

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

**Held on Thursday, 2 December 2021**

**At 4.30 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

**Present:**

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman L Duncan	A D Harvey J King
Officers:	Nicky Cayley Adam Clapton Tomas Smith Simon Wright	Project Officer Deputy Town Clerk Venue & Events Officer Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	No members of the public.	

**5 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L Ashbourne.

**6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**7 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Working Party held on 7 October 2021 were received and adopted.

**8 CORN EXCHANGE SEATING CONTRACT UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Projects Officer providing an update in respect of the installation of retractable seating at the Corn Exchange.

Members noted the reasons for the revised seating layout and the reduction in the number of seats from 138 to 134. The Working Party was advised there would be no additional cost as there were cost-neutral amendments and that it was deemed satisfactory by fire safety professionals. The Working Party discussed options for increasing the number of seats in the future and whether the new layout would impact on capacity for standing events.

Discussion ensued regarding the preferred colour for the seats and the options for ensuring that blackout materials were used on the windows. Members agreed that the seating should be blue to match the existing seats in the venue.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the revised seating layout be approved at no additional cost;
2. That, the seating be coloured blue to match existing seats in the venue.

9 **CORN EXCHANGE & 1863 CAFÉ BAR OPERATIONS 2022/23**

The Working Party considered the report of the Venue & Events Officer regarding the operation of the Corn Exchange & 1863 Café Bar.

Members discussed a number of suggestions including revised opening hours, provision of hot food, new equipment, Town Council run events and associated staffing and budget issues.

The Working Party expressed their support for the proposals and indicated that it was important to maximise the use of the venue and Café Bar and the Council would need the staff to ensure this could happen.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the proposed general public opening times for the 1863 café bar of Monday – Saturday 9am-6pm (Closed Sunday) be approved;
2. That, the proposal to introduce a limited hot food offer at the café bar be approved;
3. That, the purchase of the equipment, at a cost of £3800 be approved;
4. That, the Town Council events budget for 2022/23 be set at £8000;
5. That, an increase in the caretaking staff budget of 25 hours per week approved;
6. That, the above-mentioned budget request be considered by Council as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process; and
7. That, If the above operations are agreed, that, changes take effect once all necessary arrangements, equipment and staffing is in place and should be reviewed by this Working Party/Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments.

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The meeting closed at: 5.10 pm

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Chair