



Devizes Town Council

www.devizes-tc.gov.uk

RECREATION AND PROPERTIES COMMITTEE

You are summonsed to attend a meeting of the Recreation & Properties Committee at the following, place and date.

Date: 16 JANUARY 2018

Time: Immediately following Planning Committee

Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Devizes

Enquiries: 01380 722160

The Town Mayor: (Councillor Carter)

Councillors:	Burton	S Evans	Gay
	Geddes	Giraud-Saunders	Greenwood
	Johnson	Parsons	Rowland
	Shaw	Wooldridge	

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2017 and which have been circulated alongside the agenda.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

To receive any disclosure(s) of interest by a Councillor or an officer in matters to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with provisions of Sections 94 or 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the National Code of Local Government Conduct.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

At the Chairman's discretion, members of the public attending the meeting will be allowed to ask questions, make a statement or address the Council upon a matter of concern to that person which is relevant to the Council. A time limit of 5 minutes per person will be permitted, but this may be extended at the Chairman's discretion and a maximum period of 20 minutes has been allocated by the Council for this item of business

5. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES INCOME FIGURES

Documents are issued alongside.

6. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES - CUSTOMER SATISFACTION FEEDBACK, VENUES OCCUPANCY FIGURES & MARKETING INFORMATION

Officers are working in partnership with local businesses and suppliers to host a wedding fair in the Town Hall in March. The fair will be organised with Bob Gilmore of the Hen House and it has been agreed to allow local companies to exhibit free of charge. The venues team will dress the Assembly Room and Council Chamber to allow prospective bride and bridegrooms to see how suitable the Town Hall is for a wedding. When officers attend wedding fairs in the Corn Exchange, this is obviously something that they cannot do.

The cost of the room hire will be taken from the Town Council marketing budget as it is felt that this is a great opportunity to fully market the Town Hall as a stylish wedding venue.

Providing companies with an opportunity to market their own services free of charge is also a way of supporting local businesses.

7. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS NARRATIVE

As in previous years, the venues were quieter in December overall than in November. We did host a number of large Christmas parties and this is an area we are looking at exploiting for next year.

Overall, less enquiries were received in December than November, however, the conversion rate is higher, which is in part due to the number of enquiries received in person or on the telephone. Officers are waiting on a number of companies to confirm bookings, therefore some enquiries are still 'live'.

8. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – HILLWORTH PARK 2018 PROGRAMME

The 2018 events programme has been agreed with the Steering Committee and 2000 tri-fold leaflets have been designed and printed.

As last year, up to 1000 leaflets will be sent home to local school children in their book bags.

The leaflet is also available as a download from the Hillworth Park website and Facebook page.

A leaflet has been included in all dispatch envelopes.

9. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – PARK CAFÉ PERFORMANCE

Officers have continued to provide members with progress reports relating to the performance of the Café at Hillworth Park.

Officers also advised that although the objective is to at least break even, the café is a community service that sits alongside the delivery of the park.

Café performance data has been updated (Doc 9/1) to include actual data for the first nine months of the 2017/18 financial year and projected income data based on previous year data and updated payroll costs after the recruitment of a number of part time employees in order to minimise the use and impact of utilising Town Council venues staff.

Projected income for the full financial year is £48,450 with a Net Loss after costs of £9,749. This data is accurate as at the time of the preparation of this report.

Income in December 2017 was £1,336 compared to £2,023 in December 2016. Gross margin for the first eight months stood at 52% with estimates assuming a 52% gross margin.

The Café is extremely vulnerable to poor weather conditions and should activities fall on a wet day this has a negative impact on Café performance.

The 2017/18 estimates were agreed on the assumption that the Café would produce a net loss of £14,886.

10. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – CEMETERY LODGE, ROTHERSTONE, DEVIZES

The Cemetery Lodge has been subject to a Short Term Tenancy agreement since June 2015.

The replacement of the fascia, barge boards and guttering in PVCu have now been completed to the satisfaction of officers making this area of the property virtually maintenance free.

SSE replaced the electricity wire/supply from the nearby pole to the property at no charge.

11. REPORT FOR DECISION – PERMISSION TO RECRUIT SALES & MARKETING OFFICER

Recommendation

The committee are requested to approve officers to recruit a part time (16 hours per week) sales and marketing officer for the venues team on a twelve month contract.

and

The committee are requested to approve officers to start the recruitment process immediately, which may result in a new member being in post before the start of the financial year.

and

that the committee are requested to approve the inclusion of one councillor on the interview panel and to agree which member this will be.

Purpose of the Report

To approve the recruitment of a temporary part time Sales and Marketing officer on a twelve month contract, to approve the recruitment process timescale and to decide if a councillor should sit on the interview panel and which one this should be.

Background

During the past year, whilst undertaking a comprehensive review of the marketing of the venues, the idea of recruiting a member of staff to specifically handle this area was discussed with members.

It was agreed that a sales and Marketing officer would be able to:

- Monitor the effectiveness of our marketing strategy.
- Develop contact with local business assessing the service requirements.
- Develop relationships with local serviced companies to broaden the services we can offer our customers as well as develop mutually beneficial marketing arrangements.
- Develop offers and promotions.
- Maintain Key Performance Indicators.

It was agreed at a Recreation and Properties Meeting on 3rd October that officers could pursue this idea in more depth. Officers therefore developed a Job Description and assessed the cost implications of the role, and these elements were taken to members at the next Recreation and Properties committee meeting on 14th November.

At this meeting it was agreed that budget provision be made for this new post for 2018/19. Further to this, the 2018/19 Draft Estimates, which include provision for the Sales and Marketing Officer, were approved at Full Council on 14th December.

Officers are therefore requesting that the council agree to the creation of a new role of Sales and Marketing Officer for 16 hours per week and to recruit to this role.

Recognising the importance of this role for the venues Councillor Peter Corbett has asked if the recruitment process should be started immediately if permission to recruit is given at this meeting. By beginning the process now, there is a chance that a member of staff could be in place before the new financial year.

Due to the importance of this role, officers are asking for one councillor to sit on the interview panel.

Options Considered

The Committee need to decide if they authorise officers to recruit a part time (16 hours per week) sales and marketing officer for the venues team on a twelve month contract.

Implications and Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

Budget provision for 2018/19 has been agreed in the Draft Estimates at Full Council on 14th December for the position of Sales and Marketing Officer.

There is no budget provision for 2017/18 for recruitment to this role.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

Environmental Implications

Officers are unaware of any environmental implications for the Council associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

Officers are unaware of any risk implication for the Council associated with this decision.

Crime and Disorder

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

12. REPORT FOR DECISION – VENUES PRICING SCHEDULE

Recommendation

That the committee agrees to remove the Grand Jury Room from the pricing schedule with immediate effect.

And

that the committee agrees to standardise the community rate pricing schedule for the Town Hall with discounts on all rooms at 50% with immediate effect.

Purpose of the Report

To agree adjustments to the Venues pricing structure for immediate effect.

Background

At a meeting of Joint Governance, where officers discussed the venues pricing structure, members asked for a comprehensive review of all charges.

During this review, officers have discovered a number of anomalies. Firstly, the Grand Jury Room has a hire charge attached to it, however, this is an ancillary room only and is never hired independently. Therefore, no charge is applicable. Officers have looked at records over the past years and there has never been any charge made to hirers for this room.

Attaching a hire charge to a room which is never paid for, distorts the newly introduced Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). If councillors agree to drop charges for this room, officers will eliminate it from all relevant KPIs.

Secondly, whilst undertaking the review, it was noted that the community rate pricing schedule for the Town Hall is extremely inconsistent. Discounts range from 13% to 62% and officers would like to standardise this at 50% for all rooms, which is currently the discount allowed for the Assembly Room.

The effect of this standardisation would be that the Assembly Room prices remain as they are currently, the Cheese Hall will increase slightly and the Council Chamber price will reduce.

Options Considered

The committee needs to decide if they agree to discontinue to charge for the Grand Jury Room and to remove it from the Key Performance Indicators where appropriate and to standardise the community rate pricing schedule for the Town Hall.

Implications and Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

Looking at future bookings this change to the pricing schedule will not adversely affect Town Hall income. Conversely, by reducing the price to a more favourable amount, officers feel they may attract more bookings from community groups for meetings etc.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

Environmental Implications

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

Officers are unaware of any risk implication for the Council associated with this decision.

Crime and Disorder

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

13. REPORT FOR DECISION – PERMISSION TO RECRUIT STREET CLEANING STAFF

Recommendation

The committee are requested to approve the recruitment of street cleaning staff to provide an effective top up service to that already provided by Wiltshire Council.

Background

During the budget setting process for 2018/19 it was agreed that the Council should include a provision to employ its own staff to increase the frequency of street cleaning within the town.

The enhanced service provided by the new staff will not only include litter removal from town centre streets but also pavement weeding, signage, seat cleaning and where necessary bin emptying.

The salary scale point for street cleaning staff is calculated at SCP 10 (£15,375 p.a.) and within the agreed budget it is planned to employ two part time members of staff providing 7 days a week service delivery.

It would not be normal practice for members to sit in on the interviews for junior members of staff and therefore it is planned that the Service Head and Personnel Administrator will conduct the interviews.

Options Considered

The Committee need to decide if they authorise officers to recruit street cleaning staff to increase the Council's ability to meet its commitment to enhance street cleanliness in the town.

Implications and Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

Budget provision for 2018/19 has been agreed at Full Council on 14th December for the position of Street Cleaning Staff.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

Environmental Implications

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

Officers are unaware of any risk implication for the Council associated with this decision.

Crime and Disorder

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

14. **EXEMPT REPORT FOR INFORMATION – RELATING TO COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES**
15. **EXEMPT REPORT FOR INFORMATION – RELATING TO COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES**
16. **QUESTION TIME**

A short time is allowed at the discretion of the Chairman for councillors to ask questions on matters which are not on the current agenda but which are related to matters which have been previously discussed on an agenda relevant to the committee.

At least 24 hours' notice must be given to officers of the intended question. All other matters should be raised on an agenda and the request should be submitted through the Town Clerk

DEPUTY TOWN CLERK