



## Parish Assembly – 26 February 2014

### Additional funding for the redevelopment of 3 & 5 Conway Street to new public toilets, kiosk and office space

1. Why was the original budget underestimated?

*The original budget that was produced required us to make various assumptions; this was due to the original building being in place, the ground conditions not being fully known and boundary wall problems. Assumptions had to be made by both the Structural Engineer and the Architect. At that early stage Planning and Building Control approval had not been granted, the design was in the early stages.*

2. Why did you not anticipate the conditions?

*It was difficult for anyone to make assumptions with the building in place as a multitude of problems were hidden. We had to try and get as realistic a budget as possible based on the information at hand. We could not demolish the building without first obtaining Planning and Building Control approval.*

3. Why is the build costing so much?

*It is attributed to a number of reasons, such as the poor ground conditions, which has meant more expensive foundations are necessary (piled foundations), more expensive form of construction due to poor ground conditions and the very tight space. The site is very small which makes construction, deliveries and storage very difficult which impacts on costs.*

4. What options did you look at to reduce the build cost?

*We reduced the build cost by revisiting the lighting scheme to see where savings could be made by using alternative suppliers and manufacturers;*

*We looked at the type of doors for the upper floors to ensure that alternative manufacturer's doors could be used. There were other changes that we reconsidered such as finishes;*

*However we want to ensure that the building provided will be fit for purpose and of good quality. We have not compromised on fittings and finishes for the public toilets which need to be of good standard to withstand the high usage/popularity that these toilets will have.*

5. When will the build be completed?

*The contractor is anticipating having the building completed by the end of the year; this is subject to change if we experience inclement weather.*

6. What have you spent the money to date on?

*The money has been spent on the demolition of the existing building, which also involved legal fees associated with the boundary walls, various surveys and specialist ground condition investigations, Architects, Structural Engineers and Mechanical & Engineering Consultant's fees, as well as Planning and Building bye-law applications.*

7. What has been saved and why were these cost savings not identified prior to tender stage?

*We have saved £26,500 off the tender by revisiting the lighting scheme to see where savings could be made by using alternative suppliers and manufacturers;*

*We looked at the type of doors for the upper floors to ensure that alternative manufacturer's doors could be used.*

*There were other changes that we looked at such as finishes; however we want to ensure that the building provided will be fit for purpose and of good quality.*

*These were not identified earlier as we did not know that the project would be over budget, as we do not have access to the buying power that contractors have and we are not building contractors.*

*As the design developed, the specification also developed.*

8. What further work can you do to reduce the cost of the build?

*We have taken a serious look at the building and have cut various items in order to reduce the build cost ensuring that we do not cut down on the quality of the public facilities being provided. We have gone as far as we can with the cuts without having to compromise on critical items such as the quality and finish to the toilets.*

9. Were local contractors used? and why not re-tender for the building work?

*Yes, three local contractors tendered for the project in competition.*

*The Parish approached six contractors with only three contractors being able to tender for the works, the other contractors declined due to the amount of work that they have planned and also due to the difficult site that this development is on.*

*By going out to tender again this would incur additional cost and also delay the start and completion of the project, this would not necessarily guarantee we would get the build cheaper.*

10. Are the Parish being overcharged by the winning contractors?

*We do not believe we are being overcharged as the differences in costs are not considerable. The tenders were reviewed very carefully with the winning contractor being very open with the Parish and Architect to identify savings.*

11. Which contractors tendered for the contract

*We cannot divulge that information at this stage as it is unfair on the contractors as we have not as yet appointed the successful contractor. Of course if the Assembly is minded to approve the additional expenditure the Parish would keep parishioners updated on progress via the Town Crier*

12. How many years will it take for the Parish to recoup its money for the build?

*It is not the intention of the Parish to make a profit from the toilet facility; the previous toilet did not achieve this. The concept is to provide excellent toilet facilities for this very busy section of town.*

*However the Parish are anticipating generating a combined annual income of £16k based on recent valuation by a chartered surveyor for the two floors of offices and kiosk.*

*The Parish will also receive secondary rates income from the rental of the offices and the kiosk.*

*As mentioned in the Project 1.3million people walk through Conway Street. The original toilets were extremely well used and we anticipate this will be the case for these new facilities.*

13. But the Parish were obtaining income when No 5 Conway Street was a café/takeaway facility.

*Yes, you are correct, however if you recall the site before it was demolished, there was various bracings across the site supporting the boundary walls. These braces had failed and the Parish had to erect a scaffold for a considerable amount of time to support the walls and bracing in place, this also meant that there was a risk to the café below. Therefore the Parish had to close the café down due to the potential risk and of course our plan to redevelop the site.*

*The original purpose for purchasing No5 Conway Street was to enable new public toilets to be built on both these sites, it was not to create a commercial building. What has been achieved is that new modern fit for purpose toilets facilities which are going to be modern and pleasant to use will be created. The added bonus is that we have introduced a commercial aspect to the build by the construction of offices on the upper floors and the ground floor kiosk.*

*It is not the intention of the Parish to make a profit from the toilet facility; the previous toilet did not achieve this. The concept is to provide excellent toilet facilities for this very busy section of town.*

14. Where did the 1.3 million people walking through Conway Street come from as stated in the Project?

*This was established by people counters and the figures were provided by the Town Centre Manager. Our Refuse and Street Cleansing Department advised us of the extensive usage level of the toilets that were on this site as being five times as many visits compared to other toilets in town.*

15. What will happen if the Assembly does not approve the additional funding?

*If the Assembly does not approve the additional sum, this will mean going back to the drawing board and redesigning the scheme which will add substantial amount of time and costs for resubmissions to Planning and Building Control as well as the added costs of professional fees. This would require going through the tender stage again. We would probably be adding at least another four to five months delay to completion of the project.*