

Committee: Corporate Asset Sub Committee – For decision	Date: 07 November 2019
Subject: Guildhall Complex Accessibility Report	Public
Report of: City Surveyor	For Decision
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Summary

In response to Members comments made in March 2019 regarding issues relating to the weight of door openings and provision of baby change facilities at Guildhall complex, the purpose of this report is to provide Corporate Asset Sub Committee with some background and update on progress made by the City Surveyor to improve the current levels of accessibility provision at Guildhall.

Works to address the quick wins such as accessible toilets, baby changing facilities and power doors commenced in April 2019. An audit to assess the external approach to the Guildhall complex commenced in June 2019 to consider wider accessibility to the Guildhall Complex to ensure ease and independent use for all visitors, staff and Members.

This report also provides Corporate Asset Sub Committee with a summary of the works and audits giving an overview of the opportunities and the estimated cost implications of undertaking any of the audit works together with a funding source and timetable if Members approve to progress matters.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.
- Approve the recommendations from the review are either integrated into the Forward Maintenance Plans for the Guildhall and therefore included in the prioritised Cyclical Works Programme or form part of the Planned Preventative Maintenance programmes.

Main Report

Background

1. Whilst legislation exists for accessibility, the Equality Act is non-prescriptive in terms of adjustments to buildings and spaces and therefore standards are drawn from other sources, such as building regulations and British Standards.
2. The City Surveyor in recognising that consideration of accessibility to the Guildhall Complex is necessary to ensure ease and independent use for all visitors, staff and Members, has undertaken an accessibility review of the

Guildhall complex and noted those issues which may require improvement in order to meet best practice standards.

3. The accessibility review considered the following areas;
 - a. **The external approach surrounding the Guildhall complex**; The Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE) was appointed June 2019 by the City Surveyor to conduct an access review of the external environment and approach to Guildhall.
 - b. **Accessible toilets**; a review of the accessible toilets in the Guildhall Complex was completed in April 2019 to ensure the correct level of provision to meet compliance. Any works that were identified as required were actioned and will be completed as soon as reasonably practical.
 - c. **Automated/Power Doors**; a programme of works to survey and review all Guildhall automated doors was undertaken during July 2019. Remedial works have been carried out to any doors with faults in order to comply with legislation and maintain systems.
 - i. Following completion of the Members Cloakroom WC Project, Member concerns were raised regarding wheelchair access from the Members Car Park to the lower ground lifts. The following 6 automated doors were added to the project for installation;
 - the door from the Members Car Park (1no),
 - the female Members locker room (2no.),
 - male Members locker room (1 no),
 - Members wheelchair-accessible Shower room (1no),
 - Guest wheelchair-accessible WC (1no).
 - d. **Baby Changing Facilities**; a review of Baby Changing facilities around Guildhall complex.

Current Position

4. The current position of works and audit is as follows;
 - a. **The Centre for Accessible Environments access review** –
 - i. this review solely covers the external approach surrounding the Guildhall complex. It considers the plaza in front of the North Wing entrance, the Members vehicle approach, routes along Aldermanbury and Basinghall Street, Guildhall Yard and the laneway towards 'The City Centre' (known as Guildhall Buildings).
 - ii. The review identifies issues which may impact on accessibility and makes recommendations to enable good practice standards to be implemented. It also mentions the areas where good practice is already being achieved so that this is not forgotten in future renovations or upgrades.
 - iii. The access review highlights 3 areas;
 - **Signage and Wayfinding** – highlighting opportunities to install more site maps and directional signs to improve navigation, orientation and wayfinding.
 - **General housekeeping** – highlighting tree branches that require trim, Members Car Park improved marked bays and handrail protrusion to prevent any collision.
 - **Disability equality and awareness** – highlighting disability access around Guildhall, specifically, the raised statue outside North Wing where the hard corners of the statue need consideration to have

- protected corners to reduce the risk of collision. In the Member's Car Park ensure entrance door remains open to allow ease of access, provide sign above accessible parking bays 'Blue Badge Holders only'.
- iv. Since the report considers the external environment, some of the recommendations may be cross cutting i.e. the responsibility of the Highways Authority. In these instances, the City Surveyor will liaise with the relevant departments.

b. Accessible toilets –

- i. A review of 35 accessible toilets across Guildhall complex was completed in April 2019. Any works that have been identified as required have been actioned and will be completed as soon as reasonably practical.
- ii. The works are being funded from the Guildhall Administration local risk budget.

c. Automated/Power Doors –

- i. A review of 32 internal automatic doors, (excluding the new automated doors to the Members new cloakroom facility) was completed in July 2019.
- ii. 9 doors require new door operating systems and a further 15 doors require small improvements to return them to full working standards.
- iii. Where the door system wiring allows, doors will be connected to the door security system and opened using ID card. If additional wiring is required, a cost will be provided by the contractor as an optional extra to approve.
- iv. The estimated cost of works, £35k, are being funded from 2017/18 Cyclical Works Programme (CWP). With ongoing planned preventative maintenance (PPM) of all (38 automatic doors) being undertaken by the corporate contractor, Skanska, this will be funded from the Guildhall Administration Local Risk Budget.
- v. Following completion of the Members Cloakroom WC Project, 6 new automated doors have been installed and are due for final commissioning in October 2019.

d. Baby Changing Facilities –

- i. A further baby changing facility was installed 6 June 2019, located in the new West Wing cloakroom facilities.
- ii. Guildhall now have 4 baby changing facilities across the complex that are open to the public/users of events, and located as follows;
 - Art Gallery Cloakroom Area Toilet
 - First Aid Room – Art Gallery
 - West Wing Events Area Toilet
 - Crypts Area Toilet
- iii. As there is no specific legal requirement for the provision of these amenities, the British Toilet Association advises that for every 10,000 people using an area, there should be at least one unisex baby-changing facility.
- iv. Guildhall complex meets and exceeds this advice.

Proposals

5. It is proposed that the recommendations from the CAE review of external approaches surrounding the Guildhall complex are costed and integrated into the forward maintenance plans and therefore included in the annual bid for the Cyclical Works Programme.

6. Accessible toilets and automated doors will be regularly monitored by the Guildhall Facilities Management Team and the City's corporate building, repairs and maintenance contractor, Skanska through a planned preventative maintenance (PPM) programme.

Financial Implications

7. Recommendations from the review will either be integrated into the Forward Maintenance Plans for the Guildhall and therefore, prioritised and included in the Cyclical Works Programme or form part of the Planned Preventative Maintenance programmes, to be met from existing Guildhall Administration Local Risk Budget.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

8. Undertaking the recommendations in this report will assist with meeting obligations under the Equality Act 2010 but does not guarantee this, as further adjustments may be needed as and when an individual's particular disability requires.
9. During the review of Guildhall, the CAE highlighted all the good practices being implemented and following the recommendations made in this review will provide further reasonable adjustments under the Act that will remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by disabled people.
10. In consultation with Corporation's Disability, Ability & Wellbeing Network (DAWN), City Surveyor officers will review the provision of a Changing Places toilet. Changing Places toilets are larger accessible toilets for severely disabled people, with equipment such as hoists, curtains, adult-sized changing benches and enough space for carers.
11. The Corporation's vision is to build and support strong, sustainable and cohesive communities by ensuring our policies, processes and employment are inclusive.

Conclusion

12. The City Surveyor has now completed a review of accessibility at Guildhall complex and identified those issues which require improvement in order to meet best practice standards.
13. The ongoing works from the review will be integrated into the forward maintenance plans for the Complex and therefore included in the annual bid for the Cyclical Works Programme and Planned Preventative Maintenance schedules will be created in order to maintain accessible ease and independent use for all visitors, staff and Members.
14. The Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE) access review of the external environment and approach to Guildhall is available upon request.

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