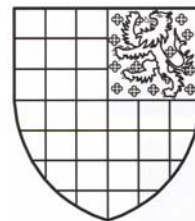


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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the meeting of the **All Saints Centre (ASC) Steering Group** held on **Wednesday 17th August 2011**, in the **Yarrow Room, Town Hall**, Lewes at **11:00am**.

PRESENT Cllrs Catlin (Wischhusen); J Daly; S Murray; R O’Keeffe; and M Turner (*not nominated to group*)

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Mrs F Garth (*Civic Officer & Asst TC*); Miss L Zeyfert (*ASC Manager*)

ASCSG2011/01 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Dean, who was on holiday.

ASCSG2011/02 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were none

ASCSG2011/03 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS:** There were none. (No public or press were present)

ASCSG2011/04 **BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:**

1 The meeting had been convened in response to the Finance Working Party’s request that ASC steering group members assess any potential for reduction in the cost of the service. (The Group would normally have met later in the year when a number of issues were further developed, but it was considered helpful to integrate with the recommendations being submitted to Council on the 1st September 2011.) Members had convened earlier that morning for a tour of the ASC, escorted by Ms Zeyfert.

2 The matter of on-site staffing was discussed at some length. Members considered statistics showing the hired hours for both the large and small halls since January 2006, and these showed steady annual increase despite several weeks’ closure for refurbishment works in 2008 and 2010. Ms Zeyfert explained the duties and technical responsibilities of the ASC staff; and described typical daily issues. It was noted that there were very few hours available for more users in a typical week, and that the hours when LTC staff were available was still short of the maximum operating hours allowed by the public entertainment licence for the Centre. This was addressed by constructing monthly working shifts around hirers, recognizing that several were long-standing users who did not require constant attendance.

3 TC described the evolution of the Centre and the earlier years of the Council’s direct management. Members were interested to learn of some early experiences with directly-promoted events, which had been popular and were considered successful, although demanding to produce. The public response to an open day at the ASC, and a wider survey, in 2003 was interesting and it was understood that many comments were still valid. There were several ideas, requiring further investigation/assessment, being developed at the moment and some of these had potential for significant revenue improvement.

4 The meeting was reminded of the principles embodied in the original transfer to the Council by the Church, and the evolution of the Council’s current adopted policy (revised 2006) regarding use of the Centre. It was acknowledged that it catered-for a wide range of users, many of whom had no viable alternative venue for their activities. There were currently 42 “regular” users booked, of which 5 were small local charities, 11 were community groups, and the rest were treated as commercial hires although their activities were often in areas traditionally supported by parish councils, such as dance; drama; music; fitness; or art classes operated in

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the local community by individuals, albeit for a small profit. There were additional *ad hoc* hires and many local organizations who were known to be keen on using the centre if certain key time-slots could be available, and a few purely commercial organizations, such as Lewes Cinema.

ASCSG2011/05

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:

It is recommended that the Steering Group develops further the current early investigations into the potential to reduce the cost of the All Saints Centre.

The meeting closed at 1:10pm