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## **RAYLEIGH OPERATIC & DRAMATIC SOCIETY (RODS) – UPDATE ON SCENERY STORE**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress being made by RODS to relocate their scenery store from The Market Car Park, Rayleigh.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. At a meeting of the Corporate Resources Sub Committee held on 19 June 2001, Members were of the view that the Council should seek possession of the RODS Scenery Store, situated in The Market Car Park, in order that it be demolished. At the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 12 July 2001, it was resolved that:-

“Authority be given to officers to negotiate the relocation of the occupants of the Scenery Store and the demolition of that building.”

- 2.2. At the Corporate Resources Sub Committee held on 6 February 2002, an update on progress was given. Members were of the view that, at that time, insufficient progress had been made and that it was necessary to set a time limit in order to bring the matter to a close. At Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 14 February 2002, it was resolved:-

“That this Council gives notice that the Scenery Store in The Market Car Park, Rayleigh is vacated by the Rayleigh Operatic and Dramatic Society with effect from 1 May 2002 unless firm plans are presented for alternative premises.”

- 2.3. A meeting was held with representatives of RODS on 20 March. At that meeting, it was explained that RODS was working in partnership with Arts Labyrinth to secure premises at Lubbards Farm.
- 2.4. The proposals would require alterations to existing buildings, which would require planning permission. Informal meetings have since taken place with officers in the Planning Department.
- 2.5. It is understood that architects have been commissioned to prepare drawings and submit a planning application. At the time of drafting the report, the formal planning application had not yet been received. A verbal update on this will be given at the meeting.

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- 2.6. RODS estimates that it will need three months to carry out the building works once planning permission has been granted.

**3 COMMENT**

- 3.1. If a planning application is submitted, it does demonstrate a firm commitment to relocating the store and it would not be unreasonable to grant an extension of time on the existing site in order for RODS to carry out the building works.
- 3.2. If the planning application is unsuccessful, then it will be necessary for RODS to seek an alternative solution.

**4 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1. In view of the above, it is suggested that this Committee consider whether RODS should be given an extension of three months from the date of receiving planning approval. If so, then this can be recommended to Council in view of the fact that Policy and Finance Committee will not meet until the new cycle.
- 4.2. In the event of planning approval being refused, it is suggested that RODS be given two months to bring forward revised proposals.

**5 RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Committee recommends to Council the above strategy. (CD(F&ES))

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