



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: 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Time: Immediately following Planning Committee

Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Devizes

Enquiries: 01380 722160

The Town Mayor: (Councillor Giraud-Saunders)

Chairman: Councillor Mrs Rose

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------|------------|-----------|
| Councillors: | Mrs Bridewell | Carter | Mrs Evans |
| | Johnson | Ody | Parker |
| | Smith | Wooldridge | |

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 11 August 2015, which have been circulated with 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

Document 5/1 is issued alongside this agenda

6. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES - CUSTOMER SATISFACTION FEEDBACK

There is no feedback to report at this time.

7. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES OCCUPANCY FIGURES & MARKETING INFORMATION

Room bookings for August 2015 are significantly lower than for July, however, this is a traditional dip and allows for the venues to be deep cleaned and painted. Enquiries for autumn and beyond continued through July and August and we are beginning to see the first of these confirmed now.

8. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – INSURANCE SURVEY REQUIREMENTS

A survey of the Corn Exchange was carried out in May 2015 by a representative of Ecclesiastical Insurance, the insurers of the Corn Exchange.

A risk management report detailed three areas of concern as follows.

- The linoleum at the rear fire exit from the Wessex Room to the fire exit at the bottom of the building was considered unsafe and required replacing.
- The storage of plastic wheelie bins in the electrical storage room was questioned, and;
- A request alarm system specification was received.

The second and third requirements were fairly quickly complied with by adopting a new procedure for the storage of the wheelie bins and a satisfactory outcome relating to the query with the alarm system by providing relevant documentation.

The first area of concern relating to the stairwell and the poor condition of the linoleum took longer to resolve. An initial attempt to effect repairs by utilising our own staff proved unsatisfactory to the insurance company.

Officers therefore approached a number of local suppliers to provide quotations for the supply and fitting of the linoleum product.

The lowest price was provided by Carpetright in Devizes. It soon became apparent that the product supplied was not appropriate and that the fitters were not experienced in fitting the product. The fitters were notified not to continue with the process and to remove any product. Carpetright were also notified of the unsuitability of the product and the fitting immediately.

Mike Mitcham Carpet Supplies, the provider of the next lowest quotation were then contacted. The Admin & Finance Manager had a detailed discussion with the business owner and the fitter to discuss the job in question. The Admin & Finance Manager was convinced that the standards required by the Town Council and the insurance company would be met by this provider and work commenced the following week.

Officers can now report that the work is completed and that the insurance company have confirmed their acceptance of our compliance with their requirements.

9. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – REVIEW OF NOMINATED CATERERS

The process to review nominated caterers has begun and has been advertised in the Gazette and Herald and on a number of social media websites. A working party has been formed to guide the process and has met once to look at the documentation.

The catering service specification and tender documents have been sent to the three existing caterers and, following the notice, two further companies have requested information.

The deadline for returning tenders is Friday 2nd October 2015 and the working party will meet the following week to examine them. As in the past, those who have returned tenders will be invited to interview and will be asked to provide a selection of food from their current buffet menus to taste.

10. REPORT FOR INFORMATION - PARKING ADJACENT THE SKATE PARK

At the last meeting of this committee on the 11 August, concerns were raised about the inconsiderate parking of cars in the large passing place adjacent the skateboard park.

It was resolved that delegation would be passed to the skate park working party to find a solution, however in the absence of Cllr P Evans who was on holiday, the committee chairman, Cllr Mrs Rose, stood in.

At a site meeting where Town Council representatives were join by Councillors from Roundway and members of the Drews Pond Wood project, various options were discussed.

It was finally agreed that the passing space should be removed adjacent the pedestrian entrance to the skate park and I high curb should be used to stop any attempt by motorists to continue to try and pull up on the edge of the road.

In addition access to the carpark has been made easier by levelling the access and filling in the holes.

In time the temporary signage will be replaced with metal signs

11. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES BOOKING SYSTEM

Officers have recently undertaken a review of the provision of the Town Council booking software. The review was prompted by a notification from our current bookings system provider that we were required to update our current software to a newer version at a cost of £1,960. This charge would be additional to the £3,330.26 paid to Business Careware in respect of Annual Licence, Maintenance & Support for the year ended 03/01/2016 which was paid during the 2014/15 financial year.

Senior officers considered a number of products via either online or direct demonstrations. The different products were considered under a number of criteria as to suitability of the bookings undertaken by the Town Council and the reports generated by the software.

Officers unanimously agreed that the product offered by Events500 was ideal for the Town Council with an extremely comprehensive reporting element.

A purchase order has been raised and a deposit paid. The software will be installed on the new server in on 15 November 2015 and staff members will receive training shortly thereafter. The existing bookings on the current software will then need to be migrated on to Events500.

Use of the Business Careware bookings system will discontinue at a point convenient to officers but no later than 1 January 2016.

12. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – CONDITION OF SIDE WALL OF CORN EXCHANGE

Officers have undertaken a number of capital projects during the past and current financial years.

The condition of the stonework on the side wall of the Corn Exchange has been brought to the attention of members on a number of occasions but no action has been taken to date.

The Admin & Finance Manager has recently been in contact with Colin Johns, conservation architect with a view to progressing the matter. Mr Johns has he believes a photographic record showing the side wall in excess of 10 years ago.

A meeting will be convened in the new future to enable a comparison to establish the rate of erosion of the stonework and to formulate a proposal to effect remedial works.

This item will be brought back to this committee as an agenda item once this comparison has taken place.

13. REPORT FOR DECISION – ADOPTION OF VENUES MARKETING STRATEGY FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

Recommendation

That the committee reviews the venues marketing strategy developed by the Direct Services Manager and approves the “action plan” set out on page 9 of the document.

Purpose of the Report

To review and approves the draft venues marketing plan.

Background

Earlier in the year, the Venues Working Party requested that a new marketing plan be developed to provide a framework for the promotion of the Council’s meeting rooms with the purpose of increasing occupancy and delivering ancillary income streams.

During the course of the summer, the Direct Services Manager has identified and reviewed existing trading activities within the venues, then explored opportunities for increased revenue growth whilst being mindful of any threats that could impact on the service.

The marketing strategy is circulated alongside this agenda and has the following key objectives:

1. To increase the occupancy rates of both the Town Hall and Corn Exchange.
2. Introduce a new pricing schedule, which incorporates flexibility including the ability to offer promotions/special offers.
3. Retain our current levels of repeat business and to develop further customer loyalty in a competitive market.
4. Attract new market sectors.
5. Continue to be perceived as a supportive member of the Devizes community.

To achieve this the following action are proposed.

RECREATION & PROPERTIES COMMITTEE
22 SEPTEMBER 2015

| Action | By Whom | By When | Cost £ |
|--|----------------------|--------------|--------|
| Set up Venues Facebook/Instagram/Twitter accounts | Sarah Williams (SW) | Oct 2015 | - |
| Front of house advertising in both venues | SW | Oct 2015 | £400 |
| Set up Corporate Mail Chimp Newsletter | SW | Oct 2015 | - |
| Send first quarterly corporate Mail Chimp Newsletter – new conference room extras to feature | SW | Oct 2015 | - |
| Introduce Conference Room Extras | Venues Team | End Oct 2015 | £400 |
| Complete Nominated Caterer Review | Venues Working Party | End Nov 2015 | - |
| Review current advertising programme/update ads in line with website | SW | Nov 2015 | - |
| Design and introduce new tri-fold leaflet | SW | Dec 2015 | £400 |
| Investigate chair cover/room dressing packages/options | SW | Jan 2016 | - |
| Review pricing schedule and promotions (incl. unlimited tea/coffee) | Venues Working Party | Jan 2016 | - |
| Create venues portfolio | SW | End Feb 2016 | £500 |
| Second quarterly corporate Mail Chimp Newsletter – to include new promotions | SW | January | - |
| Third quarterly corporate Mail Chimp Newsletter | SW | April | - |
| Fourth quarterly corporate Mail Chimp Newsletter | SW | July | - |

Progress of the marketing plan will be monitored by the Venues Working party with updates being provided to this committee.

Options Considered

The committee needs to decide of the wish to adopt the Marketing Plan for the next 12 months.

The committee needs to decide if officers should carry out the “action plan” as set out in the document.

Implications and Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

Financial or resource implication for the Council associated with this decision are set out in the agenda

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 DECISION – 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