

Manager's report to The Watermark Committee

November 2021

**1. General**

The building is getting busier. The coffee shop seems to be very busy most days and after some sales data analysis, Saturdays have certainly picked up sometimes taking more than some weekdays.

We've started to see some regular room bookers back in the building which is great however it still a little quiet.

We've got an excellent programme of cinema and events from now until Christmas that we're hoping will pull a lot of customers in.

**2. Building Maintenance**

We've had some movement of tenants on the top floor which has involved removing an archway in a wall between units 6&7. The works are now complete.

New valves have been fitted to the heating pumps and we've had the air-con system properly assessed for repair so servicing can take place.

The dishwasher and coffee machine have both received various visit and repairs from maintenance companies. Unfortunately, these pieces of equipment are of an age where increased and continued maintenance is required.

Pre-pandemic Jonathan received a quote to change all lighting fittings to LED. We're re-investigating this to become eco-friendlier but also in efforts to reduce our energy overheads, especially with the imminent rise in energy bills.

**3. Staffing**

I took over from Jonathan as Manager of The Watermark on 6<sup>th</sup> October. All existing Watermark and Town Hall staff have been extremely welcoming and helpful since my arrival. I am settling in well and starting to get to grips with things in what is a very dynamic environment.

A Watermark Supervisor has resigned, however due to the challenging time period between their resignation, my arrival, and the hiring of a new supervisor, they have agreed to re-join us as 'Watermark Assistant' on a twelve hour a week contract until the end of February.

Following on nicely, after an extended recruitment process involving a little back and forth, I am pleased to announce that a new Supervisor will be joining us from 1<sup>st</sup> December.

#### 4. Health and Safety

Staff online training is taking place.

We have had a number of first aid incidents in October however all were due to casualty prior existing medical conditions. Reports and investigations have been completed.

#### 5. Financial performance

	2019-2020	2021-2022	Difference*
Information Centre	£4,113.00	-£15.00	-£4,128.00
Room Hire	£13,488.00	£3,143.00	-£10,345.00
Cinema	£3,708.00	£1,909.00	-£1,799.00
Live Artists	£2,922.00	-£3,912.00	-£6,834.00
Catering	£907.00	-£211.00	-£1,118.00
Bar	£5,468.00	£77.00	-£5,391.00
Buildings	-£60,884.00	-£38,874.00	£22,010.00
Business Centre	£12,289.00	£14,896.00	£2,607.00
	-£17,990	-£22,987.00	-£4,997.00

Following the Covid-19 pandemic it's difficult to predict peoples new social and spending habits. The coffee shop has been very busy but is currently over shadowed by the deficit in function catering. From the sales trends we are currently seeing in the coffee shop, I'm confident we can hit targets and help to cover deficits in over cost centres. Despite this, I think it is inevitable due to the restricted business and pandemic we will be ending the year in deficit.

This also makes it very difficult to predict next year's budget as we still don't fully understand new social and spending habits and 'The New Normal'. Between the Town Clerk, the Senior Finance Officer and I we have done our best to predict what we hope are achievable targets however due to the imminent rise in cost of living, I anticipate our prices for room hire, catering (including coffee shop) and the bar may have to increase. I'm reluctant to increase cinema tickets as I think this will have a negative effect on sales and likewise box office percentages.

**Ross Bibby**  
**Watermark Manager**