

**CORN EXCHANGE WORKING PARTY MEETING OF
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 1 March 2021

At 5.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne J Aitman	L Duncan J King
Officers:	Adam Clapton Tomas Smith Nicky Cayley	Deputy Town Clerk Venue & Events Officer Project Officer
Others:	no members of the public.	

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

3 MINUTES

The Working Party received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Corn Exchange Working Party meeting held on 11 January 2021 are an accurate account and should be signed by the Chair.

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

5 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

As there were no members of the public present, it was not necessary to resolve that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

6 **CORN EXCHANGE PHASE TWO REFURBISHMENT**

Members received and considered the report of the Venue Manager concerning the development of the Main Hall at the Corn Exchange and noted correspondence from Witney Town Hall Charity concerning an unsuccessful grant request.

The Working Party discussed the merits of three theatrical consultant quotes presented as part of the report, the companies quoting to provide a technical specification for tendering on seating, lighting and audio equipment. The commitment to create a desirable community arts facility performing space for Witney was re-affirmed and it was agreed that additional elements offered in the quotes, concerning continuing project management would be beneficial in ensuring a quality product.

Members welcomed Mr T Powell's offer of assistance with the project, and as a former Corn Exchange user and theatrical advisor, his expertise in discussions with the consultants on the technical tender specification would be invaluable. The Working Party agreed that further consultation with potential user groups should take place, possibly before the Town Council goes to tender on each element; A webinar presentation or meetings might be possible formats and the consultants may be able to assist with this in consultation with officers.

There was further discussion on the maximum number of persons permitted in the Main Hall under fire regulations and it was agreed clarification was needed.

The Working Party were grateful to receive confirmation that a second door was not required for the main kitchen and agreed that a serving hatch was not necessary at this time.

RECOMMENDED:

1. That the report be noted, and: -
2. That Drama by Design be employed as consultants on the refurbishment of the Main Hall at the Corn Exchange to include seating, lighting and audio elements. The cost being £7350.00, covered from the existing consultancy budget for the project, and
3. That an additional budget of £2000.00 is requested from the Town Council to cover construction supervision by Drama by Design at a cost of £4200.00, and
4. That Mr T Powell is invited to meet with the consultants to advise on equipment required as a former user and theatre production advisor, and
5. That the timeframe and format for consultation with user groups be delegated to the Project Officer and Venue & Events Officer and brought back to the next meeting, and
6. That no further works are undertaken on a second entrance or hatch to the main kitchen at the Corn Exchange, and
7. That Officers confirm the maximum capacity of the Main Hall, seated and un-seated prior to any discussion with the consultants and report back to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at: 5.45 pm

Chair