

IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of The Watermark Committee meeting held via zoom on 16th March 2021 at 6.30 pm

Present: Cllr P Dredge(Chairman)
Cllr T Bowden
Cllr M Cade
Cllr Parsons

In Attendance: Cllr A Spencer
Mr J Parsons (Town Clerk)
Mrs P Cleal (Senior Finance Officer)

WM20/17 **APOLOGIES:** Apologies received from Cllr K Pringle.

WM20/18 **INTERESTS TO BE DECLARED:** No interests were declared.

WM20/19 **TRADING INFORMATION:** Members considered the income and expenditure information (report previously circulated). Cllr Dredge informed Members that the shortfall in the month was £5267 and there had been income regarding room hiring and calendar sales where there was a timing difference and the expenditure was in a previous month. To date the shortfall is £45K however initially when the projected figures were considered very early last year a worst case scenario was possibly in the region of £140K. Grants of approximately £33300 have been received to the end of January 2021 with grants of £15K received in February 2021, further grants are also anticipated. We have also received substantial furlough payments. In addition, the rates are paid over 10 months so no payments are due in February and March 2021. It is hoped that the current shortfall can be sustained to the end of the financial year. Cllr Dredge highlighted the Town Clerk with support from the Senior Finance Officer had worked very hard in sourcing and obtaining grants and implementing the furlough scheme which has been extremely helpful. Cllr Parsons added his appreciation to the Town Clerk for the excellent work undertaken during very difficult circumstances and thanked him and the Senior Finance Officer.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive the trading information and to thank the Town Clerk and Senior Finance Officer.

WM20/20 **BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT:** The Committee considered the Town Clerk's report (copy previously circulated). The Town Clerk referred to his report and outlined that with regard to dates for any changes these would be in-line with the lockdown rules which may change depending on guidelines. He mentioned that the room hire regarding education and health had decreased due to the fact no exams are being held and the Covid vaccinations are being undertaken elsewhere unlike the flu vaccinations. However, there were smaller bookings still being made and the Library was partially open and needed facilitating. The short date stock is being donated to the Food Bank

where appropriate. Through the pandemic the top floor units have continued to work where they could which has sustained regular income. The Town Clerk mentioned that approximately £15K in grants had been received and were included in the February figures and a further grant from the BFI has been applied for. Also South Hams District Council were refunding the licence fee for last year.

Cllr Cade questioned if any maintenance works were required as the building is quieter and this could be an ideal time, the Town Clerk replied that there were no major works required that would require the building to be closed and most of the equipment is separate from the public areas so minimal disruption would be incurred if works are required. Some works would be undertaken in the early part of next financial year and had been budgeted for. Cllr Cade also enquired about the job description for the new Watermark Manager, the Town Clerk informed him that this would be taken to the Personnel committee so that when the time is right to recruit this would be in place and would be discussed at a future Personnel committee.

Cllr Parsons thanked the Town Clerk and staff for their excellent work and Cllr Bowden agreed.

The Town Clerk informed Members he had attended a meeting with other South Hams towns to discuss ideas to encourage people to shop locally when the rules are relaxed. He explained this may inform when the Watermark might re-open. Due to the rules only outside seating will be available to start with and he was meeting with the Catering Manager to discuss the feasibility, costings and menu which could be offered.

The Town Clerk informed Members that one member of staff was on maternity leave and if temporary cover was required then this would be taken to Personnel.

The Town Clerk informed Members that the box office software had been a three-year contract and had ended, however due to the current situation it is recommended that we continue for a further year with the current provider as they have been very supportive and accommodating by reducing fees for this financial year and next. The contact can be reviewed later in the year.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- i) agree to extend the Ticketsolve contract by one year on improved terms
- ii) delegate the re-opening plan to the Town Clerk subject to him consulting the committee

The meeting closed at 7pm.

Signed: Dated:

Chairman