

West Dunbartonshire Council

Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services

Corporate Culture Sub-Committee: 10 March 2009

Subject: Purchase of New Grand Piano for Clydebank Town Hall

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report asks the Corporate Cultural Sub-Committee to consider funding the purchase of a new Grand Piano and accessories (Appendix 1) for Clydebank Town Hall.

2. Background

- 2.1** At previous meetings of the Corporate Cultural Sub-committee, members have commented on the fact that Clydebank Town Hall, despite the fact that it is a magnificent building, is underused as a venue for concerts and other events. One factor in this under-use is the poor condition of the grand piano located in the Town Hall.
- 2.2** Advice has also been provided to the Sub-committee by the Manager of Legal Services that any spending from the Culture budget on the Town Hall would require to display a clear link to cultural activities.
- 2.3** The purchase of a new grand piano would help to address the issue of the under-utilisation of the Town Hall as an events venue and would have a clear cultural focus.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Over recent years the piano in the Town Hall has become more and more difficult to tune and is now in need of replacing. Concert pianists would be unable to give recitals on the instrument as it does not hold its pitch even when tuned and the cost of hiring a concert grand would offset any revenue generation for concerts. The cultural life of the people of West Dunbartonshire is being disadvantaged because of this.
- 3.2** The purchase of a new piano would increase the potential for the town hall to be used for concerts and other events and would attract the interest of professional musicians.
- 3.3** Officers have looked into the possible options for replacing the piano in the Town Hall and have, with the expert guidance of piano tuner John Burnside, found several pianos which would be suitable for the venue. Details are provided in the appendix to this report.

3.4 It is advisable that the largest of the grand pianos listed in the appendix be purchased. This would be of a suitable standard for any invited visiting pianists giving recitals in Clydebanks Town Hall. The seven foot six grand is considered an excellent concert instrument, a good reliable workhorse, sympathetic to changes of temperature, and good value for money. All prices quoted in the appendix are at a special discount with the current retailers' recommended price alongside and are for an ebony finish. Wooden finishes would incur anything from £300 to £1000 in extra costs and may not be readily available in stock.

3.3 The costs below have been provided by a potentially suitable dealer however, given the costs involved, further tenders would be sought if the Sub-Committee were to approve in principle that a new piano should be purchased.

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial implications

5.1 The financial implications are the cost of purchase as outlined in the appendix, regular tuning (approximately £50) and insurance (cost to be determined). The new instrument would require less tuning as it would not drop pitch as quickly as the current instrument. The instrument would have a 5 year warranty with an onsite visit within a week of any problems being highlighted to the company.

5.2 It is recommended that two concert piano stools be purchased along with a sturdy protective cover for the piano itself. (Appendix 1)

5.3 It is recommended that adequate musical insurance be taken out for this new instrument or that it is itemised on the current council insurance policy.

5.4 Because of the cost of purchase, it is recommended that two other quotations be secured and that the Executive Director of Educational Services be given authority to choose the most advantageous quotation, based on the application of Best Value criteria.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 It is recommended that any individuals using the piano should complete a liabilities contract created by the council against any damage/repairs incurred.

7. Conclusions

7.1 There is an established need for the Council to purchase a new grand piano for use in Clydebanks Town Hall.

7.2 The potential benefits of such a purchase are outlined in section 3 of this report.

7.3 The costs involved are outlined in the appendices to this report.

8. Recommendations

8.1 The Sub-Committee is requested to approve the request for funds from the Culture budget for 2009/10 to purchase a seven foot six Grand piano, two piano stools and heavy duty quilted protection cover.

8.2 The Sub-committee is further requested to delegate to the Executive Director of Educational Services the authority to choose the most advantageous quotation for the purchases, from three to be secured, based on the application of Best Value criteria.

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Appendix: Appendix 1: Costings

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All wards