



Lostwithiel Town Council – Heritage Buildings Committee Meeting

Tuesday 26 November 2019

Meeting Minutes

A Meeting of the Town Council's Heritage Buildings Committee was held in Lostwithiel Library on Tuesday 26 November 2019 at 7pm.

Committee members present

Committee Chairman Councillor Mrs Jarrett,
Committee Vice-Chairman Councillor Guiterman,
Professor Scott, Councillor Sweeney & Mrs Walton.

In attendance

One member of the public was in attendance.

Town Clerk Mrs Harris was in attendance

HBC45/19 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Paul Holden, Michelle Nineham & Philip Watkins.

HBC46/19 Declarations of Interest

None

HBC47/19 Public Participation

None.

HBC48/19 Committee Minutes 22 October 2019

It was **resolved** that the minutes dated 22 October 2019 are accepted, approved and duly signed by Committee Chairman Councillor Mrs Jarrett.

HBC49/19 Ivybridge visit

In accordance with Standing Order 3f and with the agreement of the Committee, Committee Chairman Councillor Mrs Jarrett invited comments from the member of public present.

Councillor Sweeney was thanked for his written report as below:-

Five members of the Heritage Buildings Committee visited The Watermark Centre at the invitation of Ivybridge Town Council on 24th October 2019. They were met by the Town Clerk and a Town Councillor.

Background.

In 2004 Ivybridge Town Council and the Ivybridge Area Partnership, with funding from the Market & Coastal Towns Initiative published the Community Action Plan. (There was, and still is, recognition that market towns are struggling in the face of out of town competition). Ivybridge needed a new library for its growing population and saw an opportunity to link community/social facilities, which were also needed, in one new building. The Council bought land (money borrowed from the Public Works Loans Board) in readiness before the Library Service was committed to replacing the library in Ivybridge. At the time Devon County were keen to work with pro-active communities.

The Town Council saw the proposed Centre as acting as a focus for enterprise, innovation and cultural activities that would continue to develop Ivybridge as a vibrant market town.

Key features of the Centre.

21st century library. ICT centre.

Information centre. Multi-use cinema, conference/event space.

Coffee shop Business centre – 16 business incubation units.

Funding

Public Works Loans Board.

Various grants e.g. European Objective 2 funding. (Capital grants can help with investments).

Devon County Council & District Council.

Governance.

The Town Council took the lead in developing 'The Watermark', as it became known, and is responsible for its ongoing financial sustainability. It worked closely with Devon Reinvestment Service so that professional advice was in place at the outset and the design reflected the need of the key agencies. Devon County Council played an integral part with help and expert advice etc. throughout the process. Solicitors with relevant experience also guided the Town Council through the project.

The Town Council decided not to set up a charitable (or equivalent) company for various reasons, (refer to handout) so is solely responsible for the Centre's running (not the library). The Business floor has twelve single/double units running at present – each responsible for their own business rates, insurance etc (a great opportunity for income). Each unit is set up with Wi-Fi/broadband. There is a community office/spare office used by various organisations e.g. Citizens Advice. The Town Council has also provided a communal kitchen and a resources room with photocopier. Small business start-ups pay between £200-£250 per month, per unit, and the Town Council has a rental policy of 'easy in, easy out' (one

month's notice). Marketing is done in-house – mostly through social media. This has proved to be very successful.

The Centre has a business manager and three supervisors, whose salaries are generated by the Centre but come under the umbrella of Town Council staff salaries. There is a small Town Council sub- committee which works on policy. The Town Council contributes £30,000pa. to the Information Centre (this is seen as a Town Council function). Devon Council pay a peppercorn rent for the library facilities.

The Community

The Town Council consulted with the community through the mid 90's/early 2000s with meetings, door to door surveys, events and social media. Ivybridge Town Council won national recognition being voted 'Town Council of the Year 2008.'

Ivybridge is a much bigger town than Lostwithiel and 'The Watermark Centre' is a very impressive building which is providing so many things for its community. While listening to our hosts and walking around the Centre, it became very easy to see what great potential we have in Edgcumbe House, Taprell House, The Guildhall and The Museum – especially as the Town Council already own the buildings. (Cllr Dai Sweeney)

The Committee acknowledged that the visit had certainly challenged thinking and given further credence to being able to present Lostwithiel Town Council with a sustainable 'doable' project for our own Listed Buildings. It was decided that the Committee should draft a short report to Council in order to obtain Council consent to take the project forward by assessing public support for the Heritage & Craft based proposal.

HBC50/19 Outlining the potential uses for each building

The further updated table produced by the task and finish group received the consideration of the Committee supported by the financial calculations prepared by Professor Scott and a short-term financial forecast prepared by the Town Clerk. It was decided that the potential uses table and financials will need to be part of the report to Council. Councillor Sweeney's offer to make a model of one of the rooms in Edgcumbe House to illustrate how partitions will maximise income was gratefully accepted by the Committee. It was accepted that the financials and the occupancy of the buildings will need to be phased over short term, mid-term and long-term periods to improve the financial sustainability of the project.

HBC51/19 Report to Council

It was decided that the report to Council should include the following: -

- (i) 5-year cashflow (TC)
- (ii) a copy of the possible room uses drawing (TC)
- (iii) Councillor Guiterman's potential uses table (TC)
- (iv) Summary of the information gleaned from the visits (DG)

- (v) Potential loss if the Town Council doesn't take the project forward. (PJ)
- (vi) Vision for the long-term use of the buildings and the journey to get there. (PJ)
- (vii) Details of potential partnerships with other organisations and grants (JS)
- (viii) Long term benefit to the Town (PJ)
- (ix) Physical model of a room and how it can be partitioned (DS)
- (x) Emphasis that the Lostwithiel project is smaller than most of those visited but is more than achievable long term. (PJ)

HBC52/19 Bid writing workshops

The Committee decided not to take this forward.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Chairman

Date