

Agenda item 7

For information - Frome Town Hall

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Summary

This report provides an update on occupancy of the Town Hall, a year end income forecast and a summary of our marketing initiatives.

Update on Town Hall occupancy

Active and in Touch have embedded themselves into the Parlor and Fair Housing for Frome have joined them. I am delighted to let you know that Frome Learning Partnership have now moved into room three – this is on a year tenancy with an option to extend – and we are all cautiously optimistic that this is the start of a beautiful partnership.

WHY remain in room two on a month by month basis until they find a more permanent arrangement. We are actively seeking another tenant for this room from the charity sector, but in the meantime, they remain trusted tenants. This means that all of the rooms we allocate to tenants are full and this has put a little pressure on room availability. This in turn has led to the café space being used more for impromptu meetings.

The Baby Café and Spark continue to use the café space as well as other hot deskers. We may look at a slightly different arrangement with the hot desk space once we start using the café to support events in the Council Chamber. In the meantime, we are looking to promote pop-up events in the cafe.

Just to note, we still offer the café, free, for up to two hours to community groups, at a week's notice, when room three is let, although this is not often taken up.

Room one, the café and the Council Chamber remain as available bookable meeting spaces and occupation rates are certainly increasing.

In addition to the tenants and external meetings, FTC Cllrs and staff have used the meeting rooms 145 times in the last six months.

Over the last three months we have hosted events such as Improve Don't Move, a successful parking meeting, three screenings of a Plastic Ocean, and the Clean Healthy Future Energy talks as well as council meetings. We're looking forward to Zero Carbon Towns and the Apprenticeship Conference next week.

Licenses

We have received our Acoustic Report which was a condition of the Change of Use planning permission. It recommends to MDC that they allow us to have events involving amplified

music over our system with the windows closed at a setting of 80 decibels – plenty loud enough for a party with a disco.

The report also recommends that acoustic double glazing may be needed for live music which would likely be much louder. We are expecting this to be a directive from MDC. The formal process of accepting the Acoustic Report and discharging the conditions is now with MDC and we expect to hear from them within the month.

In order to keep the windows closed during meetings and events for sound reasons, we will require air conditioning. This is being installed in w/b 6 August and the job is likely to take up to a week.

In other news, the Premises (alcohol) License is expected to be ratified any day now and the registrar department are making their inspection of the Town Hall on Friday 13 which will begin a six-week consultation before the Wedding license is issued.

Income and projected forecast for the Town Hall

	Actual up to end of June 2018 (£)	Budgeted at 31/3/2019 (£)	Forecast income as at 31/3/2019 (£)
Tenants	7497	18720	19185
Meeting room	3161	17230	12644
Chamber	1359	25790	5436
Café	531	3750	2124
Events	5760	-	5760
Total	17727	65490	45,149
Deficit between budget and forecast			-20,341

The table above compares the budgeted income with the worst case scenario forecast income, based on existing performance. The forecast indicates a year end income deficit of just over £20k. This forecast deficit has improved by £10k since we last reported in May and the expectation is that it will dramatically improve once we are able to offer a full range of events in the Town Hall.

As such, we remain in a holding pattern regarding the marketing. However, once we are able to use our marketing brochures for parties, weddings and events (that are now in production) we will begin to generate higher income.