

Full Council

Title:	Upper Chamber Chairs
Date:	16 May 2023
Contact Officer:	Andrea Oughton, Operations Manager

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider options for the replacement of the Upper Chamber chairs.

Background

2. The current chairs were purchased in 1995 and are used for meetings and events held within and immediately outside the Town Hall. The chairs are heavy to manoeuvre and stack. Most of the chairs' seat fabric is stained and the foam seat padding on many is exposed which gives a poor appearance.
3. In April 2018 a report was presented to Council by the Town Clerk at the time which suggested a number of items to be purchased, including new chairs for the Upper Chamber. It was agreed more information was required. Further discussion took place at the Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 17 July 2018 with a recommendation to purchase chairs at a cost of approximately £7,132.00 (excl. vat) from the Rolling Capital Fund. The recommendation was rejected as the correct procurement procedure had not been undertaken.
4. Since 2018 the Town Council has worked on and adopted a Procurement Policy, worked through a pandemic and seen changes in personnel (Town Clerk and Asset Manager).

Options

5. In line with the Town Council's Financial Regulations, three companies were approached to provide a quotation for the supply of 80 chairs suitable for use in the Upper Chamber. Each company provided sample chairs during this review to enable staff and Councillors to assess each chair's suitability.
6. The specification for the new chairs was as follows: conference chair, minimum weight bearing capacity 150kg, minimum stacking of 10 high (on floor or trolley) and minimum of 5yr warranty.
7. Evaluation criteria for objective quantifiable features of each chair included; weight of chair, storage (including stackable and storage trolley), warranty, weight bearing capacity, availability of spares and repairs and price*. The criteria for subjective evaluation of each chair was comfort.

**Price is not a factor until all scoring is done and is then introduced to identify best value.*

8. Appendix 1 provides detail on the process and shows the scoring criteria for each chair. The detailed working document is available on request. Appendix 2 – scoring table.
9. From the results of the procurement exercise the preferred chair is No. 6.

10. As good practice regarding accessibility, it is proposed that an additional four chairs (5% of total chair requirement) are purchased with arms, greater weight bearing capacity and a wider seat pad and back rest. These may be purchased from an alternative supplier but will be in keeping with the style / colour of the new chairs.

Resource Appraisal

11. There is a budget of £7k set aside for the purchase of chairs for the Upper Chamber.
12. The cost to purchase 80 chairs from the preferred supplier is £5,787.00 + VAT. This includes three storage trolleys.
13. The existing chairs will be disposed of through the Council's current waste contractor at a total cost of £255.00 + VAT.
14. The cost to purchase four Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant chairs is approximately £600.00 + VAT.

Legal Powers

- Local Government Act 1972 s133

Recommendation:

- i) To agree the purchase of 80 chairs, to be funded from the Rolling Capital Fund at a cost of £5,787.00 + VAT.*
- ii) To delegate to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Operations Manager, the colour of the chairs.*
- iii) To delegate to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Operations Manager, the purchase of 4 x DDA compliant chairs at a cost of approximately £150 each + VAT to be funded from the Rolling Capital Fund.*