

MEMORANDUM

Meeting date:	27 June 2022
To:	Jo Miller, Chief Executive cc Mayor, Councillors and Community Boards
From:	Kara Puketapu-Dentice, Director, Economy & Development Andrea Blackshaw, Director, Neighbourhoods & Communities
Paper author:	Alannah Laban, Head of Assets & Facilities Management Karl Chitham, Head of Arts & Culture
Subject:	TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF LITTLE THEATRE

Purpose (Executive Summary)

1. Asbestos has been discovered underneath carpet tiles located in the foyer area of the Little Theatre. The area is contained, represents no risk to the public and plans to remove the asbestos have been approved by Worksafe.
2. The Little Theatre needs to be temporarily closed until at least 13 July 2022 to allow for the safe removal of asbestos.

Recommendation

3. That the Chief Executive agrees to temporarily close the Little Theatre to the public with immediate effect to allow for a Class A asbestos removal to be carried out.

Background/ Discussion

4. On Monday 20 June 2022, during routine replacement of the carpet in the foyer of the Little Theatre, a contractor discovered an unknown substance under the existing carpet tiles.
5. Fibresafe, an IANZ accredited asbestos sampler/surveyor, took a sample on site of the unknown substance. Whilst on site, they advised they would also test the vinyl that is glued to the concrete underneath the carpet tiles. Fibresafe suspected the vinyl would contain asbestos and communicated this at the time.
6. The lab report from Fibresafe confirmed that the vinyl contains asbestos and will have cross contaminated the mastic glue. The foyer was already closed off to the public due to the routine maintenance and has remained closed since. Additional hoardings were put up to restrict all access to this area.
7. In the previous carpet installation, the asbestos was not identified and therefore not sealed. When the carpet tiles were pulled up to be replaced, this disrupted the vinyl, and the job cannot be completed without further disruption.

8. To completely rid the floor of asbestos, the vinyl will be pulled up, but the glue requires being ground-off. Grinding this glue off turns the removal into the highest class due to the airborne nature of grinding.
9. The Facilities team met with three different contractors to discuss the severity of the asbestos and options for moving forward. Contractors are required to be licensed according to their ability to remove asbestos. Two of the contractors have a Class A license (highest class) and one a Class B license.
10. Whilst Hutt City Council does not have a formal asbestos management policy, from an Assets & Facilities and Health and Safety viewpoint, eliminating the hazard is the preferred option. However, this is always viewed case by case to ensure practicality, risk assessment and affordability.
11. Before an asbestos removal can take place, Worksafe require a five-day review of the methodology from the contractor.
12. Worksafe has viewed and approved a methodology from one of our Class A contractors and work can proceed once the quote has been accepted.
13. An option of not grinding the floor (dropping to a Class B removal) was considered. However, due to the state of the vinyl, the inability to manage the airborne particles and contractor's policies of not encasing asbestos, this is not a feasible option.
14. The timeframe for asbestos removal is likely to be two weeks from Wednesday 29 June 2022.
15. There will be 4 venue hire bookings affected by the closure.

Risks & Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
The closure of the Little Theatre will impact on bookings already in place as well as impact on our café tenant and possibly on users/staff of War Memorial Library	<p>Share communications with staff, elected members and affected groups.</p> <p>Continue to endeavour to re-home bookings of the Little Theatre.</p> <p>Work closely with Fellow Café tenant to minimise impact.</p>
Noise from the grinding of the glue off the concrete floor	<p>Assess noise levels to ensure they meet safe decibel levels.</p> <p>Share communications with Library and Fellow Cafe</p> <p>Have plan in place to reduce sound spill into library</p>
Health & Safety to staff and customers	<p>Workspace will have hoardings preventing access by the public</p> <p>Workspace will be completely sealed so no airborne particles can escape</p> <p>Contractors have detailed H&S plan including worker</p>

People implications

16. There will be an impact on hirers and the Arts & Culture team will endeavour to find alternative arrangements for all bookings. There are three one-day bookings and one two-week booking that will be impacted by the proposed closure.

Financial implications

17. These works are not budgeted for within the Arts & Culture budget but will be covered by the Facilities Management Contingency Fund. The work to safely remove the asbestos is estimated to be approximately \$30,000.00.

Legal implications

18. Hutt City Council is a PCBU under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, with Chief Executive Jo Miller, holding duty of care as the Officer of the PCBU, and therefore responsible for ensuring due diligence responsibilities are met.
19. Hutt City Council as a PCBU has responsibility to ensure we provide a safe work environment and to manage any risk to our staff, contractors, or visitors through provision of information, training, instruction, or supervision.
20. Where possible, a PCBU should eliminate risks to health and safety as far as reasonably practicable, or where not possible, minimise those risks as far as is reasonably practicable. Based on this, an elimination strategy should be considered, and if not practicable, the risk needs to be minimised as far as reasonably practicable.
21. Hutt City Council must meet any overlapping duties, and consult, coordinate and cooperate with all affected PCBUs, including other tenants or contractors engaged to complete work.

Health, Safety and Security implications

22. Until remedial works have been completed, the foyer area of the Little Theatre is unsafe for staff or public to access. This area has been closed off with protective hoardings.

Communication and Engagement

23. The Mayor, Councillors and Community Boards will be advised.
24. Signage has been organised.
25. Information will be provided to the public via usual communication channels.

Signed:



Jo Miller
Hutt City Council
Chief Executive