

# Council rapped over £400,000 repairs bill

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STROUD District Council has been criticised by its own members for failing to take action over vital repair work at the Subscription Rooms which has left them with a massive £400,000 bill.

Members of the district council's leisure and tourism committee said the town's main function hall was in a state of disrepair because councillors have refused to spend any money over the past ten years.

And they hit out at proposals for a £400,000 rescue package.

## Survey

Council chairwoman Margaret Nolder said: "We have made decisions over the past ten years not to spend any money on the Sub Rooms which are now starved of cash. Now we are being asked to pick up the tab for this decision."

And Councillor Sheffie Mohammed (Ind., Uplands) said a public survey, due to be launched this month to decide on future uses for the rooms, should have been done years ago.

"We have let the Sub Rooms fall in to an appalling state of disrepair.

"This survey is all very good but why

by Jo Makosinski

wasn't it carried out years ago?"

Gerald Benton (Ind., Nailsworth) added: "I cannot believe how we have let the Sub Rooms fall into such a bad state. We should welcome this survey so we know the proposed use of the subscription rooms is what everybody wants but it seems to have come at a very late stage.

"I would have thought all property under the control of the council should be subject to regular surveys like this."

The debate follows the publication of a report into the Sub Rooms, which claims a total of £385,000 is needed for vital repairs to heating and ventilation systems and the introduction of new access routes.

A second report on possible uses is currently being drawn up and will be out in December.

Bob Ellerby (Lab., Hardwicke) said: "We are talking about the most important public building in Stroud.

"It is a sad and drab looking place and the local people should be given a chance to decide how we are going to look at repairing it."