

IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of The Watermark Committee meeting held at The Watermark on 29th March 2022 at 6.30pm

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

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

A minute's silence was held in respect of the Mrs Lesley Hughes who was Town Clerk for 20 years, who recently passed away.

WM21/24 **APOLOGIES:** There were no apologies.

WM21/25 **INTERESTS TO BE DECLARED:** No interests were declared.

WM21/26 **TRADING INFORMATION:** Members considered the income and expenditure information (report previously circulated). Cllr Dredge informed Members of the trading information referring to the final page of the Income and Expenditure report, explaining there was a small loss for the month and the accumulative loss was showing 35K which was considerably less than an earlier provisional forecast of 55K. Month 12 as the final month is where the accounts are finalised and payments accrued where necessary to give as accurate accounts as possible. There has been a pay award agreed which is back dated to April 2021 and will show in the March figures. There has also been some sickness with Watermark staff and general in March the coffee shop has been quieter and this will also be reflected in month 12 figures.

The Information Area shows as break even and the Watermark Rooms the salaries appear high against budget. The Cinema is showing a small profit which given the circumstances is a good result. Live artists although showing a small loss have been well attended and shows in the Bar figures which are good. The Buildings is also below budget and the Business Units exceeding budget which is excellent.

With regard to salaries appearing over budget it can be difficult to attribute the salaries in the different areas, so some may be overspent and others under, overall the salaries are under budget and allowance was made with regard to the salary increase to be paid in March.

Cllr Munro enquired about debtors and Cllr Dredge informed him that this had been discussed at the Policy and Resources meeting the previous night but that there no issues regarding the Watermark.

Cllr Parsons congratulated all staff involved in the results which are very good considering the circumstances and uncertainty of the Pandemic, he congratulated the Watermark Manager with regard to the service and facilities available. Cllr Parsons mentioned his family had attended the cinema and noted it was well attended, he also hoped that in the future more conferences will be booked.

Cllr Munro enquired about costs with recent increases in mind and the Watermark Manager replied that they are always looking at costs and alternatives but from April prices will be increases by 10% as stated in his report at item WM21/27.

Cllr Rea enquired about how salaries are split across the centres and how these are decided. Cllr Dredge replied that at the time of setting budgets the Senior Finance Officer and the Watermark Manager meet to discuss the budget for the forthcoming year, in 2021 this was undertaken by the Town Clerk, as The Watermark Manager new in post, and the Senior Finance Officer. It can be difficult to predict the salaries across the centres

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

WM21/27

WATERMARK MANAGER REPORT: The Committee considered the Watermark Manager's report (copy previously circulated).

The Watermark Manager informed Members that there was increased footfall in the coffee shop and the coffee shop was doing very well, although there has been some staff sickness in the last two weeks. A 10% price increase is to be implemented from 4th April 2022 to help cover rise in costs. The Catering Manager is always checking regarding alternatives and suppliers to keep costs as low as possible.

The Cinema has been busy with some very good films and on 1st and 2nd April 2022 The Watermark is involved with the 'Thriving Ivybridge' project which will be a platform for community groups and businesses to showcase what they offer the residents of Ivybridge. On the 2nd April 2022 there will be an Artisan Market and an opportunity to Meet The Councillors.

The Watermark lift and air-conditioning has been repaired although these figures will not show until March 2022. The satellite dish also had to be replaced due to damage from storm Eunice and there has been works to the atrium smoke vents and a leak in the ladies' toilets has been repaired and remedial cosmetic works are due to be completed.

The Watermark Manager informed Members that the Coffee Machine will need to be replaced and that he would investigate costs regarding purchasing a new machine or to lease and he would include in his report at the next Watermark Meeting.

The recent Tamaritans Theatre Company event attracted new customers who also purchased tickets for future events and cinema, some also signed up for the newsletter which is encouraging. Although encouraging signs it will take into the next financial year to establish new trends or spending patterns and see the effects.

Cllr Rea enquired about events The Watermark may be hosting for the Platinum Jubilee, the Watermark Manager informed the members that he was in discussion with staff regarding possible events and would be finalising in the next couple of weeks.

Cllr Munro enquired how we promote events and cinema and how they compare to other venues. The Watermark Manager replied all events etc are advertised through social media, in local publications and the What's On booklet available in the Watermark. With regard to comparing costs, ticket prices are slightly higher, however this could be attributed to the convenience of the venue being local and no need to travel into Plymouth or further.

Cllr Cade enquired if consideration had been given to selling milkshakes, The Watermark Manager said he would discuss with the Catering Manager as this may broaden the customer base especially in the afternoons. The Watermark Manager did highlight that space in the Coffee Shop was limited but he would research this and bring a report to the Committee.

Cllr Rea proposed the Chairman write to thank Mr Bowden for his contribution to the Committee and Cllr Parsons seconded.

It was RESOLVED that the Watermark Manager research purchasing or leasing a new coffee machine and to discuss with the Catering Manager the possibility of selling milkshakes. Also, Cllr Munro as Chairman to write to Mr Bowden.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Signed: Dated:
Chairman