

IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of The Watermark Committee meeting held via zoom on 26th January 2021 at 6.45 pm

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

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

WM20/13 **APOLOGIES:** There were no apologies for absence.

WM20/14 **INTERESTS TO BE DECLARED:** No interests were declared.

WM20/15 **TRADING INFORMATION:** Members considered the income and expenditure information (report previously circulated). Cllr Dredge informed Members that two further grants have been received and the coffee shop had opened for a short time in December prior to Christmas. There have been some bookings from the College regarding exams and some room bookings for DCC have been held. The business floor was continuing where able to and the furlough scheme is a great help as well as grants which have already been received. Cllr Dredge added that considering the possible outcome predicted last year it is hoped the deficit will be much less. Cllr Dredge thanked all staff.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive the trading information and to thank staff.

WM20/16 **BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT:** The Committee considered the Town Clerk's report (copy previously circulated). The Town Clerk referred to his report outlining the coffee shop had opened for a short period in December until Christmas Eve. There have been a few bookings from the College which is positive and a few further dates next week have also been booked. Some DCC bookings have continued which are for an exempt activity. The staff furlough scheme has been extremely helpful especially as this is flexible and the supervisors have been working on a rota basis when bookings are in the building.

The Town Clerk informed Members that wherever possible any out of date stock is given to the local Food Bank and any alcohol sold on line as a licence was obtained via South Hams District Council for this purpose. The Town Clerk informed Members that a very good team effort had helped to identify possible ways to make savings and the Senior Finance Officer and Finance Officer are monitoring the figures closely.

The Town Clerk thanked South Hams District Council for their help in identifying possible grants to apply for, which will be in the accounts for January 2021. A grant has been awarded by the BFI which will also be in the accounts for January 2021. There may also be a possibility of a further grant from the BFI which will be investigated. Cllr Cade enquired if there were any conditions attached to the BFI grant and the Town Clerk explained the grant was based on fixed outgoings and costs allocated to the cinema including staffing.

Once the lockdown is lifted the coffee shop will open first as it did with the previous lockdown and this will be monitored with regard to the feasibility of opening and all the supervisors are fully aware of the procedures which need to be in place and how to reopen the building once we are able to which can be up and running in a very short space of time.

Live events are more uncertain and appear to be very unlikely until much later in the year. There are some events booked which may have to be postponed and the cinema is also looking more likely to be opening later in the year with big film releases being pushed back until the autumn.

Cllr Dredge referred to the recruitment of a new Manager for the Watermark and asked other Members if they felt this was something that could wait until later in the year once there was more certainty. Cllr Bowden agreed as did all Members of the Committee. Cllr Parsons thanked the Town Clerk, Senior Finance Officer, Finance Officer and all staff and mentioned the three supervisors doing an excellent job. Cllr Munro enquired about the staff who are on furlough to ensure they were coping with the pressures of the lockdown. The Town Clerk reassured the Committee that staff were in contact regularly with him and as a group. Cllr Dredge enquired as to whether further reallocation of duties within the existing team is possible and the Town Clerk advised this matter is for the Personnel Committee to consider.

Cllr Dredge enquired about the Library services and the Town Clerk replied that there was a very limited service available on an invitation system.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and note the report and to thank all staff for their efforts during this difficult time.

The meeting closed at 7.05 pm.

Signed: Dated:

Chairman