

September 2022

1. Building Maintenance & Security

Maintenance has been ongoing with issues with further leaks, the lift, stair window, and general maintenance.

This must continue to keep the building safe and also protect our business by presenting ourselves in a professional manner.

The P&R Committee approved upgrading of all lighting to LED which will be covered by the Climate Emergency fund and will not only reduce the carbon foot print of the building but save energy and maintenance costs as there will be no lamps to change. This should be completed by November.

2. Events

The team have been very busy with many varied events from new and returning customers. Including a breakfast meeting for 150 people, full day wedding including sit down dinner and evening buffet, smaller weddings, birthday parties, and others.

Lots of positive comments have come in over this extremely busy period, including this example:

I just wanted to say a big thank you on behalf of X for a lovely evening celebrating her 60th birthday party. The staff member who was helping us that evening was so lovely & made the evening more special for X.

They have also been continuing cinema and live satellite events and live music events. Satellite events have been fairly busy as have music and comedy gigs with good ticket sales. Although nearly at pre-pandemic levels, it is clear our regulars are tightening their belts now due to the cost of living rises.

Some events have been cancelled by promoters, and a comedy gig had to be postponed last minute due to the sad death of The Late Queen. The work involved in moving events is very labour intensive, but does not generate any extra income.

This has been extremely challenging for team, especially since the departure of The Watermark Manager in late August. The reduction of one persons hours has a large effect on the time available to deliver excellent service and keep the building running smoothly. There has also been the ongoing anti-social behaviour issues which adds to stress levels.

There are some larger bookings coming up and the team are managing the diary carefully to maximise income while coping with a reduced staffing.

3. Financial performance

	2019-2020	2021-2022	2022-2023
Information Centre	-£ 40.00	£ 465.00	-£ 310.00
Room Hire	-£ 817.00	£ 1,491.00	£ 5,396.00
Cinema	-£ 2,427.00	£ 392.00	£ 5,897.00
Live Artists	-£ 2,653.00	-£ 3,313.00	-£ 267.00
Catering	-£ 10,130.00	-£ 4,520.00	-£ 2,445.00
Bar	-£ 907.00	-£ 1,505.00	£ 3,852.00
Buildings	-£ 31,309.00	-£ 26,158.00	-£ 47,069.00
Business Centre	£ 10,131.00	£ 10,829.00	£ 10,231.00
Total	-£ 38,152.00	-£ 22,319.00	-£ 24,715.00

The finance situation is still frustrating. Costs have escalated in the Catering and bar areas, but customers are cutting their cloth and so there is a perfect storm holding these areas back still despite Covid fading away somewhat.

Buildings is showing a large expenditure compared to previous year. Partly explained by having the Watermark manager in position until the end of August (Month 5) and also the catch-up maintenance that was postponed during the Covid period.

The team are working to minimise expenditure, encourage more use through delivering great service to room hirers and attendees at events and the coffee shop.

Jonathan Parsons

Town Clerk