

Report of a Meeting between Representatives of Wem Town Council and Wem Town Hall Community Trust held on Tuesday 29th November 2016 at 4 p.m. in Wem Town Hall.

Present:-Cllrs Mrs C Granger (Chairman), Cllr P Broomhall, Cllr E Towers and Cllr Mrs R Dodd. Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

R Owens, R Reeves, R Horner, (Wem Town Hall Community Trust).

1. Appointment of Chairman

Resolved:-to appoint Cllr Granger as Chairman for the ensuing year.

2. Apologies for absence

Resolved:-to accept the following apology
Cllr Mrs P. Dee

3. To approve as a correct record the minutes of a meeting of this Working Group held on 8th December 2015.

Resolved:-that the report from the meeting of this Working Party held on 8th December 2015 be approved and signed as correct record.

4. To receive an update from the representatives of the Trust.

Market update

Rose Horner updated the group on the situation with lettings for the indoor and outdoor market stalls. It was reported that the indoor market was doing well with most stalls full each week and a good mix of stalls. It was reported that the outdoor market also had some new traders making use of it and there had been no major issues over the course of the year. A discussion took place on the need to encourage stallholders to close later especially in the indoor market as stalls are often closed by lunchtime when new customers arrived.

Activity report

The activity report for the past year was presented by Rose Horner and questions were asked about recent activities including any plans the Town Hall had for putting on more dementia related projects.

Financial Report

Mr Reeves presented the accounts to date and reported that 2015/16 year ended with a surplus of £7000. This was due mainly to a popular programme of events and reduced staffing costs due to maternity leave. It was reported that a loss was anticipated for the current financial year due to issues with grant fund applications that were outside the control of the Town Hall. Wem into Work has been particularly affected as the main grant application had to be deferred due to changes in the application process which meant that the shortfall in funds for the project could not be made up by other funders as most of the grants available were from lottery funding. However what grant applications that it had been possible to submit had been largely successful. Another factor for the projected loss was due to this increased expenditure on essential maintenance work and replacement equipment.

A question was asked about the reduction in estimated income from lettings in the budget for 2017-18. It was reported that this reduction will be due to the fact that Media Active may be relocating to a smaller room in the building and that their rent would reduce accordingly. However it was anticipated that by freeing up the upstairs room there would be an increased income from the hire of this room as it could be used for smaller functions.

It was also reported that Shropshire Council's grant will be reduced again and that there was no information as to how long the grant would continue.

5. To consider any other issues raised

Volunteers - It was reported that there were up to 50 people registered as volunteers for the Town Hall. The work of the volunteers is highly valued and helps to keep overall costs down.

Vision for the Town Hall

A discussion took place on what the trustees long term vision for the Town Hall was. It was reported that the hall is in the early stages of working on a joint grant application to run an intergenerational project which if successful could be an exciting new initiative for the Town.

Whilst trustees are keen to develop the services on offer in the hall, space continues to be a limiting factor on the development of the hall.

Exhibition area

The area is still used by artists and can bring in a significant income. It was reported that a request had been received from the Town Clerk to utilise the space in the run up to the Town Council elections in order to raise the profile of the Town Council and encourage people to stand for election. However due to existing bookings for the space this may not be possible. Councillors requested that an alternative space be found if possible as it was important to promote the elections.

Trustees

It was reported that there was a vacancy for 2 trustees with either business acumen and / or marketing experience and that these vacancies are to be advertised.

Library

A discussion took place on the future of Wem Library once the lease on the library finishes in 2021. It was agreed that the Town Hall and Town Council should work together to identify options to enable a library service of some sort to continue to be offered to residents of Wem.

Meeting ended 17.10

Chairman