

REPLACEMENT OF BOURNE HALL AUDIO EQUIPMENT

<u>Report of the:</u>	Head of Venues and Facilities
<u>Contact:</u>	Andrew Lunt
<u>Urgent Decision?(yes/no)</u>	no
<u>If yes, reason urgent decision required:</u>	
<u>Annexes/Appendices (attached):</u>	Annexe 1: List of hirers requiring the use of audio visual equipment (This Annexe is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of part 1 and paragraph 10 of part 2 schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended))
<u>Other available papers (not attached):</u>	Bourne Hall Main Hall Re-instatement Report, Leisure Committee June 2014.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report summarises the significant issues and failings of the current audio visual provision at Bourne Hall and outlines a proposal for improvement.

RECOMMENDATION (S)

That the Committee support the improvement work to the audio visual equipment at Bourne Hall and authorises the release of £16,687 from the repairs and renewals fund.

Notes

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 The use of the Main Hall and Banqueting Suite of Bourne Hall by community groups and businesses contribute to the Council's Key Priority of "Supporting our Community"
- 1.2 Should the proposed improvement work not be carried out, the number of community groups using Bourne Hall is likely to decrease.

2 Background

- 2.1 Bourne Hall has a sound system in the Main Hall and the Banqueting Suite. This system was installed over ten years ago and is no longer fit for purpose. Many of our regular hirers are experiencing constant audio related issues during their bookings and the manager is regularly fielding

complaints from both hirers and staff. Income derived from hirers who also use the audio visual equipment is circa £85,000 and is detailed in **Restricted Annexe 1** to this report (**please note: this Annexe is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of part 1 and paragraph 10 of part 2 schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)**).

- 2.2 The speakers at the venue are of a very basic specification and are unable to deal with large outputs of sound which is a requirement of many of our current hirers.
- 2.3 The sound output is distorted; this is a frequent complaint from hirers using both rooms.
- 2.4 The sound system interferes with the hearing loop system in the banqueting suite, users wearing hearing aids regularly report humming and hissing from their hearing aids. A number of hirers regularly complain about the sound quality hearing aid users are experiencing during their events.
- 2.5 The sound systems in both the Main Hall and Banqueting Suite are also inter-linked. This means that if there is a problem with the sound in one of the rooms, the whole system is affected.
- 2.6 On numerous occasions, officers have set up and checked the equipment prior to an event. During the event, the system has stopped working. This causes disruption to the hirer during their booking and officer's time is taken up trying to resolve the issue, meaning they are unable to meet other demands required of them.
- 2.7 The numerous difficulties Bourne Hall has experienced with the sound system means that customers and staff no longer have confidence with the system. Venues staff are not qualified technicians and their ability to troubleshoot problems is limited. In most cases, there is no solution; this leaves hirers with a negative opinion of the venue.
- 2.8 In order to protect the above income it is proposed to upgrade the current Audio Visual equipment and this work will entail the following:
 - 2.8.1 The sound system needs to be split into two independent units. One unit to service the Banqueting Suite; controls to be accessible from the upper bar, the other unit to service the Main Hall. By making the systems independent of each other means that should an issue arise with one part of the system, it will not affect the other room.
 - 2.8.2 All wiring needs to be updated as the current wiring has deteriorated over time.
 - 2.8.3 Professional wireless microphone systems need to be installed within the Banqueting Suite and Main Hall, the receivers will have a unique channel which will avoid interference. This will also save officers a lot of set up time which will enable them to be able to

undertake other duties.

- 2.9 Giving hirers the ability to be able to play sound through the sound system using their own device and be satisfied with the quality of audio output will improve our current hirers' experiences at the venue and will assist officers to attract new hirers. This is a requirement for many customers wishing to be able to provide their own music for weddings and parties.
- 2.10 The speakers need to be upgraded as they are currently unable to handle the sound requirements many of our hirers require.
- 2.11 With proposed changes to the catering provision at Bourne Hall, we will have the ability to be able to bring in more hirers which will result in more income for the venue. Having a fit for purpose sound system will enable officers to retain our current hirers and attract new business.
- 2.12 After receiving three quotations the above necessary work is estimated to cost £16,900.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 In order to prevent hirers from leaving Bourne Hall and the resulting increase in subsidy it is proposed to carry out a much need upgrade to the audio visual equipment.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 In order to facilitate the improvements to the audio visual equipment £16,687 will need to be released from the repairs and renewals reserve. This money can be made available due to an underspend that occurred on the Bourne Hall main hall refurbishment project. During the specification process of the main hall project it was identified that the audio visual equipment would need to be replaced, however this element of work was not carried forward to ensure that project did not go over budget.
- 4.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** There is a balance of £16,687 currently on the repairs and renewals reserve that could be used to fund these works, subject to approval by S&R Committee. Any cost above this would need to be funded from revenue budgets.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** *There are no legal implications arising from this report – it is important that any purchase is undertaken in accordance with contract standing orders.*

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 There are no identified sustainability and community safety implications

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 Bourne Hall is a well used facility utilised by a large number of community groups. A significant number of these groups rely on the availability of an efficient and working audio visual provision in the building.
- 7.2 Should this work not be carried out relationships with these groups will be detrimentally affected.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 If the sound system is not upgraded and we continue to experience high levels of breakdown, it is likely that our hirers will leave and seek alternative venues. This will result in the building subsidy increasing.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 That the strategy and Resources Committee support the upgrade of the audio visual equipment at Bourne Hall and authorise the use of £16,900 from the repairs and renewals fund for this work.

WARD(S) AFFECTED: (All Wards);