

Malmesbury Town Council

Minutes of the Town Hall & Facilities Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 11th November 2020 commencing at 7.00pm via zoom

Present: Councillors S D'Arcy (Vice-Chair), C Doody, P Exton, L G Grant (Chair), W Jones, P Smith, F Vandelli

G Davie (Minutes), R Spencer Williams (Town Clerk)

- 1. Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest
- 2. Apologies for Absence:** Cllrs J Exton, C Ritchie
- 3. Public Question Time:** There were no public questions
- 4. To receive and adopt the minutes of the Town Hall & Facilities Committee meeting held on 9th September 2020**

Resolved that the minutes of the Town Hall & Facilities Committee meeting held on the 9th September 2020 were a true and accurate record of the meeting and should be received and adopted

Proposed Cllr Grant **Seconded** Cllr Smith

- 5. To receive an update on the current Town Hall usage (Report No 1, Town Clerk)**

The Town Clerk used the report to indicate the level of usage that had been achieved at the end of the second month of reopening. Many regular bookings had been re-established and some new bookings had been made where groups needed more space because of social distancing requirements. The picture had been quite encouraging and bookings were being sensibly managed. Now with the second lockdown, bookings were frozen not cancelled and will be reinstated when it is permitted. Overall, the team are better prepared at interpreting the guidelines.

The Town Clerk's report was noted.

- 6. To receive a quarterly finance report for the Town Hall & Facilities (Report No 2, Town Clerk)**

The Town Clerk's report was noted in preparation for the next agenda item

- 7. To consider the Town Hall and Facilities Budget requirements for 2021/22**

Cllr Grant summarised discussions that had taken place at the P&R Committee where it had been agreed that a cautious approach should be taken given the current levels of uncertainty and the potential reduction in Council Tax receipts. All agreed a responsible approach needed to be taken with the funds available.

Significant discussions took place around the rent for the café and the impact of the second lockdown period imposed by the government.

Proposal: The Town Clerk is asked to renegotiate a manageable rental contribution from the Jackdaws Café tenants and to review the café's invoice along with those for the other tenants and to bring a proposal to the next Full Council meeting ensuring full tenancy is maintained.

Proposed: Cllr Doody

Seconded: Cllr Jones

Then a detailed review of the budget figures followed with the objective of returning a small surplus at the end of the financial year. All agreed the financial forecast was exceedingly difficult given present uncertainty. After a detailed review of the budget figures, a budget was agreed for 2021/22 which would return net income over expenditure of £30,500. This budget would be submitted to the P&R Committee accepting a couple of areas may have the potential for further economies.

Action: The Town Clerk was asked to examine what is charged to the Consumables line on the budget to clarify whether the items should be in the Central budget.

8. To receive an update on the implementation of the Town Hall re-opening plan, incorporating the bar opening plan (Report No 3, Cllr D'Arcy)

All is well prepared for re-opening at the end of lockdown. Guidelines for each room in the Town Hall are ready, the cinema will re-open when allowed, work is ongoing on the virtual tour of the Town Hall and the ventilation issues.

The focus of the working group should now be on the running of the bar, as a Covid safe operation with all systems in place and as a potential income stream. The EPOS till has been installed and work needs to be done to understand competition rules in the context of local councils.

Action: Cllrs Jones, Vandelli and Doody still need to source a mirror for the bar

Resolved: to narrow the focus of the working group to concentrate on all elements of the bar operation in the Town Hall

Proposed: Cllr D'Arcy

Seconded: Cllr Jones

9. To receive an update from the Cloister Gardens Working Group (Cllr Smith)

Cllr Smith reported that the group had met in September and had also met with the owner of the site. A further Working Group meeting is scheduled for next week when discussions will take place over how to make the Cloister Gardens a secure area and on the work that needs to take place on the arbour. The group will report back to this Committee at the next opportunity to be scheduled by the Town Clerk.

10. To receive a verbal update from the Open Spaces Working Group (Cllr Jones)

Cllr Jones reported that so far an appropriate level of response from the community to join the group had not been achieved, possibly to do with the time of the year. Therefore, any work on this will be deferred to January when it is hoped to move forward more positively.

Thanks were given to Cllr J Exton for her work on promoting this group to the wider community.

11. To consider the matters raised by Malmesbury Victoria Football Club to the Full Council on 20th October

The issues were the pitch is not fit for purpose, the ground does not meet the requirements in terms of capacity for the higher leagues, other tenants use the site. The conclusion the club has reached is their aspirations can't be achieved on that site and their request was that the Council work with them to find a process for the club to stay in the town.

Resolved: to set up a working group with the remit to open discussions with the football club to fully understand what the club wants to achieve, to ensure these are on a sound financial base, then to consult with the other tenants on the site, to look at possible alternative sites for the football club, entering into discussions with other landowners if appropriate and to consider the implications for future use of the current site. Progress reports and proposals to be brought to this committee.

Proposed: Cllr Grant

Seconded: Cllr Jones

Action: the working group will be Cllrs Doody, D'Arcy, Grant, Smith, P Exton and Jones. It is proposed that the group meets within the next 2/3 weeks to set up workstreams and then to arrange an initial conversation between the football club and 2/3 members of the working group to understand the club's long-term business plan

12. To consider the governance arrangements of the Cinema contracts with film distributors. (Report 4, Town Clerk)

This issue had come to light when reallocating support jobs within the TIC. It raised the question should contracts with film distributors be with Malmesbury Town Council or with Movies@Malmesbury. General discussion took place over the regulatory position and the implications of the competitions act.

Action: the Town Clerk was asked to undertake a piece of work examining and clarifying the liability being accepted by the Council, clarifying roles, responsibilities, structures and status.

13. To consider the use of the cinema equipment by community groups and any policy implications (Report No 5 Town Clerk)

The Town Clerk explained that the Last Baguette Theatre Group had wanted to use the projector. Given the sound equipment is hired out the question was should the projector be the same. It was recognised that third parties seeking the use of the projector had been allowed in the past but always with the assistance of a cinema projectionist. A significant investment had been made in the equipment, so if it is to be used as an income stream it is essential the equipment is protected.

Resolved: to welcome third party use of the cinema equipment for appropriate use but provision must be either through Movies@Malmesbury or it must be accredited by projectionists from Movies@Malmesbury

Proposed: Cllr D’Arcy

Seconded: Cllr Jones

14. To consider the use of the Market Cross in the context of the current Covid 19 pandemic (Report No 6 Cllr Grant)

Cllrs were reminded that the purpose of allocating space at the Market Cross is to benefit our local community. Currently use of the Market Cross is suspended due to the lockdown restrictions. Cllr Grant raised concerns over the process of allocating time at the Market Cross, including checking on risk assessments, hygiene standards and public liability insurance. He also suggested the Council should reserve the right not to allow organisations to use the Market Cross if it was deemed to be unfair competition to other businesses on the High Street. A suggestion was made that permits should be given to organisations booking the Market Cross so that Councillors could be confident the booking had been checked and approved.

Action: the Town Clerk will work with the TIC to firm up booking practices, using the Chair and Vice-Chair if necessary, for guidance.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm