

IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of The Watermark Committee meeting held at The Watermark on 25th January 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present: Cllr T Munro (In the Chair)
Cllr M Cade
Cllr P Dredge
Cllr T Parsons

In Attendance: Mr J Parsons (Town Clerk)
Mr R Bibby (Watermark Manager)
Mrs P Cleal (Senior Finance Officer)

WM21/20 **APOLOGIES:** Apologies were received from Cllrs Bowden and Rea.

WM21/21 **INTERESTS TO BE DECLARED:** No interests were declared.

WM21/22 **TRADING INFORMATION:** Members considered the income and expenditure information (report previously circulated). Cllr Dredge informed Members of the trading information starting with the Information Area which is at a break even position. The Watermark Rooms have received reasonable income for the month so were doing well. Live Artists were showing a small loss currently but this is due to timing differences regarding income and expenditure. One event prior to Christmas, tickets had sold very well but with the COVID Omicron variant many decided not to attend, although no refunds were given Bar sales were less than anticipated. The Watermark Manager mentioned there were less buffets and also fewer customers which in part could be due to Omicron. Cllr Dredge mentioned that the buildings were ahead of budget and had received grant income at the beginning of the year. He also highlighted that the Business Centre income was ahead of budget. Cllr Parsons added many businesses had struggled and he thanked the staff for their work during very difficult circumstances.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive the trading information.

WM21/23 **WATERMARK MANAGER REPORT:** The Committee considered the Watermark Manager's report (copy previously circulated). The Watermark Manager informed Members that December had been a very busy month with Christmas Dinners and some good films screening in the Cinema. He mentioned there are some good films booked for February but as the College had hired the venue for exams and The Tamaritans Theatre Company in late January, we are unable to use the Cinema for January. The Watermark Manager mentioned the event prior to Christmas, Mad Dog Mcrea thicket sells had been very good but the attendance was around 150 which was due to the Omicron variant and people deciding not to attend. He also mentioned that the Sunday Lunch

and screening of Andre Rieu was well attended and would be looking to repeat again later in the year. Neil Sands was very popular and many of those who attended have booked for the event in May. The Jersey Boys event was a sell out, however, bar sales were less than anticipated.

The Watermark Manager informed Members that the lift, the heat pumps and air conditioning were awaiting repairs. Also some remedial works have been carried out on one of the chillers in the kitchen.

Some vandalism had occurred to the outside seating and the Police were in contact with the families and costs were being recovered with regard to the damaged umbrella stands and bases. Cllr Parsons added that at the Full Council meeting the evening before vandalism in the town had been discussed.

The Watermark Manager updated the Members regarding the recent Health and Safety incident which occurred in the Watermark and informed them this was being investigated. Cllr Parsons suggested that a letter be sent to the staff involved acknowledging their swift attendance and actions.

With regard to the finance performance the Watermark Manager outlined how difficult the last two years have been due to restrictions and the circumstances with Covid and the latest variant. There are shortfalls in the Information Area regarding the compostable bags where sales have significantly decreased. Cllr Cade enquired about the possibility of selling Compost Bins through the Information Area. The Watermark Manager agreed to look into this and added that they continue to look for items to sell but added it is difficult to find a product that will sell in high volumes. He also added that although businesses are not holding or arranging face to face meetings or holding training courses as previously we are currently reviewing the booking process, pricing structure and advertising. As restrictions lift over the next year, this will give an idea of how trends may have changed if at all.

It was **RESOLVED** to: note and receive the Watermark Manager's report and Cllr Munro to write to the Staff involved in the Health and Safety incident.

The meeting closed at 7.09pm.

Signed: Dated:
Chairman