
ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

**Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area
Committee**

Customer Services

14 March 2018

Civic Furniture - Oban

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The council has agreed a protocol for dealing with items of furniture and memorabilia following building refurbishments and/or office rationalisations and which are deemed to be of historical or local significance. As a result of office rationalisation in Oban a number of items were identified to be dealt with in accordance with this protocol. Following the decision by the Area Committee in October 2016, this report updates Members on the outcome of the public advert and asks for agreement on a way forward.

Civic Furniture - Oban

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 As a result of office rationalisation in Oban, a number of items have been in storage which should now be dealt with in accordance with the Council's protocol relating to civic furniture and memorabilia. This report asks Members of the Area Committee to determine the future of the items identified in line with the protocol which has been agreed for dealing with such items.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Area Committee is asked to agree:-
- (1) That officers obtain valuations for the furniture and proceed with a public sale of the furniture to be held in Oban and advertised widely;
 - (2) That any furniture that remains unsold will be put to auction, and
 - (3) The proceeds from the sale of the furniture is transferred to the Oban Common Good Fund.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 The Policy and Resources Committee at the meeting held on 17 March 2016 agreed a protocol for dealing with furniture and memorabilia following building refurbishments and/or office rationalisations. A copy of the protocol is attached at Appendix 1.

4.2 Municipal Buildings, Oban

- 4.2.1 Items of furniture from this building have been in storage locally, having been removed from the building at the time of its refurbishment. Since this time, the items have been stored within other Council-owned buildings or in commercial storage. The following items have been identified in terms of the Protocol as falling into category (a) furniture of historical or local significance:-

1 large desk in three sections, noted as having dents and scratches apparent;

6 wood and leather carver chairs (Photograph Appendix 2); and

23 wood and leather chairs (Photograph Appendix 3), with some damage noted.

4.2.2 It should be noted that the desk and all chairs have required treatment for woodworm.

4.2.3 At the Area Committee meeting held on 12 October 2016, Members agreed the following:-

The Committee agreed to offer items free to a local community group having first sought expressions of interest by notice on the Council website, and failing that, to offer the items for sale locally.

4.2.4 In line with this decision, an advert was placed on the Council website and a press release was issued to the Oban Times seeking expressions of interest from local community groups for the furniture. Following this, one expression of interest was received from the local Dog Fouling Group who advised that they hold meetings in their chairperson's house and could utilise some of the chairs at these meetings. It is not considered that this request meets the criteria outlined in the protocol. In line with the decision of October 2016, officers will now proceed with a public sale of the furniture.

4.2.5 There have been similar reports submitted to both the MAKI and the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committees where civic furniture has become surplus to requirement. In both of these areas, the Area Committee Manager organised a public sale of the furniture which was advertised locally and on the Council website. A valuation on the furniture was obtained and this was used as a guide price in terms of the sales. The proceeds from the sale of the furniture in Campbeltown is to be transferred to the Campbeltown Common Good Fund, with the proceeds from the Helensburgh sale being used to facilitate the display of civic memorabilia in the Helensburgh and Lomond Civic Centre.

4.2.6 The furniture sales have to date generated £1710 in total. Furniture that remained unsold has now been transferred to Glasgow and will be going to public auction on Friday 16 March 2018.

4.2.7 It is suggested that Members agree that officers should progress a similar arrangement to that which has taken place in MAKI and Helensburgh and Lomond, with a valuation being obtained for the furniture and a sale organised in Oban which would be widely advertised. Any furniture which remains unsold would thereafter be taken to auction with the proceeds from the sales being transferred to the Oban Common Good Fund.

4.2.8 The furniture remains in commercial storage at a cost to the Council.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Council has agreed a protocol for dealing with furniture and memorabilia which have been identified during office rationalisations. Following the decision

of the Area Committee in October 2016 and the outcome of the agreed process, it is now appropriate for Members to agree the terms of the proposed public sale and how the money from the sale is allocated.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy - none
- 6.2 Financial – the furniture is currently in commercial storage at a cost to the Council.
- 6.3 Legal – none
- 6.4 HR - none
- 6.5 Equalities - none
- 6.6 Risk – disposal of items of local or historical significance may result in damage to reputational or financial assets.
- 6.7 Customer Service - none

Executive Director of Customer Services

Policy Lead Councillor Rory Colville

February 2018

For further information contact: Shona Barton, Area Committee Manager

Tel: (01436) 657605

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Protocol for Civic Furniture and Memorabilia management

Appendix 2 – Photo of carver chair

Appendix 3 – Photo of chair

Furniture and Memorabilia Protocol

- (1) When a building is to be disposed of (a) any furniture of historical or local significance will be identified, as will (b) any art work or other civic items.
- (2) The building user as at the date of departure, together with nominated officers from Community and Culture and Governance and Law, will detail the items specified at (a) and (b) above and will determine if any item may have a significant value. Any such item will only be disposed of after consideration by the relevant Area Committee and referral to Policy and Resources for final determination.
- (3) All other items in category (a) will then be considered by the relevant Area Committee to establish:
 - If the items should be stored for future use by the Council
 - If the items should be offered for sale locally
 - If the items should be offered free to a local community group, having first sought expressions of interest by notice on the Council website, either on loan or as a disposal
 - If the items should be released for recycling
- (4) All other items in category (b) will be considered by the relevant Area Committee, which shall receive the views of the Provost prior to their consideration of the matter, and who may determine:-
 - If the items should be stored for future use by the Council
 - If the items should be offered for sale locally
 - If the items should be offered free to a local community group, having first sought expressions of interest by notice on the Council website, either on loan or as a disposal
 - If the items should be given into the custody of the Archivist or the museum service, or leant to a Private Archive
 - If the items should be released for recycling
- (5) If there is any dispute as to whether an item is of significant value the matter will be determined by the Executive Director of Customer Services after such inquiry as he determines reasonable.
- (6) In reaching a determination on such matters the Area Committee will have regard to the local interest in any items and will be guided by the principle of the strength of local connection and identity with any of the items as may be ascertained by the Committee.