

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

Held on Monday, 16 May 2022

At 4.30 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne J Aitman	L Duncan A D Harvey
Officers:	Nicky Cayley Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie Tomas Smith	Project Officer Deputy Town Clerk Halls & Green Spaces Administrator Venue & Events Officer
Others:	Andrew Stone – Drama by Design	

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Working Party held on 7 March 2022 were received and adopted.

4 AUDIO, LIGHTING AND SEATING UPDATE

The Working Party considered the report of the Project Officer. Confirmation was given that the installation of the audio and lighting was progressing to plan.

In respect of retractable seating it was reported that officers had been made aware of a health & Safety concern and had been advised by the consultants, employed by the town council to provide technical expertise on the project, that a structural survey should be taken in order to guarantee proposed loading calculations on the weight of the seating.. Discussion ensued in respect of legislative requirements, financial implications, timescales, responsibility for the contract and governance issues.

It was agreed that the survey needed to be undertaken and it was confirmed that budget was available once costs were known but this would need to fast-tracked due to timescales as a delegation by the Town Clerk, and to be ratified by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee. Members requested that a review of the contract be instigated to ensure that all statutory requirements were being met.

The Working Party received a quote in respect of the zoning of lighting in the hall. Members expressed support for the principle of the works but urged caution in light of previous discussions regarding the structural survey. It was suggested and agreed that the lighting be supported and implemented if the survey is satisfactory but if there are issues identified then the matter be reconsidered.

It was noted that the provision of fire alarms had been agreed by the Town Clerk under delegated powers and it was agreed that the implementation also be paused until the survey report is finalised.

Recommended:

1. That, a survey to establish load bearing capacity of the floor be undertaken with the costs being met from contingency funds and subject to approval by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee;
2. That, officers be requested to review the contract to ensure that all statutory requirements are being met;
3. That, the zoned lighting be agreed subject to a satisfactory survey with the matter being reconsidered by the Working Party if issues are identified in the report; and
4. To note the provision of fire alarms agreed under delegated powers by the Town Clerk.

5 **CORN EXCHANGE SHOWCASE EVENTS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Project Officer. The Venue & Events Officer outlined the proposed activities, in partnership with local organisations, to showcase the facility.

It was suggested that a poetry showcase/open mic event, a performance by Witney Town Band and OXMAT could be included as part of the event. Officers agreed to contact the additional participants and if members had any further suggestions they should let the Venue & Events Officer know. In respect of the opening it was noted that an actress with links to Witney had been approached subject to her availability. After discussion it was agreed that the opening may need to be delayed if she was not available on 22 July.

Note: Councillor Ashbourne left the meeting at 4.55pm

Recommended:

1. That, the proposals for the showcase event be noted and other participants be approached as outlined at the meeting;
2. That, any further suggestions be made directly to the Venue & Events Officer;
3. That, the date for the opening be confirmed once the availability of participants was known

The meeting closed at: 5.11 pm

Chair