

# **FARINGDON TOWN** **COUNCIL**

The Corn Exchange, FARINGDON, Oxfordshire, SN7 7JA Telephone  
01367 240281 Fax 01367 240303

[www.faringdowntowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.faringdowntowncouncil.gov.uk) Clerk:

Sally Thurston



## **Minutes of a Venues Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at 7.15pm in the June Rennie Room, the Pump House, Faringdon**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. Julie Farmer (Chairman)  
Ian Bell  
Steve Leniec  
David Price

**In Attendance:** Mark Blatch, Bar Manager (from Min 7/2/15)  
Kealy Whenray, The Pump House Project  
Phil Matson, Venues Manager  
Liz Billson, Assistant Town Clerk

### **1/2/15 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr. Angela Finn.

### **2/2/15 Minutes of last meeting on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015**

The minutes were signed as a correct record of the meeting.

### **3/2/15 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr. Julie Farmer declared a personal interest in item 16/2/15(a) dealing with Wifi in the Corn Exchange, as Quidne IT Ltd are her clients.

### **4/2/15 Public Question Time**

No questions were received.

### **5/2/15 Public Speaking Time**

No members of public wished to speak at this time.

As the Bar Manager was not present at this stage, the Chairman proposed that his report be deferred and The Pump House Project Activity Report be brought forward on the agenda. This proposal was AGREED.

### **6/2/15 The Pump House Project Activity Report**

A written report detailing current activities at The Pump House Project (TPHP) was received and NOTED. The Project Co-ordinator, Kealy Whenray (KW), reported that her hours had been increased to 18 per week. A new website, [www.TPHP.co.uk](http://www.TPHP.co.uk), had been created.

KW outlined some of the additional projects TPHP are planning including a Family Events programme and a Youth Arts Festival.

KW explained that The Trustees of The Pump House Project are aware that the lease has one year to run. The trust are in discussions to see if the lease should/could be renewed.

KW reported that the links between The Pump House Project and FAZE were being strengthened on an on-going basis.

KW queried if it would be possible for the council to install Wifi in the Theatre. Cllr. David Price reported that there was no existing phone line in the building, and as mobile broadband is expensive, it might be worth TPHP contacting the District Council to see if the area covered by the Town Wifi could be extended.

### **7/2/15 Bar Manager's Report**

Mark Blatch (MB) reported that overall takings from the bar had continued a gradual increase, with some very strong events having taken place.

A recent 18<sup>th</sup> birthday party booking had been challenging for the bar staff. The Assistant Town Clerk confirmed that she was aware, and had discussed the issues with Jackie Smith (JS), the Bar Manager on duty during the event.

Bar takings from the cinema were unpredictable, but JS would be liaising closely with the Marketing Officer over ticket sales in future.

There was an issue with the skylight above the bar, and it was agreed that the Venues Manager would investigate.

MB enquired on behalf of a recent hirer whether it would be possible to provide changing facilities for performers in the Corn Exchange. It was AGREED that the Town Clerk should be asked to consider whether the Mayor's Parlour could be used for this.

### **8/2/15 Marketing & Publicity**

A written report from the Marketing Officer, detailing advertising and special events since the last meeting, was received and NOTED.

### **9/2/15 Venues Manager Report**

A written report from the Venues Manager was received and NOTED.

The legionella bacteria testing had been carried out and all venues had passed. The testing will be repeated at 6 monthly intervals.

The repairs to the flat roof outside the Tourist Information Office had been completed. Unfortunately, the contractors had discovered that the plywood roof needed replacing, resulting in an extra cost. The repairs to the cellar doors would be completed as soon as the weather allowed.

#### **10/2/15 Venues Bookings**

- (a) A written report from the Assistant Town Clerk detailing recent and future bookings was received and NOTED. Bookings in the Corn Exchange were down slightly on the pre-Christmas period. The Pump House bookings remained steady due to regular bookings.
- (b) A report detailing how hirers have heard about the venues they are booking was received and NOTED. The vast majority of hirers are local residents who have used the venues before.

#### **11/2/15 Security of Venues**

The Assistant Town Clerk reported that a complete review of all alarm contracts had been carried out by the Town Clerk, and all contracts for unusable alarms had been cancelled. Cllr. Julie Farmer requested that the Town Clerk be asked to investigate whether any refunds were due as a result.

#### **12/2/15 Financial Reports**

Financial reports for the Corn Exchange and the Pump House were received and NOTED. Cllr. Steve Leniec confirmed that the negative figure under income from VWHDC represented the difference between the sum of money agreed by the District Council for refurbishments to the Corn Exchange, and the sum actually received to date. Cllr. Julie Farmer requested that the Town Clerk be asked to pursue the possibility of obtaining the outstanding amount. Cllr Farmer also asked that the Assistant Town Clerk check the remaining balance in the advertising budget.

#### **13/2/15 2015/16 Budget**

A requested reduction of £750 in the 2015/16 Venues Committee budget, as agreed at the Finance Committee meeting on 21/1/15, min. no. 10/1/15 (d) (i), was discussed. It was proposed, seconded and CARRIED that amount this be taken from the advertising budget.

#### **14/2/15 Hire Charges**

A report from the Assistant Town Clerk, summarising research in to the charges and terms and conditions of hire of other local venues, was received and NOTED. Current charges across Town Council venues were found to be broadly in line with other venues. It was suggested that the existing price structure be simplified to include heating within a winter rate, and VAT within all rates. This was proposed, seconded and CARRIED.

The introduction of a refundable damage deposit was discussed, with concern being expressed as to how this could be applied uniformly across all bookings. The introduction of a £100 damage deposit was proposed, seconded and CARRIED. It was further proposed that authority be delegated to the Chairman, Vice- Chairman and Assistant Town Clerk to draw up a policy. This was seconded and CARRIED.

### **15/2/15 Fixed Wire Testing**

Quotes from Electrical Technologo-G for remedial work to the fixed wiring in the Corn Exchange and the Pump House were considered. As there were still funds in the cleaning, maintenance, advertising and security budgets it was proposed, seconded and CARRIED that these quotes be accepted.

In view of her previously declared interest in the following item, Cllr. Julie Farmer relinquished the Chair at this point. Cllr. Ian Bell took the Chair for this item only.

### **16/2/15 Corn Exchange**

- (a) A quote from Quidne IT Ltd to install Wifi in the Corn Exchange was received and considered. Cllr. Steve Leniec proposed that the outstanding electrical work should be carried out and paid for before any other projects were undertaken. This was seconded and CARRIED.

Cllr Julie Farmer resumed the Chair for the rest of the meeting.

- (b) A request from the Marketing Officer to purchase display boards for the Corn Exchange was received and considered. It was again proposed that the electrical work should be carried out and paid for first, as this was the priority, followed by the installation of the Wifi, and then the purchase of the display boards if sufficient funds remained. This was seconded and CARRIED.

### **17/2/15 S106 Contributions**

The Assistant Town Clerk reported that the Venues Committee had been asked to agree a list of projects for which S106 funding could be sought. In order to be appropriate, they should address a community need which had arisen because of new housing developments.

It was AGREED that the replacement of the wooden floor and the provision of blackout blinds for the cinema in the Corn Exchange, and the purchase of free standing lighting in the Pump House, could be suitable projects. Cllr. David Price suggested that the external lift in the Pump House should also be included.

### **18/2/15 Utilities Contracts**

Following some discussion, it was proposed, seconded and CARRIED that the services of LSI Utility Brokers be retained. It was further proposed that 3 year fixed term contracts with SSE for gas and electricity in all venues be approved. This was seconded and CARRIED.

### **19/2/15 Strategic Working Party Recommendations**

- (a) Draft Terms of Reference for the Venues Committee were received and considered. No amendments being proposed, the Terms of Reference were AGREED.

- (b) After some discussion, it was AGREED that authority be delegated to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Assistant Town Clerk to agree a 3 year plan for Venues and be considered at the next meeting.
- (c) It was AGREED that authority be delegated to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Assistant Town Clerk to agree a maintenance plan for 2015/16 with the Venues Manager and should be considered at the next meeting.

### **20/2/15 For Information Only**

A progress report on actions arising from the previous meeting of the Venues Committee held on 13 January 2015 was received and NOTED, as follows:-

| <b>Min No.</b> | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Person/s Delegated</b> | <b>Action Taken</b>   |
|----------------|--|---------------------------|---|
| 23/14          | Information board to be installed at front of Pump House   | Venues Team               | Planning Department contacted for advice on whether Listed Building consent required.   |
| 63/14(a)       | CCTV: Recommendation to be made to Town Council to vote against use of CCTV as a matter of Town Council Policy                                 | Assistant Town Clerk      | Item on agenda for discussion at Town Council Meeting 11 February 2015. Deferred to Town Council Meeting 11 March 2015 (min 14/3/15 (a)). |
| 79/14(b)       | Hire charges: research to be carried out in to hire charges at other local venues in preparation for a review of prices for new financial year | Assistant Town Clerk      | Assistant Town Clerk to provide report for Venues Committee meeting 17 March 2015.  |
| 85/14          | Gas and electricity consumption: to provide a breakdown for the Corn Exchange and the Pump House   | Assistant Town Clerk      | LSI Utility Brokers approached.   |
| 8/1/15         | Marketing: To provide feedback from hirers as to where they heard about the venues   | Assistant Town Clerk      | Report to be presented to Venues Committee meeting 17 March 2015.   |
| 8/1/15         | Marketing: To introduce a feedback sheet for hirers  | Assistant Town Clerk      | Feedback sheet now in use.  |

|             |   |                                      |  |
|-------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| 11/1/15     | Strategic Working Party Recommendations: formulation of a 3 year plan and a maintenance plan for Venues- deferred to next meeting                   | Assistant Town Clerk                 | Item on agenda for discussion at Venues Committee meeting 17 March 2015.                                     |
| 12/1/15 (b) | Damage deposits: To investigate whether other venues charge damage deposits   | Assistant Town Clerk                 | Report to be presented to Venues Committee meeting 17 March 2015.  |
| 12/1/15 (d) | Bookings: to investigate the possibility of using a Google calendar for bookings and whether this would be compatible with the Town Council website | Town Clerk/ Assistant Town Clerk     | Will be progressed once new Microshade IT system in place.   |
| 13/1/15     | Security of Venues: purchase of additional keys for Pump House to enable internal doors to be locked  | Assistant Town Clerk/ Venues Manager | Keys not yet cut due to budget constraints.  |
| 13/1/15     | Security of Venues: review of alarm systems   | Assistant Town Clerk                 | Assistant Town Clerk to report back to Venues Committee meeting 17 March 2015.                               |
| 16/1/15     | Pump House water bills: to claim re-imburement of increased water bills from The Pump House Project   | Assistant Town Clerk                 | Being progressed.  |
| 17/1/15 (b) | PPL/ PRS licences: to seek further clarification of the situation regarding the need to have these licences   | Assistant Town Clerk                 | To be included in review of hire charges and terms and conditions at Venues Committee Meeting 17 March 2015. |
| 19/1/15     | Future meetings: to consult with Town Clerk on possible change of day for Venues Committee  | Assistant Town Clerk                 | Meetings to be held on Wednesdays from May 2015.   |