicle and Store Doors, 7 doors

Purpose:

To discuss and agree on the proposed reconditioning of the cubicle doors and store door at the Station Road public toilets.

Details:

The works will include:

- Removal of rust and surface preparation
- Application of anti-rust treatment
- Use of exterior metal primer
- Two coats of top-quality topcoat paint

Estimated Costs:

- Paint and materials (rust converter, metal undercoat, and two coats of topcoat): £170.00
- Labour: Approximately 24–30 hours caretaker overtime c. £500.00

Recommendation:

It is recommended to use quality materials and products to achieve a long-lasting finish and prolong the period before any rework becomes necessary.

Decision Required:

That the PHC considers and agrees to proceed with the proposed reconditioning works as outlined above and develops a proposal for review and agreement by the full TC

Item 11 Public Hall Terms & Conditions **PHC 13/10/25**

Public Hall Terms and Conditions – Key Deposit Arrangements

To agree that a key deposit of £100.00 may be added to the invoice rather than being requested as a physical deposit in advance.

Purpose of Report

To consider amending the Public Hall terms and conditions so that a key deposit (£100.00) is no longer required upfront, but instead may be applied retrospectively to the hirer's invoice in the event of a loss of keys.

Background

Under the current terms and conditions of hire for the Public Hall, hirers are required to provide a refundable key deposit of £100.00, paid as a separate transaction prior to the event. This has created some administrative inefficiencies, including:

- The need to handle and track separate payments.
- Additional work for both hirers and council staff.
- Loss of bookings from those that are based far away and unwilling to make the trip to collect a key

It should be noted that in the past 12 months there have been no instances of hirers mislaying or failing to return keys.

Proposal

That the refundable £100.00 key deposit is no longer collected in advance but applied retrospectively to the hirer's invoice only in the event of keys being lost or not returned. This approach would:

- Reduce administrative work for both the council and hirers.
- Allow hirers to make one straightforward payment for hire charges only.
- Retain the safeguard of charging hirers £100.00 if keys are not returned.
- Reflect the low risk based on past experience.

Financial and Legal Implications

- No upfront handling of deposit payments required.
- In the event of key loss, £100.00 will be invoiced to the hirer as a retrospective charge.
- No financial disadvantage to the council is expected, given the very low incidence of lost keys.
- Provides a clear, auditable process while minimising unnecessary transactions.

Recommendation

That the committee agree to amend the Public Hall terms and conditions so that the refundable key deposit of £100.00 is not collected in advance but instead applied retrospectively to the hirer's invoice in the event of lost or unreturned keys.

