

Minutes of the Meeting of the Facilities Committee, St Ives Town Council held in the Committee Room, The Guildhall, St Ives on Thursday 14 March 2019 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Chairman - Councillor T Andrewes
Vice Chairman – Councillor R Glanville

COUNCILLORS

Arthur K	Henry R	Symons J
Griffin J	Nicholls C	Williams T

OFFICERS

Town Clerk	Support Services Manager
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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – were received from Councillors T Harris and R Lait.

F.64 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman moved that agenda items 3 and 4 should be the first reports to be considered, given that members of the public were present who had a specific interest in these items.

F.65 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBER/OFFICER INTERESTS

None.

F.66 OFFICERS UPDATE REPORT

Members considered a number of issues on the update report. A councillor expressed concern that update reports had become long documents. The Town Clerk explained that items were deleted as actions were completed. With a full complement of staff in place, it was expected that items would now be completed more rapidly and would be removed from the report.

In response to individual questions, the Town Clerk confirmed that:

- Solar array – this was being installed that week and the Town Council was on track to receive the feed-in tariff at the agreed rate
- An insurance claim for Smeatons ladies' toilets would be submitted after the works were complete.
- Baulking House – she was happy to meet with Councillor Nicholls to go through the issues surrounding the lease as and when schedules permitted

RESOLVED – that

The Clerk's update report be noted.

F.67 LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE MATTERS – FREE ROOM HIRE FOR FOSIL

The Chairman explained that this matter was brought to Committee for decision as there had been no exemptions agreed for room hire charges to be levied in the recent adoption of the Scale of Charges. It was therefore important that all exemptions were recorded and why the concession had been agreed.

RESOLVED – that

1. All proposals from FOSIL to invest in the library equipment and facilities are submitted in writing to the Council, with the LIS manager delegated to decide on whether the proposal is accepted, in consultation with the Town Clerk and Chairman of the Facilities Committee;
2. FOSIL be granted free room hire for 24 events per annum, comprising of 1 evening per month and 12 monthly Saturday coffee mornings
3. This working arrangement to be reviewed in 12 months time

F.68 **LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE MATTERS – APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

The Committee considered two options for resolving nominations to the Partnership Board and agreed option 2. This would allow the Library & Information Services Manager to liaise with the bodies involved and in the event of multiple nominations to select the appointee in consultation.

RESOLVED – that in the event of there being multiple nominations to the Library Partnership Board, it be delegated to the Library & Information Services Manager to liaise with the parties involved to seek agreement on a single nomination if possible. Otherwise, to decide the appointment, in consultation with the Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

F.69 **EARMARKED RESERVES**

Members considered the report on the earmarked reserves held which fall under the area of responsibility of the committee, with a view to making any recommendations to the Finance & General Purposes Committee regarding movements in reserves in-year and at financial year end.

During discussion the following points were considered:

Visitors Information Centre reserve – this was not now required as an earmarked reserve to support the VIC and neither did it need to be transferred for library as there were already sufficient reserves for this purpose.

Ear marked reserves were still required to purchase a second vehicle. This was still an extant decision and a search for a suitable vehicle was underway.

£82,000 was retained in earmarked reserves for the library. A final payment for the refurbishment works is still to be paid from this reserve. This earmarked reserve also included funds received from Cornwall Council to be ringfenced for use on backlog maintenance works and work associated with the transfer of the library to the town council. The Council have also agreed that any remaining balance be used to fund future developments at the library, subject to council approval when specific projects are identified. The expectation was that with the setting up of the Library Partnership Board, project ideas would be coming forward to be considered for future action. Although the final decision on investment will rest with the Council, the board would generate ideas and contribute to a plan for the future.

RECOMMENDED to Finance & General Purposes Committee – that the allocation of earmarked reserves for the Facilities Committee be retained in 2019-2020 with the exception of £482 for the guildhall lights and £23,160 in the VIC reserve.

F.70 CONCERT HALL BOOKINGS

The Support Services Manager presented the report setting out a practical way forward for the Council to devise and implement a potential improvement plan following the recently commissioned external report on the future development of the concert hall.

Members discussed the proposal and during the discussion a variety of views on the hall's future use were expressed. Some members felt that the objective should be for the hall to have a rounded use as a community facility to cater for multiple functions. Others felt that the hall should be placed on a fully commercial footing. Members commented that the action plan should also look at different ownership models and involve consultation with the community.

Officers noted Members' concerns that the work should not be carried out in haste but advised that the project was important in order to retain some momentum following the external report. The initial action plan for year one will focus on the short-term actions to be addressed but would also scope out ideas for capital investment in future years and would include exploring options for external funding. It was therefore intended that there would be a draft action plan to be presented to committee in June, reflecting planned actions over year 1 and future ambitions over a three to five year timescale.

RESOLVED – that

1. The Committee progress the development of the concert hall as a Council project;
2. The Committee appoint a small working group of Councillors, supported by the Support Services Manager to draw up an action plan for the project which will include a detailed plan for 2019-20 and indicative plans for future years;
3. The draft action plan, together with a service plan for the concert hall are presented to the June meeting of the Facilities Committee.

F.71 SERVICE PLANS

Members considered the draft service plans for the public conveniences and the Island Centre for the 2019/2020 year. It was noted that these were the first of a number of service plans to be drafted, with additional plans to be presented to the next scheduled meeting of this committee.

The Chairman advised that service planning gave the opportunity to review progress over the past year and to plan for coming service provision and investment. Thoughts were invited on the development of performance indicators to help measure the success of the Council's plans over the coming year.

Councillors endorsed the objective of introducing annual plans. They considered each of the plans. During the discussion the following points were made:

Public conveniences

The Committee fully supported the service plan proposals but would wish to see timescales built into the objectives. This would give more certainty that the works can be scheduled and carried out over the course of 2019/2020. They discussed additional ideas for reducing running costs. It was confirmed that the utilities contracts had been re-negotiated for 2019-20. It was asked whether there was scope in future years to look at water recycling and rain water collection. The proposed exemption from business rates would reduce running costs in future years.

It was noted that the transfer of toilets to other organisations had also been successful and Saints Board Riders were to be complimented on the quality of the building at Porthmeor.

The Committee also discussed possible performance monitoring. It was agreed that the Council should continue to monitor complaints. Other satisfaction methods could be investigated including an on-line survey, occasional mystery councillor inspections. A footfall monitor could also provide useful information.

The Committee requested that a sign be erected at Longstone Cemetery on the public facilities on the right hand side of the gate and that Longstone Cemetery is added as a facility in the service plan.

Island Centre

The Committee discussed the Island Centre and noted that rental income had exceeded targets and had exceeded costs.

In response to questions, the Support Services Manager noted that previous investment had included strengthening works to the upper floors which had permitted the letting of the office accommodation and Council had now approved capital investment to restore the wooden windows.

The objective now was to increase the number of regular hirers but this was linked to the need to improve decoration on the ground floor and toilet facilities longer term. Staff sickness has meant that repair works planned over the winter had not been carried out. The Committee noted the additional income generated and requested that Council let a contract for re-plastering and re-painting in the hallway, to be funded from the surplus in the income budget. The Clerk advised that the repair and maintenance budget for 2018/2019 had been fully allocated and so to commission plastering works to be carried out by a contractor would require either council approval for use of reserve funds, or for a virement from another budget line in the Island Centre cost centre.

The Committee recommended that the availability of the space be better publicised for local and community groups to attract new hirers to the hall. Also, the scale of charges meant an increase in costs for regular hirers and so there would be work to try to encourage them to continue to hire the hall.

It was noted that there had been a request to install equipment for Skyhigh Arts CIC. Councillor Andrewes explained that the works would be carried out at the cost of Skyhigh Arts, and that the CIC had public liability insurance.

New chairs were required, and these would support a broader range of uses, for example previous enquiries for language lessons.

It was acknowledged that the Island Centre would need to be better publicised to encourage new hirers. A suggestion was made that the noticeboard under the canopy at the Guildhall should be used to publicise the town council's facilities available to hire.

RESOLVED – that the 2019/2020 service plans for public conveniences and for the Island Centre are approved and adopted, with the inclusion of the amendments set out below:

- i. Public conveniences:
 - a. the installation of signage at Longstone Cemetery toilets be added as an objective under building refurbishment
 - b. timescales to be built into the objectives

- c. additional performance and contract monitoring measures be investigated
 - d. rainwater collection to be considered in future years
 - e. signage be updated to include contact details, for reporting damage etc, and complaints/compliments
 - f. investigate options for footfall monitoring (to inform works, opening times etc for the various public conveniences)
 - g. add the public convenience at Longstone Cemetery to the achievements listed, and the list of public conveniences operated by the town council
- ii. Island Centre:
- a. that funds from the additional surplus income be used to externally contract plastering and redecorating in the hall area
 - b. the Council co-ordinate better promotion and publicity of all its available spaces for hire

F.72 FINANCE REPORT

The Town Clerk introduced the report. The accounts were provided, together with the service by service narrative. Items to note included the underspends in the library budget, due to it being the first year of management. The Council had also met its income target for the guildhall and the concert hall for the first time and the Administrative Assistant was to be congratulated.

In response to a query, the Town Clerk confirmed that because of difficulty in sourcing a suitable vehicle as a second council-owned vehicle, lease charge payments had continued, depleting the funds available to make the intended purchase.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

F.73 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meeting) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following matter on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

F.74 REQUEST FOR 1:00 AM FINISH TIME FOR CONCERT HALL BOOKINGS (Paragraph 3)

The Support Services Manager introduced the report explaining that staff had received a request for a late licence in the concert hall. As a verbal update, she advised that since the time of writing, a second request had also been received. This was for an earlier time of midnight but on a Sunday evening. The Council currently have a licence until 1am but requests to extend licence times are considered on an ad hoc basis. The report asked that the Committee agree a policy based approach. This would allow the Council greater additional controls – proposed controls were set out in the report. Agreeing an annual limit to the number of late licence events would also give promoters clarity and allow the Council to decline requests which did not meet the policy or exceeded the number.

The Committee debated the proposal. Councillors had a number of questions and concerns. Noise nuisance was the main issue and the Council should explore measures for managing noise. It was also important to ensure that events were adequately staffed. If caretakers were required to lock up the venue after 1am, it would be necessary to review their rate of pay. Caretakers are currently paid double time for the midnight hour but not after 1am. The additional cost could be funded from the £75 hourly charge after midnight to hirers

RESOLVED – that the bookings policy as proposed be accepted: up to 12 events during the year may be booked with an extended licence beyond 11pm, with the further mitigating measures as set out in paragraph 7.3 of the report to Committee.

To **RECOMMEND** to Finance & General Purposes Committee that caretaking staff working after midnight be paid double time, to be funded from additional charges levied on hall hirers.

Meeting closed at 8.57 pm

Chairman