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

**Attendance:**

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

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

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

A. 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**

Apologies received from Cllr. D. Baverstock, Cllr. M. Cooper and Cllr. K. Dunleavey, Barbara Burbridge, Honorary Archivist

1. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

None

1. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Building & Town Committee Meeting held on 17th December 2019 were confirmed as a correct record.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. C. Wise

**SECONDED:** Cllr. J. Cairney

**CARRIED**

**Matters Arising** -Cllr. I. Culley asked the Chief Officer if the Foodbank has been sent a Grant Application Form. She confirmed they have

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1. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION -** None
2. **ARCHIVIST REPORT –** None

**REVIEW OF BOOKINGS**

1. **TOWN HALL**

The Events Manager reported the income for 2019-20 to date has already exceeded budgeted income and it £7,000 more than this time last year. The Bookings income is at its highest since 2015/16. Bookings for 2020-21 are progressing well.

1. **REVIEW OF FILMSHOWS**

Filmshow income is on target.

1. **FINANCE REPORT**

The Chief Officer presented Month 10 Finance Report to the Committee. She confirmed overspend for the Civic Budget was due to the event appointing Mike Curtis as an Honorary Burgess

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

The Building Manager presented his report which included plans for a lift in the Town Hall. After discussion the following resolution was agreed.

**RESOLUTION NO. 19/31**

It was **RESOLVED** the Building & Town Committee recommend to the next Full Council meeting on 21st March 2020, that the lift project, based on the lift being located in the downstairs kitchen, should proceed to the next stage acquiring firm prices and an outline of the project plan.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. J. Parker

**SECONDED:** Cllr. J. Cairney

**CARRIED**

1. **TOWN CENTRE MANAGER REPORT (Appendix 2)**
2. **EMERGENCY PLAN GROUP**

The Chief Officer reported the Emergency Plan Group are still investigating insurance cover.

1. **VE DAY**

The Chief Officer reported the bunting will be erected in the town for VE Day. Also plans are being discuss to have a VE Day exhibition in the Town Hall.

1. **PALMERSTON STATUE**

**RESOLUTION NO. 19/32**

It was **RESOLVED** not to investigate the cleaning of Palmerston Statue

**PROPOSED:** Cllr. J. Parker

**SECONDED:** Cllr. I. Culley

**CARRIED**

1. **GRANTS**

None

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Environment Agency Letter dated 27th January 2020 - Noted

Meeting closed 8.55p.m.

**Building Manager Report to Building and Town Committee 11th February 2020.**

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| 1 | **Maintenance Technician** | Steve Stone has indicated that he is going to retire. He has been in post since 2012 and had previously worked as a casual attendant. Along with the Chief Officer we have instigated the recruitment of a replacement operative. |
| 2. | **Christmas Lights** | The lights are now stored in our basement. This keeps our investment in a much better environment than before thus, mitigating degradation during storage. |
| 3. | **Delegate Communication System** | The ex Test Valley Delegate Communication System was used at Full Council 21st January and appeared to be a success. It will be in place at all future Full Council Meetings. |
| 4. | **Garden** | Further works will continue when the weather permits. |
| 5. | **Phone Box** | BT have given notice of removal of the Whitenap Phone Box. It was suggested that we take advantage of the “Adopt a Phone Box for a £1” scheme and use it as an information point. After in-depth investigation it came to light it is on private land and is unavailable for adoption. Therefore, it will be removed at BT’s pleasure. |
| 6. | **Lift** | The Feasibility Study has been completed and is attached to this report |
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**Appendix 2**

Mark L. Edgerley - Romsey Town Centre Manager

Report to RTC Building and Town Committee December 2019 & January 2020

**Introduction**

Footfall in Romsey has certainly been a roller coaster over the past couple of months, the sun and our events bring out residents and see more visitors to the Town, helping to drive small upturn over 2018.

Interestingly number of local business have recently expressed opinion that there is some confidence returning in that shoppers have increased spending. These comments are supported by Springboard Retail Surveys nationally. Let us hope that trend continues.

**Town Centre occupancy summary**

Please see Annex A

It is now confirmed that freehold of both Abbey Hotel and former Santander building in the Market Place has been purchased by Romsey property company Brightbeech Group. The former bank building is subject to a change of use application to A3 (food and drink), The Abbey Hotel will be subject to a planning application in due course.

Clintons in The Hundred, building lease up for let, property is physically linked to Herbwise in Latimer Street that is used under a sub-lease as are offices over. We suspect that Clintons lease has come to end of term.

Anya in Bell Street have announced they will not renew their lease and will close in February 2020 to concentrate business on their two shops in Haslemere. We are told the related Regatta business next door will remain open.

Asante in Latimer Walk have announced closure of café from March 1st, the business has been struggling to generate a profit for some time, the profit funded a project in Kenya which we believe is also closing.

**Town Centre Events**

We are currently reviewing Christmas 2019 events they all were very well supported by the public, given the good weather the crowds were at record numbers. At a recent wash-up meeting we agreed that the only event that needs some revision is Late Night Shopping which is a Chamber event and likely to change to a series of Thursday evenings with no road closures, the related Lantern Parade may move to a Saturday.

First major 2020 event is the French Market on 29th March

**Markets**

We continue to talk with potential new stall holders and hope to have new cake stall and a gift stall in the near future. A pop-up Vegan Café have also expressed an interest in coming to Romsey.

**Business Support**

The Christmas supplementary security was generally seen as a success and evidence suggests it did reduce retail related crime. The late decision to proceed did cause some communication issues which we need to consider if scheme is to be repeated this year

We are currently reviewing the format of the bi-monthly Romsey Retail & Business Forum we host for the Chamber, we need to increase attendance and reduce costs

With the Chamber of Commerce, we are discussing a Summer 2020 Business Event.

**Romsey Future**

Priority issue is linked to start of Masterplan of South of Town Centre that commenced Friday 7th February.

We have now agreed a protocol for use of new piazza area in the Market Place which has been approved by local TVBC members and accepted by local County members. Document is on the RTC website

Work exploring options to make Romsey a “Digital Town” continues. This is a very difficult scheme to develop given the rapid changes of technology what is clear is there are some huge benefits to be had if we can fund future costs

**Other issues**

We would encourage Councillors to review the progress we have made with the RTC website. It has become a good community resource for information as well as a showcase for RTC, Faye Godwin is to be congratulated for her work.

There are consider numbers of paving repairs outstanding in Latimer Street and The Hundred, I accept that budgets are said to be tight but by observation public spending is increasing at a huge rate and local residents don’t get the capital viz running cost agreement and frankly why should they, building new infrastructure ahead of maintaining existing is foolhardy.

There have been a small number of temporary repairs in Latimer Street that are welcome. By far the greater numbers of engagements I continue to have with local residents and businesses are about the state of pavements which in its self is a distraction from other medium / long term issues.

Mark L. Edgerley,

Romsey Town Centre Manager 6th February 2020