



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: 11 JULY 2017

Time: Immediately following Planning Committee

Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Devizes

Enquiries: 01380 722160

The Town Mayor: (Councillor Carter)

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

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 30 May 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 will be issued under separate cover.

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

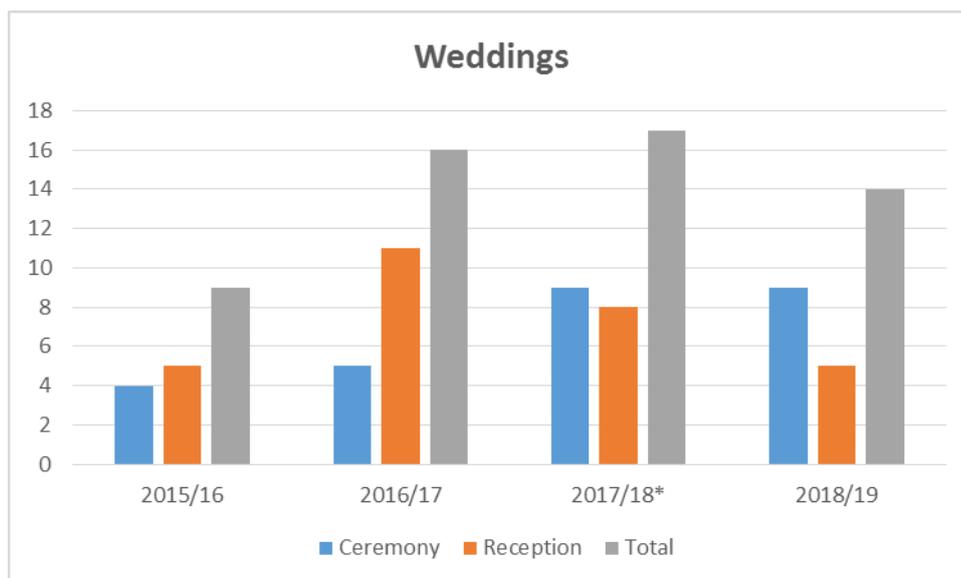
Resolution Design have drawn together a marketing action plan, which has been agreed by officers. Before a direct marketing campaign can begin, Resolution Design are updating the printed and online material. They are also looking at our competitors' offers, fresh ways to advertise ourselves and any gaps in our current advertising strategy.

7. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES ROOM USAGE, WEDDINGS

Over the past two years, there has been a drive to increase wedding and wedding ceremony bookings, particularly in the Town Hall. The chart below shows that the bookings for weddings as a whole are increasing year on year.

The introduction of a new website, with a dedicated wedding area, attendance at wedding fairs, a new brochure and packages, has seen an increase in the number of bookings in this area over the past two years.

The income per head from weddings, both ceremonies and receptions is high and our new packages has further increased this. There is still more scope to increase bookings and this is the initial thrust of the new marketing action plan.



* 2017/18 – based on historical data, we expect further bookings for 2017/18.

8. BUS SHELTER – LONDON ROAD

In late 2015 it was agreed by the Town Council that it would replace a Bus Shelter on London Road, by the access to Victoria Road, which was destroyed by a car in accident some years ago.

After an extremely protracted negotiation with Aster Housing Assn, the land on which the shelter sits is about to be transferred to the Town Council. In preparation of that transfer, an order for the bus shelter has been made.

The shelter is due to be installed by the in mid-August, which will see the completion of this protracted project.

9. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – CEMETERY OPEN DAY

The Cemetery Open Day was held on 29th June and was again very successful. Those who attended had a range of questions, including where their families were buried and were also interested in the history of the cemetery. As in previous years, the Wiltshire Family History Society were also on hand to offer information and advice.

10. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – DAMAGE TO CHAPEL

Significant damage occurred to a small stained glass window at the cemetery chapel there or thereabouts to the 11th of May, 2017. Officers are of the opinion that whosoever caused the damage to the window was attempting to steal from the chapel but when they could see that the chapel contained nothing of real value stopped.

The local police were informed and an article was circulated on social media without success.

The repair was undertaken by Wells Stained Glass at a cost of £300.00 and a claim has been submitted to Zurich, the Council's insurance brokers. The Council insurance policy carries a £250.00 excess therefore only a small amount is recoverable.

11. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – DAMAGE OF HEADSTONE IN DEVIZES CEMETERY

There has been some damage to a headstone which is believed to be the result of the contractor colliding with the memorial.

This has resulted in a large section of the memorial breaking away.

The contractor has accepted liability and a stone mason has been commissioned to make the repair.

There were no details of the living family, however, a sign requesting that the office be contacted has resulted in a relative calling the office, and the situation and proposal has been explained and accepted.

12. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – CORN EXCHANGE LICENCE

A new licence for the Corn Exchange basement has been approved in accordance with the wishes of the Wiltshire Council's Licensing Team and Police Licensing.

13. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – NEW BAR FRANCHISE AGREEMENT

Officers have been in negotiation with the current bar franchisees Stanley and Leigh Kelman regarding a renovation of the Merchants Suite and a subsequent new bar franchise agreement.

The bar franchisees have requested that the Merchants Suite of the Corn Exchange be the subject of a 7 year lease expiring on 30 April 2024 at a rental of £24,000 per annum.

The Merchants Suite will be the subject of a renovation costing in the region of £29,000. £20,000 of the cost will be in lieu of bar commission payments and will be repaid over a period of 84 months.

Commission payments over and above the monthly lease payments will continue to be made in respect of bar receipts at the Town Hall and the bar in the foyer of the Corn Exchange. The nature of the event/booking will dictate whether the bar revenue falls within the lease of the Merchants Suite or the existing commission arrangements.

The Town Council reserves the right to utilise the Merchants Suite at its discretion with reasonable notification to the leaseholder.

The Town Council's legal representatives are currently completing the lease/franchise agreement for signature by the franchisee/lease holders and the Town Council.

The intended works are programmed to be commenced on 6 August 2017 and completed by 23 August 2017 with a soft relaunch of the Merchants Suite on 24 August 2017.

The Town Council have budgeted additional works during the 2017/18 financial year in the bar and toilets area to be undertaken in conjunction with the works to the Merchants Suite.

14. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – ROUNDWAY WHITE HORSE

Since taking on the responsibility of the White Horse on Roundway Hill, the Council have received a number of complaints about its condition. In response to those complaints, officers undertook a site visit and agreed that over the years the edges had lost some definition and weeds were well established in the chalk surface, which was turning the horse green.

It was agreed some intervention was necessary and the Council's landscape contractor was asked to recut the horse to the original edging, where it exists, and undertake a programme of weed spaying to clean up the surface.

The reshaping work is now complete and the first weed spray has been undertaken. After two more weed sprays, officers will review the surface to decide if any further work is necessary.

The cost of this current work is £669.24+VAT which is to be funded from a reserved transferred from Roundway Parish Council dedicated to the maintenance of the White Horse.

15. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – TOP GRASS CUTTING

Recently the Council has received a number of requests for additional top up services in addition to that which has been agreed. For clarity this report sets out what has been agreed in the past.

Attached to this agenda is a list of the areas of Wiltshire Council land, which the Town Council pays to have an additional cut. These additional cuts are undertaken May, June, August and September with a potential cut in July and October. Each cut costs £2,121.83.

Currently the areas that are in local authority ownership and are already being cut by Wiltshire Council.

All Town Council land is maintained to the agreed standard therefore areas such Hillworth Park are undertaken daily and areas like the Green are cut as a minimum fortnightly.

It would appear that as some areas that are not within the Council's management are not maintained as frequently and therefore are quite untidy.

Whilst there may be a desire that these areas are maintained more frequently, currently the Town Council neither has the resources, financial or physical to undertake such work and naturally it would also need the consent of the land owner to maintain the property at the tax payers' expense.

The clearing of weeds is the responsibility of Wiltshire Council and its service agreement with Ringway is that the weeds in all towns are sprayed once between May and September. As there is no guarantee when the work will be done, Wiltshire Council has agreed that towns if they so wish can undertake their own programme of weed control.

As part of the preparation for the South West in Bloom judging, the Town Council has been working with volunteers (Clean Up Devizes Squad) but as volunteers, whilst they do a tremendous job in the town, they are limited in what they can do, so they tend to focus their work on the most visually sensitive areas.

16. 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 16/1) to include actual data for the first quarter of the 2017/18 financial year and projected income data based on previous year data and updated payroll costs after 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 £53,553 with a net loss after costs of £6,255. This data is accurate as at the time of the preparation of this report.

Income in April was considerably more than in the previous year and against forecast but fell back in May and June. Gross margin for the first quarter stood at 53.6% with estimates assuming a 52% gross margin.

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

17. REPORT FOR DECISION – CHEQUERS GARDEN REFURBISHMENT

Recommendation

That the committee decides if it wishes to reappoint a Chequers Garden working party with a remit to oversee the refurbishment of the area.

Purpose of the Report

To decide if the time is right to review the current condition of the Chequers with the view to continuing with the programme for its refurbishment.

Background

Following the refurbishment of Albion Place in 2015, it was agreed the second phase of the project to refurbish the Chequers Garden would be put on hold to allowing officers time to progress other projects.

Officers now feel they have capacity to support members to progress this project if the committee are minded to reappoint the working party.

The previous working party consisted of Councillors East, Nash, Mrs Rose and Wooldridge.

Should the committee decide to reappoint a working party, their first job will be to review decisions to date and the current level of budget held for the project. The committee may also wish to increase the remit of the working party to include the Penny Bank in order that they can make a recommendation about what action should be taken to the remaining tree stump in the Penny Back following the demise of the Cherry Tree in 2015 and the paving which surrounds it.

Options Considered

The Committee needs to decide if the time is right to progress the Chequers Project and if it is, which four members should work with officers.

Furthermore the committee needs to decide if the tree stump and paving should be included within the remit of the working party.

Implications and Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

Currently an earmarked reserve of £25,750 is held for this project.

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.

RECREATION & PROPERTIES COMMITTEE
11 JULY 2017

- 18. EXEMPT REPORT FOR INFORMATION – RELATING TO COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES**
- 19. EXEMPT REPORT FOR INFORMATION – RELATING TO COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES**
- 20. 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

TOWN CLERK