

Full Council

Date:	22 January 2019
Title:	Matchstick Model of the Town Hall
Contact Officer:	Graham Hunt, Town Clerk

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide background on the opportunity to purchase a matchstick model of the Town Hall.

Background

2. On 8 November 2018, the Town Clerk circulated a letter, received that day from a resident of Bicester, offering a matchstick model of Thame Town Hall for sale, made by her "Uncle Sam". Photographs were also enclosed.
3. Initial responses were mixed, both for and against, along with a suggestion that it could be donated to the museum.
4. It was agreed that the seller be asked to bring the model in, so that it could be displayed at the Council meeting on 11 November 2018, which it duly was.
5. A value of between £200 and £250 has been suggested by the seller.
6. The museum has confirmed they have no need of it. They already have 2 models of the Town Hall in store.
7. The model is around 12"x8" in plan size, and a height of 12" to the clock tower.
8. Further detail on the maker / date has been requested, but all that has been shared is that Sam lived with his wife Rosie opposite the vets in Wellington Street. The model (and one of the Birdcage) were left to the seller by will.
9. The model will be on display again at the Council meeting and is currently also available to see in the Town Clerk's office.

Proposal

10. The Town Clerk is of the view that if the model was purchased, it could be permanently stored in his office, and put out for occasional display in the Information Centre, where it would be a talking point.
11. An earmarked reserve of unspent Town Hall maintenance funds has been built up over the last few years and currently stands at £3,225. The Town Clerk is of the view that the Council could make an offer of £225 from that reserve.

Resource Appraisal

12. £225 is a relatively small amount in terms of Town Council spend, and could be covered by use of the Town Hall Maintenance Reserve.

Risk Assessment

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13. The model is fragile, and will need carefully handling, but includes a custom made box to protect it when not on display.
14. There will be residents of Thame who will see no value in spending £225 on such an item.

Legal Powers

15. There are specific promotional / art related powers that could be applied, but the project is also covered by the General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011.

Recommendation

The Council is recommended:

- i) To resolve to offer £225 for the matchstick model of the Town Hall, on a take it or leave it basis.*