



W E S T B E R G H O L T P A R I S H C O U N C I L

A NEW PARISH OFFICE FOR WEST BERGHOLT

(Revisited by Cllr Brian Butcher following the Finance meeting on 14th June 2022)

A look back and update on the intention to provide a Parish Office.

Objectives of the project:

- to provide West Bergholt with a 21st century facility where members of the public, etc can visit to meet the Clerk, her assistant or the Hall administrator - it not being thought right that any visitors, the handymen, contractors, etc should have to be entertained at their front door or home.
- to provide a sufficient space for at least two of the above to work together at the same time.
- to ensure access for any that are disabled.
- to be a safe environment in which to work, which will assist in facilitating the appoint of an assistant clerk.

Background:

Four years ago, the Neighbourhood Plan first listed as an issue the lack of a Parish Office and actioned the investigation of such.

On the 2020 section 106 list the need for a Parish Office was first included and it noted that funding was anticipated to be from miscellaneous grant funds, CIF, National Lottery, micro grants and/or s106 monies.

The three-year plan for 20/21 listed as a 2022-23 project the Parish Office, noting available funding of £20,000, plus anticipated s106 funding. The new office would be a P C sponsored project built on Trust land, with Trust's agreement to maintain, clean, etc.

Circa September 2021 nine potential office options were presented discussed and the decision taken to appoint a Q S to cost the two preferred options, being a standalone office or the conversion into one room the existing office, the adjacent defunct w c and store used by BYG, Bowls and the Orpen Players.

The Q S was appointed and following discussions it was agreed to proceed within the standalone office design, not the conversion.

Subsequently though a number of further location options were circulated to OHMC members with one notable viable alternative option to the standalone office being an extension to the RHS of the John Lampon. The one notable issue being highlighted was the loss of the fire escape door from the J L Hall. This has now been said to have been satisfactorily resolved.

Recommendations:

1. Thus, the first consideration at this month's meeting for discussion/agreement is an extension to the RHS of the John Lampon, as being said to be a less expensive option than a standalone office and uses a 'dead piece' of land next to the John Lampon. This means no parking spaces will be lost. This recommendation is the location of the new Parish Office that the Parish Council should proceed with.

2. The second recommendation at this month's meeting for discussion/agreement is, having regard to the RFO's comments on available funds, that the Parish Council should seek fee quotes for the design and contract administration of the new office from local architects (as was done for the external w c, toilet refurbishment , etc using the P C's drawings as a blueprint but not stifling their input on matters associated with layout, thermal efficiency, cost, accessibility etc.)

N.B. These recommendations do not commit the P C to any expenditure but seek to take the intention to provide a Parish Office to the next stage. Following on thereafter will be the P C's anticipated consideration of the Finance recommendations, probably in September, to appoint an architect on the basis of the cost-effective fee quote obtained.