

**DECISION MAKER:** PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PLACE  
**SUBJECT:** ST LAWRENCE CHURCH - MAIN  
CONTRACTOR  
**PORTFOLIO HOLDER:** COUNCILLOR NEIL MACDONALD  
**SENIOR OFFICER:** TOMASZ KOZLOWSKI

***Short description of report content and the decision requested:***

This report details the procurement of a main contractor to undertake the required external stone repair and scaffolding works at St Lawrence Church and seeks the Portfolio Holder for Place authority to approve the appointment of the contractor (CM1) identified in exempt Appendix 1.

***List of Appendices included in this report:***

*Exempt Appendix 1 – Tender evaluation of price and technical requirements*

*This report has been prepared by Tomasz Kozlowski*

*Email: [tomasz.kozlowski@ipswich.gov.uk](mailto:tomasz.kozlowski@ipswich.gov.uk)*

***This report was prepared after consultation with:***

*Internal consultees*

*Corporate Management Team*

*Senior Conservation and Urban Design Officer*

***The following policies form a context to this report:***

*(all relevant policies must also be referred to in the body of the report)*

*Proud of Ipswich*

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW**

*(papers relied on to write the report but which are not published and do not contain exempt information)*

None

**OTHER HELPFUL PAPERS**

*(papers which the report author considers might be helpful – this might include published material)*

None

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## **1. Executive Summary**

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- 1.1 Ipswich Borough Council is the owner of three redundant churches (St Lawrence, St Peters and St Clements), which are leased to and operated by the Ipswich Historic Churches Trust (IHCT).
- 1.2 A significant amount of work has been identified as needing to be carried out to preserve the structure of the churches and the safety of the public.
- 1.3 During recent quinquennial surveys, it was identified that St Lawrence Church required work to be carried out to the stonework from the church tower. Protection scaffold has been installed to maintain the safety of the public.
- 1.4 Following an open tender process three bids were received to carry out the required repair works to the stonework and windows. Subject to the approval of the contractor identified in this report, works would be expected to start during March 2025, with completion anticipated by the end of October 2025.
- 1.5 This report recommends to the Portfolio Holder the appointment of the contractor identified in Exempt Appendix 1 to deliver the required repair works to St Lawrence Church and seeks approval to award the contract.

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## **2. Background**

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- 2.1 The Council is the owner of three redundant churches (St Lawrence, St Peters and St Clements) and in 1980 these churches were leased to the IHCT on a 99 year term. The IHCT was set up to ensure preservation and maintenance, for the public benefit, of the redundant churches of any denomination in the Borough, which are of historical and/or architectural value. The Trust is also responsible for seeking alternative uses for the churches by finding operators and establishing and maintaining lease agreements.
- 2.2 At present the uses for the churches are as a café (St Lawrence) and an arts exhibition gallery (St Peters). At present St Clements is used as an ad-hoc exhibition gallery.
- 2.3 The Council provides funding, by grant applications, to the IHCT for the ongoing maintenance of these churches. There is also an allocated one off capital budget of £429,000 (inc. professional fees and all surveys), to deal with the backlog of repairs to these churches, for which the IHCT have not been able to raise sufficient funding.
- 2.4 In 2018, a set of quinquennial inspections were carried out on behalf of the IHCT which identified approx. £770k worth of repairs, of which £480k was deemed as Priority A/B works (i.e. needing urgent attention). Following a request from the IHCT via Councillors for funding to carry out these works the Council allocated £350k towards the works being carried out.

- 2.5 In 2023 following an open tender process the Council appointed Nicholas Jacob Architects (NJA) to undertake architectural services and contract administration across the 3 churches. ProQS was also appointed to provide quantity surveying services. From December 2023 to January 2024 NJA undertook renewed quinquennial inspections of the three churches which identified the priority A/B works required.
- 2.6 Whilst undertaking the inspections of St Lawrence Church in December 2023, it was noted certain areas of the church tower stonework was bulging and at risk of falling on to the public below. In consultation with the Council's Building Control Team, it was decided a fan protection scaffold was required to ensure the safety of the public. This was subsequently installed and is to remain in place until the repair works commence. The costs for this are being funded by the project adding further pressure to an already tight budget.
- 2.7 Due to the large scope of works required to St Lawrence Church, it took NJA until June 2024, to have a set of specifications and drawings ready for costing. These were costed by ProQS and the estimate for the works to St Lawrence Church came in at £280k.
- 2.8 The Council invited tenders from suitable contractors to deliver the stone repairs and scaffolding requirements at St Lawrence Church. The proposed works comprise of:
- a. repair works to exterior masonry of the tower.
  - b. tower window repairs.
  - c. masonry repairs to the chancel north east buttress.
  - d. masonry repairs to the chancel south elevation.
  - e. scaffolding and access for the above works.
- 2.9 Detailed specifications for the schedule of works and construction drawings were issued to tendering contractors along with relevant surveys, site information and other specific requests relating to experience, qualifications, proposed project team etc. Submissions were required to cover matters such as:
- Relevant experience and knowledge
  - Risk management
  - Proposed project team and supply chain
  - Draft programme of works
  - Climate change and environmental
- 2.10 The open tender for the works was advertised on the Suffolk Sourcing E-Tendering portal to main contractors.
- 2.11 Three bids were received, the details of which are provided in Exempt Appendix 1.

- 2.12 The three bid submissions were evaluated by Major Capital Schemes, Procurement, NJA and ProQS. The Procurement Team has checked the suppliers to ensure they are financially stable.

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### **3. Relevant Policies**

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- 3.1 The works to St Lawrence Church contributes to the Corporate Strategy priorities of:
- Priority 1 - A thriving Town Centre
- 3.2 The proposed works will ensure that the St Lawrence Church is preserved as a key building in the town centre and continues to operate and provide the café services it already provides.

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### **4. Options Considered / Under Consideration**

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- 4.1 **Option 1:** To agree that the appointment of a main contractor should be made as described in this report, to enable the required works to be undertaken.
- 4.2 This is the recommended option as this work is integral to protecting and improving the long-term sustainability of the Church by providing a safe structure for the Church to continue being occupied. It is specialist work that cannot be conducted by an in-house team.
- 4.3 **Option 2:** To not agree that the appointment of a main contractor should be made.
- 4.4 This option is not recommended as the building currently poses a health and safety risk to the public and delay in the works taking place could mean further costs and more works being required in the future.

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### **5. Consultations**

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- 5.1 Internal consultations have taken place with the Procurement, Legal and Finance Teams.
- 5.2 Consultations with the Council's conservation team have taken place throughout the design process, a Listed Building Consent application was made in November 2024, with consent granted in December 2024.
- 5.3 Trustees of the IHCT have also been consulted throughout the project via monthly progress meetings with the Major Capital Schemes Team.

## 6. Risk Management

| <b>Risk Description</b>  | <b>Consequence of risk</b>        | <b>Risk Controls</b>   | <b>Probability of risk occurring taking account of controls (scale 1-6)<br/>1 – almost impossible<br/>6 – very high</b> | <b>Impact of risk if it occurred, taking account of actions (scale 1 – negligible; 4 – catastrophic)</b> | <b>Actions to mitigate risk</b>  |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Increased costs due to inflation and material shortages                    | Increase in project cost          | Developed design to enable fix cost to be agreed                                 | 4   | 3  | Ensure negotiations with contractor prior to appointment are robust to identify elements of the project where costs are likely to increase |
| Contractor enters liquidation during project                               | Increase in project cost          | Financial checks undertaken  | 2   | 3  | Ensure robust financial checks are carried out before contract award and prompt payment to contractor at all times.                        |
| Contracts overspend due to unforeseen circumstances.                       | Increase in project costs         | Monitor contract closely   | 3   | 3  | Contract continuously monitored by Contract Administrator, QS and PM   |
| Nature of church when works commence - unforeseen issues arise             | Increase in project costs.        | Ensure appropriate levels of contingency are included within the budget build up | 4   | 2  | Monitor contract expenditure closely and employ suitably qualified contractors.  |
| Injury to working operatives and/or members of the public passing the site | Harm to reputation of the Council | Ensure works are planned carefully   | 2   | 3  | Construction Phase Plans to be submitted in time to allow for approval at least five days prior to works commencing on site.               |

|  |   |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| Delays incurred during the delivery phase  | Poor customer experience for café users due to unfinished works | Ensure works are planned carefully with ongoing monitoring of progress | 3 | 3 | Liquidated and Ascertained Damages (LADs) will be allowed for in the Contractors pricing of the tender. LADs will be paid by the Contractor if the Contractor is at fault and causing a delay in the progression of the Works |
| Delays incurred due to a pandemic or other non-construction related event that halts construction progress | Poor customer experience for café users due to unfinished works | Ensure works are planned carefully with ongoing monitoring of progress | 3 | 3 | Ensure that project planning ensures the risk is minimised at every stage of the delivery phase   |

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## 7. Environment and Climate Change

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- 7.1 The Council has declared a climate change emergency and has resolved to start working towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030. All Council decisions should consider and respond to the potential impact that they will have on the climate and wider environment.
- 7.2 Whilst outside of the Council carbon footprint calculations, and further to the environmental questions posed during the tender process the contractor procured will assist the Council in reducing its carbon footprint by implementing energy saving throughout its management of the works.
- 7.3 The design process for the works required that minimal carbon intensive materials are specified where possible and that the whole life carbon cost of the specification is considered from the outset.
- 7.4 The process of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in the context of town and country planning in England is governed by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the '2017 Regulations'). These regulations apply to development which is given planning permission under Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The aim of Environmental Impact Assessment is to protect the environment by ensuring that a local planning authority when deciding whether to grant planning permission for a project, which is likely to have significant effects on the environment, does so in the full knowledge of the

likely significant effects, and takes this into account in the decision-making process. Direct and indirect environmental impacts should be identified and quantified. Where these are negative, actions to mitigate these impacts should be identified. Examples include impacts on land, water, air, noise, odour, biodiversity, energy, procurement, use of resources, climate change, etc. Whole life costing is an appropriate tool to use in assessments. Due to the location, size and nature of this project an EIA is not required.

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## **8. Equalities, Diversity and Community Implications**

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- 8.1 Under the general equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimization, as well as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 8.2 The protected grounds covered by the equality duty are age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. The equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination.
- 8.3 The law requires that there is due regard in respect of demonstrating such matters, within its decision-making process. Assessing the potential impact on equality of proposed changes to policies, procedures and practices are ways by which public authorities can effectively demonstrate that they have had due regard to the aforementioned.
- 8.4 An equalities screening assessment has been carried out and has found that there are no negative equality or diversity implications as a result of the proposals in this report.

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## **9. Crime and Disorder Impact**

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- 9.1 Any potential crime and public disorder will be managed by the main contractor. All situations will be managed responsibly to ensure health and safety to all operatives and the public remain a priority.
- 9.2 There is no crime and disorder impact from the procurement of the main contractor.

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## **10. Financial Considerations**

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- 10.1 Budget provision has been identified for this project within the MTFP. With £429,000 being allocated from 2022/23 through to 2026/27 financial years.
- 10.2 The below table outlines the current spend (up to December 2025) and forecasted spend on the project.

|                  | <b>2023-24</b>    | <b>2024-25</b>    | <b>2025-26</b>     | <b>2026-27</b>    | <b>TOTAL</b>       |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Consultant Fees  | £7,280.00         | £13,341.48        | £14,165.87         | £2,235.78         | £37,023.13         |
| Main Contractor  |                   |                   | £266,223.41        | £14,011.75        | £280,235.16        |
| Temp Scaffolding | £8,617.48         | £28,899.57        |                    |                   | £37,517.05         |
| Surveys & Misc   |                   | £21,047.50        |                    |                   | £21,047.50         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>£15,897.48</b> | <b>£63,288.55</b> | <b>£280,389.28</b> | <b>£16,247.50</b> | <b>£375,822.81</b> |

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## **11. Legal Considerations**

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- 11.1 The Tender processes complied with the Council's Contract Standing Orders and UK Procurement Legislation.
- 11.2 Following the decision on the award of the contract, the Council will notify all unsuccessful tenderers of the identity of the successful contractor, the scores it achieved and the characteristics and relative advantages of the successful tender. A standstill period of ten days will then be allowed before entering into the contract.

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## **12. Performance Monitoring**

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- 12.1 Major Capital Schemes, through an appointed project manager, will monitor the work to ensure it is completed in accordance with the specification and contract, on time and to budget. The Council's expectations will be clearly communicated to the contractor at the beginning of the contract. Throughout the contract, the project team will monitor the quality of the works and materials used.
- 12.2 Officers within the Major Capital Schemes team will manage the overall expenditure of the contract and monitor overall costs and progress. Monthly team meetings will be held to ensure that the contractors works progresses in accordance with the Council's requirements.

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## **13. Conclusions**

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- 13.1 St Lawrence church is in need of repair work to its tower.
- 13.2 It is considered that the tender submitted by the contractor listed as CM1 in the summary sheet in Exempt Appendix 1 to be, following the tender evaluation process, the most economically advantageous bid for the works to St Lawrence Church.



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## **14. Recommendations**

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- 14.1 That the Portfolio Holder for Place authorises the Assistant Director of Place, in consultation with the Heads of Legal and Procurement, to award a contract for the works required to St Lawrence Church to the contractor listed as CM1 in Exempt Appendix 1 of this report.**

Reason: To enable the works required to St Lawrence Church to be carried out.