#### In the Chair: Councillor C. Wise

**Attendance:**

A. Cllr. D. Baverstock P. Cllr. J. Critchley

P. Cllr. J. Burnage P. Cllr. K. Dunleavey

P. Cllr. J. Cairney -. Cllr. M. Southey

P. Cllr. M. Cooper P. Cllr. J. Parker

P. Cllr. I. Culley P. Cllr. C. Wise

Chief Officer: Judith Giles Present:

Public: 0 Mark Edgerley – Town Centre Manager

Debbie Forder – Events Manager

Howard Brisland – Building Manager

1. **APOLOGIES**

None

1. **CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN 2020-121**

Cllr. K. Dunleavey proposed Cllr. C. Wise as Chair, seconded by Cllr. J. Burnage

**CARRIED**

Cllr. J. Parker proposed Cllr. Cllr. I. Culley as Vice Chair, seconded by Cllr. J. Burnage

**CARRIED**

1. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

None

1. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Building & Town Committee Meeting held on 11th February 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. J. Parker

**SECONDED:** Cllr. K. Dunleavey

**CARRIED**

**Matters Arising** – None

1. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION -** None
2. **ARCHIVIST REPORT –** None
3. **REVIEW OF BOOKINGS**
4. **TOWN HALL**

The Events Manager reported the income for 2019-20 has exceeded budgeted income. However, it was noted due to COVID-19 and the closure of the Town Hall the income for 2020-21 will not reach targeted budget income. At this stage it is not known to what extent.

1. **REVIEW OF FILMSHOWS**

No Filmshows have been shown since mid March 2020 due to COVID-19. A discussion was held and it was agreed the Filmshows will not re-commence until Government Guidelines allow no social distancing.

1. **FINANCE REPORT**

The Chief Officer presented Month 1 Finance Report to the Committee. Concern was raised with regards to the Income for 2020-21 due to COVID-19. The Chief Officer to apply to TVBC for a Business Grant.

1. **BUILDING MANAGER’S REPORT (Appendix 1)**

The Building Manager presented his report which included plans for a lift in the Town Hall. It was agreed a meeting will be scheduled with the Building Manager, Cllr. J. Parker, Cllr. K. Dunleavey and Cllr. M. Cooper to discuss the current Maintenance Schedule.

1. **TOWN HALL – WAY FORWARD – COVID 19 (Appendix 2)**

The Chief Officer outlined the phased return of Town Hall staff

1. **LAND AT THE STAR**

The Committee agreed to leave the Land at the Star as a Herb Garden with seats and refused the request from the Landlady at the Star Inn to use as a Pub Garden.

1. **TOWN CENTRE MANAGER REPORT (Appendix 3)**

The Town Centre Manager reported the first Farmer’s Market in Hampshire took place on 7th June in Romsey, since lockdown on 20th March 2020. Cllr. J. Parker thanked the Town Centre Manager for getting the market “up and running” in Romsey. The market stall holders are very grateful.

The Committee asked the Chief Officer to send a letter to Stuart Jarvis, HCC, Director of Environment, Transport & Economy detailing concerns with regards to The Hundred being open to traffic when the pavements with the public queueing to get into the shops leads to people having to walk on the road. It was felt a serious safety issue exists.

1. **EMERGENCY PLAN GROUP**

The Chief Officer reported the Romsey Emergency Plan Group are playing a major role in the current COVID-19 Pandemic. A meeting will be held when allowed to discuss the way forward for the Emergency Plan Group using lessons learnt from COVID-19.

1. **GRANTS**

**RESOLUTION NO. 20/01**

It was **RESOLVED** to grant £150 to the Charities Fair

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. J. Parker

**SECONDED**: Cllr. M. Cooper

**CARRIED**

**RESOLUTION NO. 20/02**

It was **RESOLVED** to grant £100 to Victim Support

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. K. Dunleavey

**SECONDED**: Cllr. C. Wise

**CARRIED**

**RESOLUTION NO. 20/03**

It was **RESOLVED** to grant £250 to Freedom Matters/Romsey Foodbank

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. J. Burnage

**SECONDED**: Cllr. M. Cooper

**CARRIED**

**RESOLUTION NO. 20/04**

It was **RESOLVED** to grant £150 to Romsey Robin.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. J. Parker

**SECONDED**: Cllr. J.Burnage

**CARRIED**

**RESOLUTION NO. 20/05**

It was **RESOLVED** to grant £200 to Greenbuttercup CIC

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. K. Dunleavey

**SECONDED**: Cllr. J. Burnage

**CARRIED**

Meeting closed 9.00p.m.

**Building Manager Report to Building and Town Committee 9th June 2020.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | **Maintenance Technician** | Steve Stone left on 31st March. Although two candidates were selected for interview this has been postponed until the situation allows. |
| 2. | **Covid Clean** | The whole Town Hall was deep cleaned by a contractor on 4th & 5th June to allow for a partial return to operations. It is worth noting that such contractors are very busy at the present time. It was extremely lucky that our “normal” cleaners could accommodate us. |
| 3. | **Covid Working** | I have been receiving regular updates from both the Government and Health & Safety Executive. Currently I have completed and implemented the necessary risk assessment to allow for a partial return to “normal” office operations. This has been discussed with all regular staff. |
| 4. | **Garden** | I have not committed to further works at the present time as I am unsure of the financial position going forward. |
| 5. | **Email** | The councilors email addresses have been rolled out and this has enabled the use of Teams for video conferencing of meetings. With one or two exceptions, this I believe has been a success. |
| 6. | **Remote Operations** | Staff have found the use of Teams very useful to coordinate our working arrangements. Personally, I have been surprised by the amount of work I can do from home. |
| 7. | **Lift** | The ongoing enabling studies have been hit by the furloughing of staff in the companies concerned. However, as of writing I am hopeful of some more information before the meeting. I do have a draft project plan. |
| 8. | **Quinquennial Inspection** | This has taken place and is now be used to revamp the rolling Buildings Maintenance Plan. This will be presented at the next meeting. |
| 89 | **External Decorations** | This is due this summer. The tendering process has been delayed due to the Covid situation. Funds are in place.  I believe this is still a priority as there are a couple of defects that if left until next year will incur much more damage and thus cost. |
| 10. | **Service Contracts** | I have suspended some of the service contracts to save money whilst closed. These will be taken up as we require them. |
| 11. | **Statutory Servicing** | These have continued on program. HSE Guidance was to continue with tasks even if not being used. |
| 12. | **Decoration** | The Mayors Parlor and the front basement stairs and corridor to LTVAS have both been painted during the last few weeks. |

**Appendix 2**

**PHASE 1**

**FULL LOCKDOWN MARCH 23RD – 1ST JUNE 2020**

* ALL STAFF WORKING FROM HOME. SOME STAFF MEMBERS CAME INTO THE OFFICE IN ISOLATION FOR A FEW HOURS EVERY WEEK.
* CHIEF OFFICER IN OFFICE MOST DAYS IN ISOLATION

**PHASE 2**

**SOFTENING OF LOCKDOWN 1ST JUNE 2020**

* 2 MEMBERS OF STAFF\* ALLOWED IN TOWN HALL OFFICES AT THE SAME TIME BEING LOCATED IN SEPARATE OFFICES.
* PHOTOCOPIER AND SHREDDER TO BE REMOVED ONTO LANDING TO ALLOW CLEAR THOROUGHFARE FOR MAYOR’S SECRETARY OR CHIEF OFFICER TO WALK THRU’ WHEN REQUIRED.

**PHASE 3 - YET TO BE CONFIRMED HOPEFULLY TOWN HALL WILL OPEN IN JULY 2020.**

THREE MEMBERS OF STAFF\* ALLOWED IN OFFICE, ALL IN SEPARATE OFFICES

**OTHER OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED**

* SCREENS TO BE ERECTED BETWEEN STAFF DESKS WHO ARE FACING EACH OTHER
* MAYOR’S PARLOUR TO BE USED AS AN OFFICE UNTIL TOWN HALL RE-OPENS

\*DOES NOT APPLY TO MEMBERS OF STAFF WITH UNDERLYING ISSUES

**Appendix 3**

**Mark L. Edgerley - Romsey Town Centre Manager**

**Report to RTC Building and Town Committee June 2020**

**Introduction**

The recent months and certainly for the next few months will be one of the toughest times for retailers of Romsey. Most of those that could be open have opened on a very restrictive basis, pleasing that most have increased their hours to meet growing customer demand. Two of the banks are operating very restrictive opening hours that has created some queue management issues.

In the circumstances I suspect the situation is the best that can be achieved at this time. Town footfall is about one third of the total we would expect at this time of the year, but is growing slowly. The lack of footfall impacts decisions to open and we are certainly in a “chicken and egg” situation at the moment. Without more shops open it will be hard to grow footfall, if the footfall doesn’t grow shops will restrict their hours or stay closed.

**Town Centre occupancy summary**

Please see Annex A

Anya in Bell Street have closed February 2020 to concentrate business on their two shops in Haslemere. There is some interest in this excellent unit

Asante in Latimer Walk closed in March and unit now being converted for a new business “Cork & Bean” – a useful addition to the Romsey coffee scene and early evening trade. Reopening dependent on completion of works and changes to Coronavirus regulations.

Carphone Warehouse have closed their store as part of the company’s withdrawal into Curry’s PC World stores, that are owned by the same group.

It remains to be seen how many businesses find they cannot continue, all traders I have spoken to believe that the Treasury support for businesses has made the prospect of them continuing highly likely, the big unknown is customer confidence, when will shoppers return?

**Town Centre Events**

We have cancelled all Town Centre Events through until end of September, we continue to monitor UK Government Guidance regarding events, we can run the October Antiques Market under current regulations

Currently we are holding a watching brief on the Christmas Events, although I do believe we should erect the Christmas Lights as normal even if the Switch-on event has to be modified

**Markets**

The lockdown has been a huge knock back for our plans for the markets, all re-launch plans are on hold for the duration.

We opened some food stalls on 22nd May and on Tuesday 2nd June invited non-food stall holders back, we had five stalls two in the Market Place and three in the Cornmarket. This layout seemed to go down well with Traders and shoppers and we will work with the space we have to build number of traders on each Market Day.

**Business Support**

Working with TVBC to ensure businesses know about all the financial support currently available.

Again, with TVBC building a “Bounce Back Romsey” plan, TVBC have been awarded £112,403 to fund appropriate and allowable activities across the three TV Towns

During walk abouts around the Town Centre I am taking every opportunity to chat with local retails and business owners to ensure they have the support they need, a time consuming process but one that gives positive feedback.

We have rescheduled the TV Business Awards to the new year with awards dinner likely to be in March 2021.

**Romsey Future**

Work has continued on the South of Town Centre Masterplanning, I have been involved in number of discussions about various existing activities that need to be accommodated in the Masterplan, in particular pattern of deliveries in the Town

The Romsey Future Group support my proposals for changes to traffic flow in the Town Centre to give more space to pedestrians.

**Other issues**

I am delighted to report that HCC have, after 18 months of lobbying, made a real effort to improve the pavements in Latimer Street and the surfaces in the Cornmarket. The latter works were delayed when SSE found they had faults on their low voltage cables and had to dig up a large area in front of McColls and Barclay’s Bank, those areas have been fully reinstated and SSE are also resolving area outside of Superdrug that was opened up for emergency repairs back in the winter.

On the 27th April I raised the potential issues we were finding in The Hundred with some conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, at that time I suggested to HCC that a temporary road closure to give pedestrians confidence to use the space be introduced. My suggestion was supported by Cllr Cooper.

Despite assistance from senior TVBC Officers and intervention from our MP, HCC have once again displayed a reluctance to take notice of local comments and continue to offer little in way of any immediate solution apart from a few road signs and some pedestrian route changes. This despite a clear recommendation and funding from UK Government and very clear evidence many other local authorities have responded with really quite large schemes to remedy similar issues of separation of increasing numbers of pedestrians and cyclists from live traffic lanes to accommodate social distancing. Disappointing but sadly not unexpected of HCC.

**Mark L. Edgerley,**