

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON 8 August 2022 AT 4.00pm

Present: M Barr, A Govier, J Lloyd, M McGuffie and J Thorne
David Farrow – Town Clerk.

Given that the Chairman of the Committee had given apologies the Committee agreed that Councillor A Govier should chair the meeting

193 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors M Lithgow, K Canham and K Wheatley

194 Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

195 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 18 June 2022.

196 Questions and Comments from Members of the Public

No members of the public were in attendance.

197 To Consider a Town Council Media Communications Policy

After reviewing the draft circulated with the agenda the Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend that The Policy is adopted by the Town Council with the suggested drafting amendments made by Councillor Thorne.

198 To Review the Town Councils Publication Scheme

After reviewing the draft circulated with the agenda the Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend that the revised Publication Scheme is adopted by the Town Council.

199 To Review the Town Councils Privacy Notice

After reviewing the draft circulated with the agenda the Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend that the revised Privacy Notice is adopted by the Town Council.

200 Refurbishment of Longforth Road Toilet Block

Having reviewed the report circulated with the agenda it was **RESOLVED** to recommend that the refurbishment proceeds without a Changing Places facility included in the specification, subject to confirmation from The Iron Duke that its facilities were available to the general public without having to buy food/drink from the pub, and that the Clerk should revisit the options for the block and report back at the next meeting of the Committee.

201 Community Review and Plan

Having reviewed the report circulated with the agenda, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend that the Council engages with Community Council for Somerset Smarter Communities Team to undertake a Community Review.

202 Review of Town Council Staffing Structure

Having reviewed the report circulated with the agenda it was **RESOLVED** to commission Local Council Consultancy to undertake a review of the Council staffing requirements and make recommendations in relation to an appropriate staff structure that is fit for the future.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 5.10pm.

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Councillor Andrew Govier
Chairman



WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR USE IN COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE COUNCIL

Adopted by Wellington Town Council

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Wellington Town Council recognises that from time to time there will be concerns expressed by members of the public over the activities of the Council or one of its councillors or employees. This is the Council's procedure for the handling of complaints which allows people to have a form of address to the Council if they feel they have a complaint; or have been unfairly treated in their dealings with the Council staff, Councillors, the Council or its Committees.
- 1.2 The following procedure has been adopted for dealing with complaints about the Council's administration or its procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by the Council will be referred back to the Council, or relevant Committee, as appropriate, for consideration.
- 1.3 This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a Member of the Town Council. Such complaints should be made through the district council, Somerset West and Taunton Council (see para 5 below).

2. Process

- 2.1 The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated officer. If the complaint is only notified orally to a councillor, or to the Town Clerk or other member of staff, a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.
- 2.2 If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Town Clerk or other nominated officer, he or she should be advised to address it to the Mayor as Chair of the Council.
- 2.3 The Town Clerk or other nominated officer shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council or by a committee established for the purposes of hearing the complaint. The complainant should also be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential or whether, for example, notice of it will be given in the usual way (if, for example, the complaint is to be heard by a committee).
- 2.4 The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.

- 2.5 Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

3. The Meeting

- 3.1 The council, or committee established for the purpose of hearing the complaint, shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.
- 3.2 The chairman should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.
- 3.3 The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the Town Clerk or other nominated officer and then (ii) members.
- 3.4 The Town Clerk or other nominated officer will have an opportunity to explain the council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii) members.
- 3.5 The Town Clerk or other nominated officer and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
- 3.6 The Town Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties shall be invited back.
- 3.7 The Town Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the decision, but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

4. After the Meeting

- 4.1 The decision should be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.

5. COMPLAINTS AGAINST A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL

- 5.1 Town Councillors sign up to a Code of Conduct on taking office. A member of the public who wishes to submit a complaint for breach of this Code should do so to the Monitoring Officer at Somerset West and Taunton Council:-

The Monitoring Officer
Somerset West and Taunton Council
Deane House
Taunton
TA1 1HE

Telephone: 0300 304 8000



WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL STAFF GRIEVANCE POLICY

1. Policy Statement

1.1 The Council recognises that individual employees or groups of employees may, from time to time, feel aggrieved about an aspect of their employment and accepts that each employee has the right to raise this grievance and to expect that management will consider it and respond.

1.2 The purpose of the accompanying procedure is to provide a framework for dealing promptly and fairly with such grievances. The aim is to resolve grievances as near as possible to their point of origin.

1.3 Matters appropriately dealt with under the Council's grievance procedure include all questions relating to the individual rights of employees in respect of their employment other than:-

- grievances lodged outside of the time limits set out in the accompanying procedure unless with the agreement of the Town Clerk;
- grievances which have already been considered in accordance with the procedure;
- grievances arising from a disciplinary or capability process in which the employee is already involved and where there is an appeals procedure in place;
- grievances in respect of issues over which the Council has no control e.g. external legislation;
- grievances which are already the subject of a collective grievance or dispute.

1.4 The timescales shown in the accompanying procedure may be altered by mutual agreement.

1.5 The nature and number of grievances raised in accordance with the accompanying procedure will be monitored annually by the Town/Parish Clerk.

1.6 This policy and the accompanying procedure will be the subject of periodic review and will at least be reviewed in the first year following the election of a new Council.

1.7 Responsibility for conducting this review will rest with the Town Clerk.

2. Procedural Guidelines

2.1 Where an employee is aggrieved about any matter relating to their employment they should raise the matter informally with the Town/Parish Clerk as soon as possible and other than in exceptional circumstances within **20 working days** of the incident or event. However employees will be permitted to raise as part of a grievance a series of directly related incidents having a cumulative effect.

2.2 The Town Clerk should consider and seek to resolve the grievance within 10 working days. Whether or not this proves possible the line manager should in every case inform the employee of their decision and, if appropriate, any action taken.

2.3 Employees may wish to seek the advice of a trade union representative or colleague prior to raising a grievance at this informal level.

2.4 If the employee is not satisfied with the result of the informal process, they can take the matter up with the Town Clerk, in writing, stating the nature of the grievance. This should be done within **10 working days**.

2.5 The Town Clerk will arrange a meeting with the employee to discuss the grievance as soon as possible and normally within **10 working days**. If, having listened to the employee's submission the Town Clerk determines that further investigation is required the meeting will be adjourned for a period not to exceed **10 working days** during which time the Town Clerk will conduct any necessary research, including, if appropriate, liaising with other parties.

2.6 It is not expected that other parties would attend the reconvened hearing. However, if it is determined by the Town Clerk that their contributions would facilitate consideration of the grievance, they will be asked to make themselves available, in order that they may respond to any matters raised by the aggrieved individual during the course of the hearing.

2.7 A formal written response to the grievance should be issued within 5 working days of either the initial or subsequent grievance hearing as appropriate.

2.8 If the employee is still aggrieved there is a right of appeal to three members of the Policy and Resources Committee. The notice of appeal should be submitted in writing to the Mayor, as chair of that Committee, within **10 working days** of receipt of the formal written response issued by the Town Clerk. The Appeal Panel shall consider the appeal within **20 working days** of receipt of the written appeal.

2.9 There is no further right of appeal.

2.10 An individual raising a formal grievance may be accompanied throughout the process by a trade union representative or colleague of their choice and reasonable preparation for the hearing will be allowed.

2.11 If the grievance relates directly to the action or omission of the Town Clerk the grievance should be submitted in writing directly to the Mayor who will nominate a councillor to carry out an investigation and respond to the grievance as outlined above.

October 2022

REPORT FOR POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE OCTOBER 2022

Longforth Road Toilets

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to seek the Committees views about how to proceed with the refurbishment of the Longforth Road toilet block following the decision not to include a Changing Places Facility in any refurbishment.

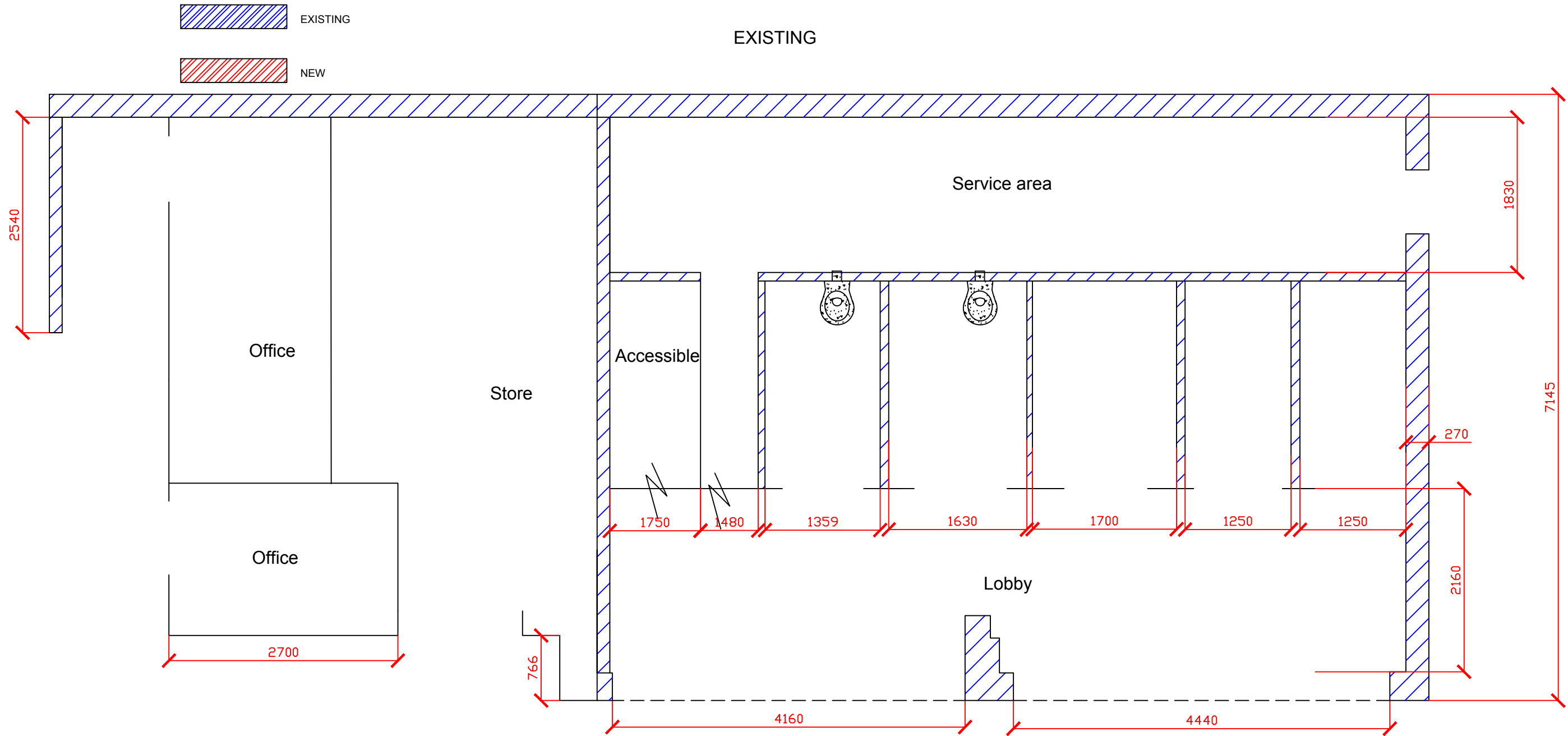
2. Background


- 2.1 The Town Council has previously considered refurbishing the Longforth Road toilet block.
- 2.2 Following the decision of the Town Council not to include a Changing Places facility in any refurbishment the plans for refurbishment have been reviewed.
- 2.3 Councillors had previously indicated a wish to have three cubicles including a disabled facility as shown on the attached plan (Appendix A) The remainder of the block could then be put to other use e.g. retail/office/storage.
- 2.4 Appendix B gives an indication of what the internal view of a refurbished cubicle could be with two different types of door.

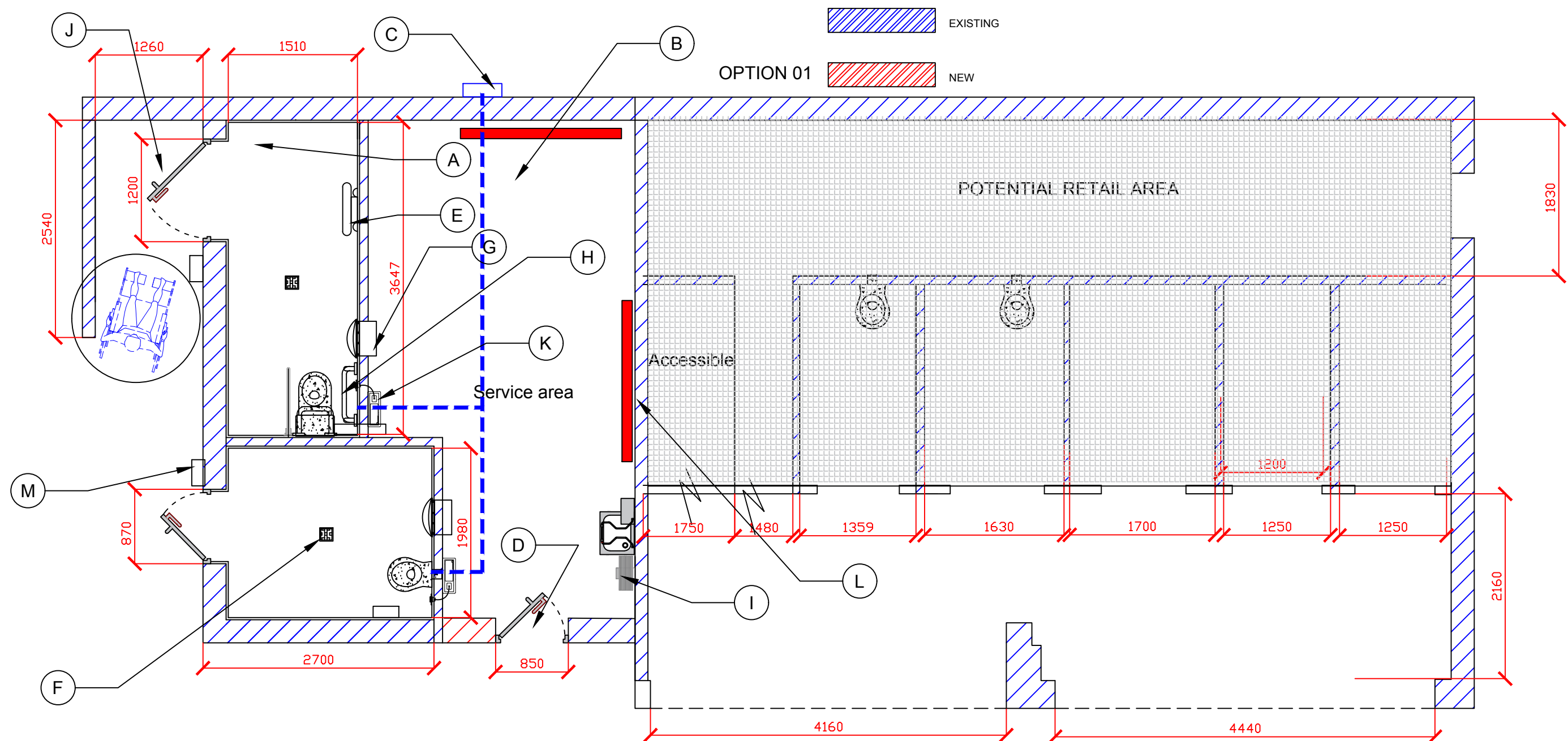
3. Considerations

- 3.1 Revised estimates for refurbishing the existing block have been sought with a suggestion that a budget of £145,000, including a contingency, for the project would be sufficient.
- 3.2 A new three cubicle building would cost c£105,000. There would also be a demolition and clearance/site preparation cost, previously estimated at £10-£15,000. This does not include rebuilding of the redundant end of the building the costs of which are not known at this stage.
- 3.3 To take the project forward it is **RECOMENDED** that the Council commission a specialist contractor to work up detailed proposals and costings for range of options and to then project manage the works to deliver the agreed final design.
- 3.4 It is likely that funding for the project could be drawn from the Councils Community Infrastructure Levy budget.


Dave Farrow
Town Clerk
October 2022

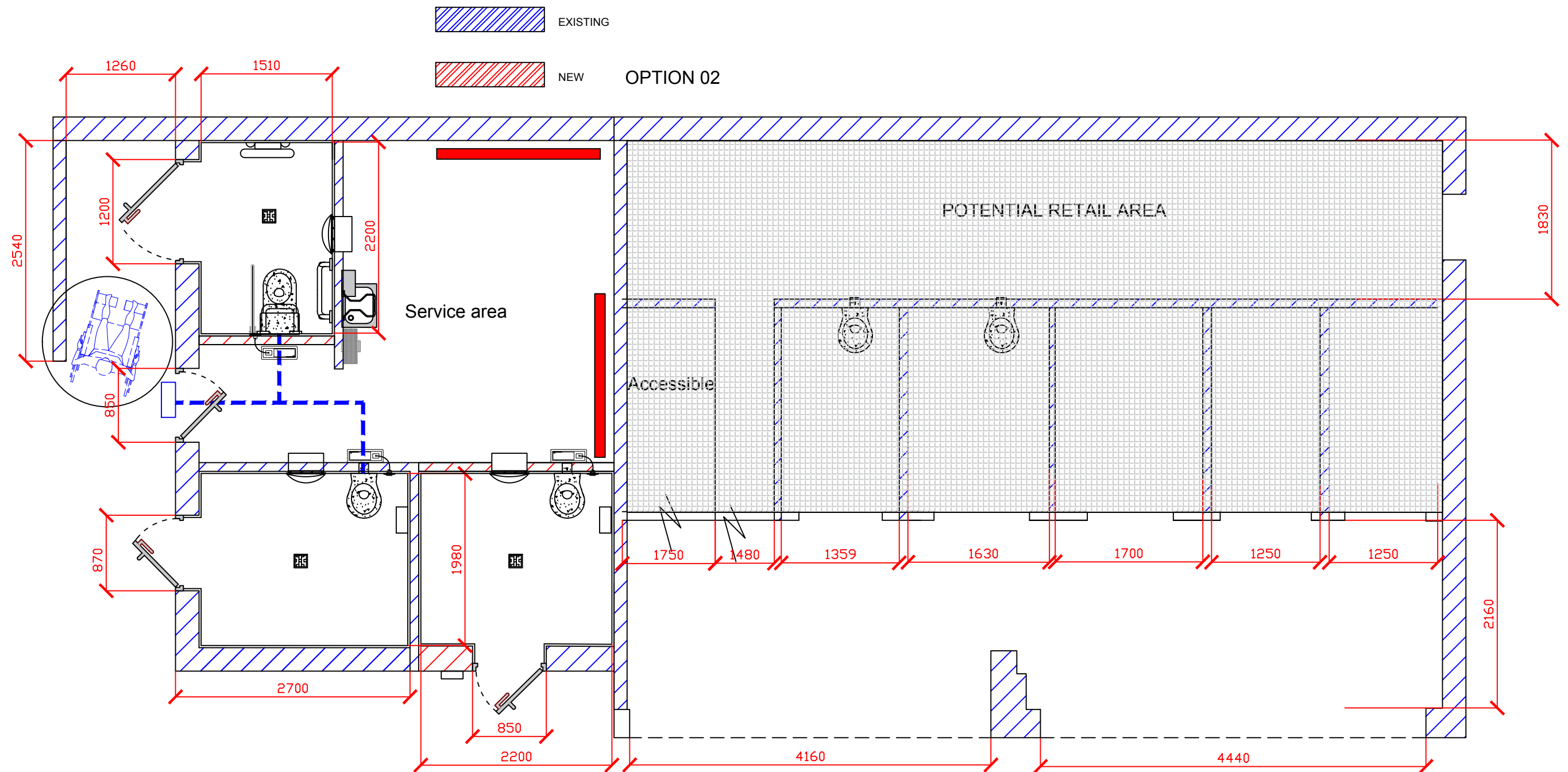



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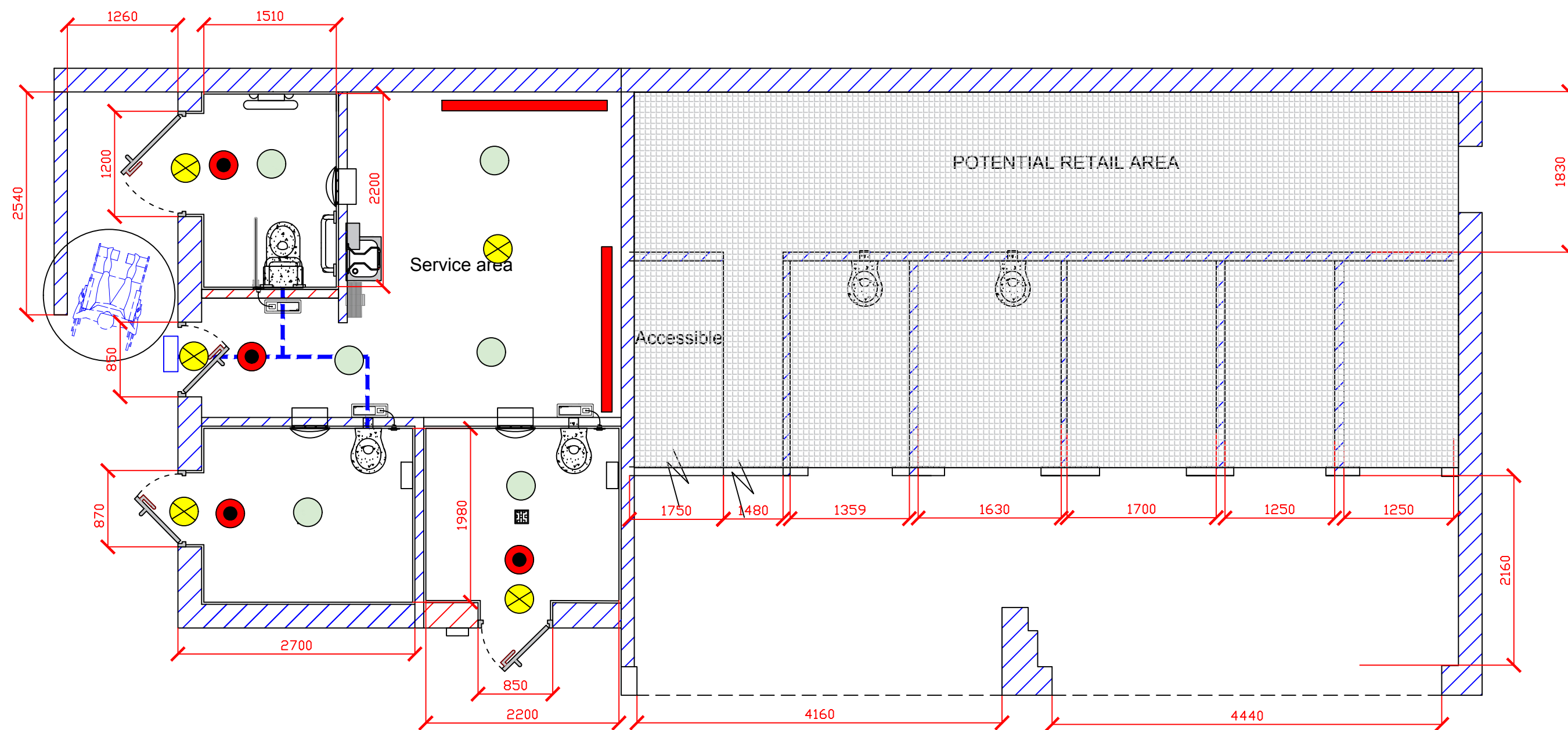


- A Accessible to part M regs.
- B Service area
- C Extract min.6L/sec
- D Service door
- E Baby change
- F Floor gully
- G Handwash/dryer
- H Doc M pack
- I Washdown
- J Accessible door
- K Wave-on flush system
- L Tube htr. frost protection service
- M Coinpay and/or contactless entry

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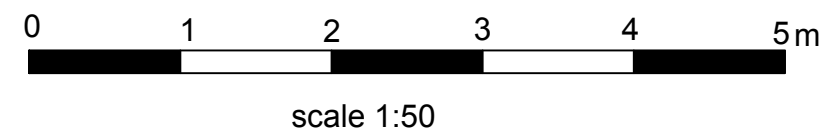
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EMERGENCY LIGHTS

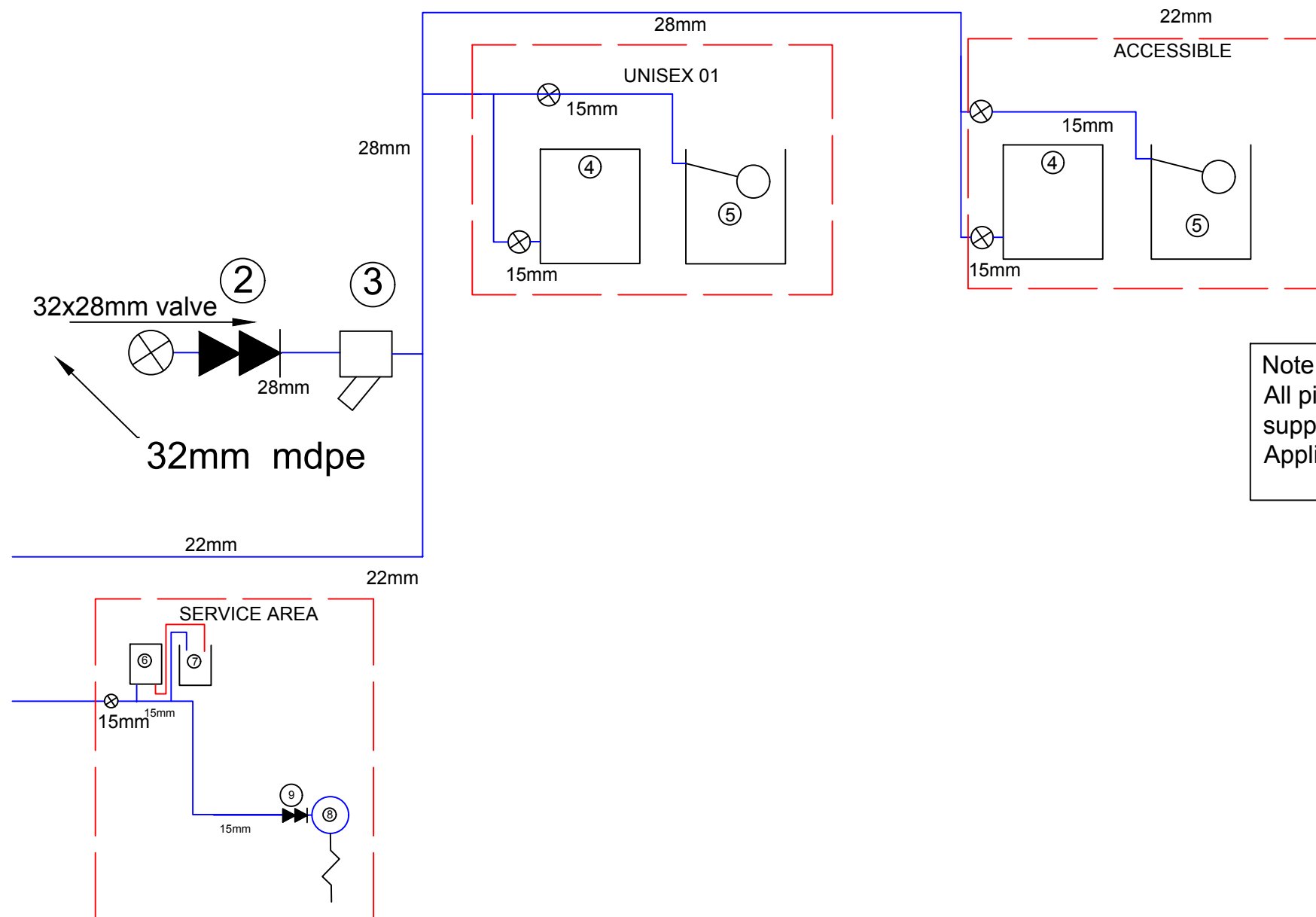
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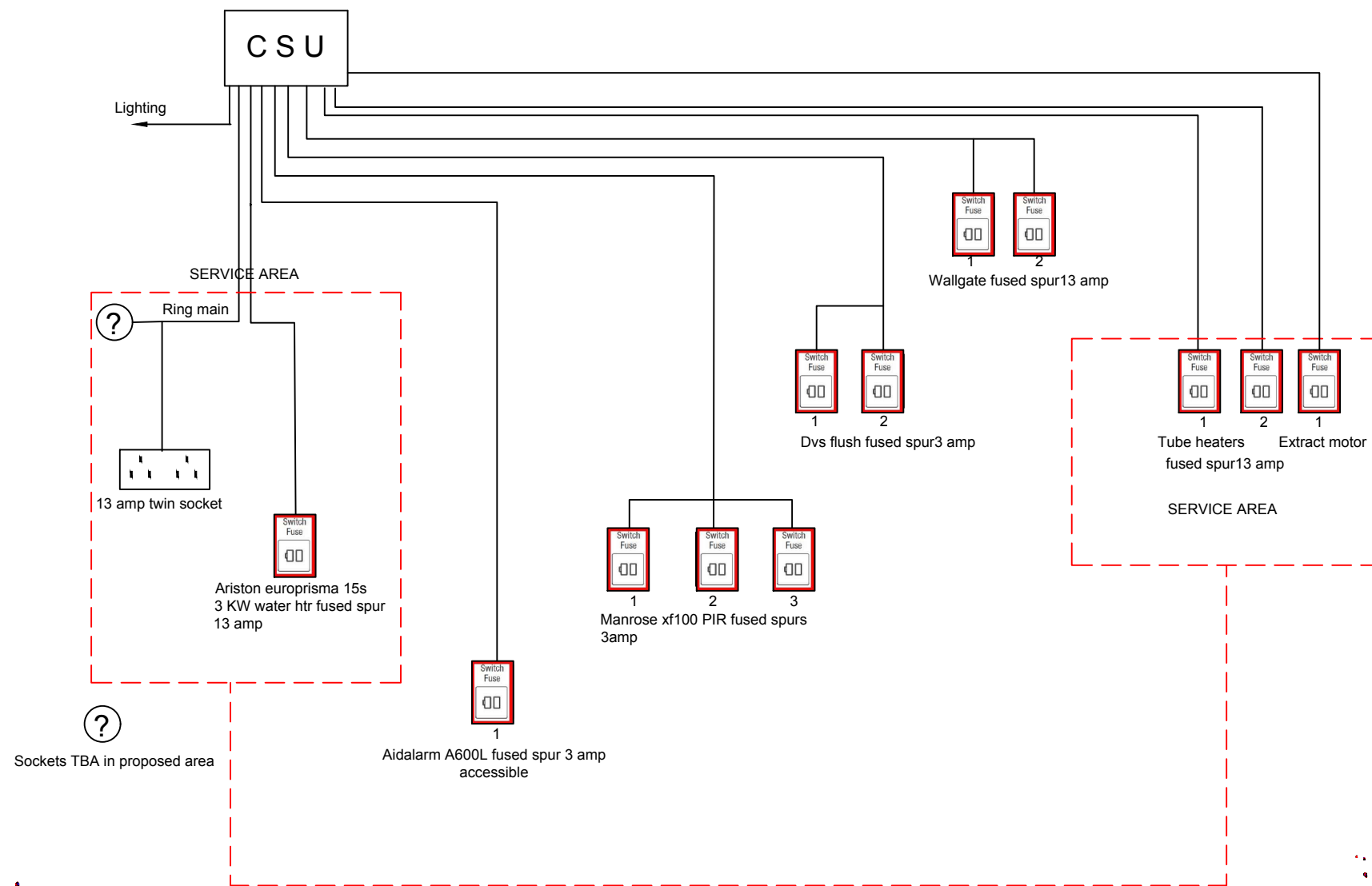
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- 2 Double check valve
- 3 Drain cock
- 4 Wallgate thrii handwash
- 5 Toilet cistern dvs flush
- 6 Ariston europisma 15 s 3kw
- 7 Cleaners sink
- 8 Hoselock compact reel
- 9 double check valve
- ⊗ Isolation valves



Note.
All pipework/fittings WRAS approved and installed water supply (water fittings) regulations 1999, Appliances and Dart Valley cistern flush WRAS approved

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REPORT FOR POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING OCTOBER 2022

Proposal To Purchase Council Tablets for Councillors

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to recommend that the Council seek agreement of Councillors that papers are circulated electronically and that to facilitate this, the Town Council purchases tablets to allow councillors to access documents online.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Committee recommends that the Town Council resolves to, where it has councillor consent, circulate all papers for council meetings electronically and that it purchases tablets to facilitate this at an estimated cost of £2,850 plus VAT. This is to enable councillors to access meeting documentation on the basis set out in this paper.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Town Council is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and reducing costs to ensure that public money is used appropriately.
- 3.2 The number of documents supporting Council meetings has increased significantly over the last year and is unlikely to reduce in the future as the documents enable councillors to make informed and effective decisions.
- 3.3 An analysis of cost of printing and posting Council documents estimates that the Council spend £3,427.56¹ on paper and postage. In addition to that, there is staff time involved in photocopying, putting papers in envelopes and posting them which usually equates to one full day for a minimum of one member of Staff.
- 3.4 As well as the financial cost of producing council papers in this way there is also the environmental costs of using paper and electricity to produce hard copies.
- 3.5 Both the District and County Councils have in the last few years moved away from producing paper documents and now all their meeting papers are online with councillors being provided with laptops/tablets to enable them to access them.

¹ Calculation based on numbers for September Committee and October Full Council papers which were of an average size (x12 to calculate yearly cost)

- 3.6 We cannot however just move from using paper copies to electronic copies of documents. The default legal position is that papers should be delivered by post unless the member has given their consent to receive them electronically².
- 3.7 An initial informal survey of Councillors resulted in the vast majority of councillors indicating that, if asked formally, they would give their consent to receiving documents electronically.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 That the Council move as quickly as possible to a position where, for those councillors that give consent, meeting documents are produced electronically and held in a SharePoint folder for them to access before and during meetings. We would also use the screen and projector at meetings to display a summary of the agenda and supporting documents.
- 4.2 That to facilitate this the Council purchase reconditioned iPads for those councillors who have indicated they will give consent to working in this way at a cost of approximately £2,850 plus VAT which is less than we are currently paying a year for printing and postage. We have a budget line of £2,500 for the purchase of tablets for councillors in this year's budget. The balance will be drawn down from reserves.
- 4.3 Tablets would be set up securely using Councillor's Microsoft 365 accounts and individuals would need to sign an undertaking in relation to appropriate use of the tablet and keeping it secure with the sanction of inappropriate use being withdrawal of the tablet. Councillors will also give an undertaking to return the tablet to the Council should they cease to be a councillor.
- 4.4 Tablets would be included on the Council's insurance and covered for loss or accidental damage.
- 4.5 For those Councillors who don't give consent, paper copies will continue to be provided.

Dave Farrow
Town Clerk

October 2022

² Local Government Act 1972 Sch12, para 10(2)(b) as amended by the Local Government (Electronic Communications (England) Order 2015 (SI 2015/5)) and para 26(2)(b)

REPORT FOR POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE OCTOBER 2022**Proposal to Establish 'Contribution to the Community Prizes' for Court Fields School****1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to make a proposal to establish a 'Contribution to the Community' Prize to be awarded annually to a student in each year group at Court Fields School.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Town Council sponsor a prize for at least one student from each year group at Court Fields School who has made a significant contribution to an aspect of community life in Wellington over the preceding academic year. The prizes to be awarded at the school's annual presentation evenings and the Town Clerk is given authority to purchase the trophies up to a maximum spend of £50 per year.

3. Background

- 3.1 One of the Priorities in the Council's Vision is for the town to be *'an inclusive, safe and secure town where everybody is supportive of each other and offers particular care for the more vulnerable members of our community'*.
- 3.2 One of the actions identified though which we will deliver this is by *'working with schools to encourage children and young people to have pride in their town and engage in making it a better place'*.
- 3.3 Whilst primary schools have The Civic Award project to work with, should they choose to do so, there is nothing similar that encourages Court Fields School students to engage with improving the community.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 At the end of each academic year the school holds Presentation Evenings for each year group where students are rewarded for academic and other achievements.
- 4.2 The proposal is that the Town Council sponsor an award that is used to recognise a student, or students, in each year group at the school 'who have made a significant contribution to an aspect of community life in Wellington over the preceding academic year'. The students receiving the award will be selected by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Head teacher following recommendations from the school.
- 4.3 As the award sponsor, the Town Council will provide a trophy/trophies for each year group – a minimum of five trophies per year. The annual cost of providing the trophies, assuming one per year group, should not exceed £50 with the cost to come from the Community Services and Priorities budget line.

Dave Farrow
Town Clerk
October 2022

