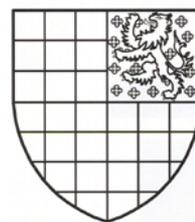


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## **MINUTES**

of the meeting of the **All Saints Centre (ASC) Steering Group** held on **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014**, in the **Yarrow Room, Town Hall, Lewes at 11:00am.**

**PRESENT** Cllrs Catlin (Wischhusen); Chartier; Daly; S Murray; A Price; and Dr M Turner (*Chairman*); also (*not appointed to the Steering Group*) Cllrs D Lamport and J Stockdale.

**In attendance:** S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Miss L Zeyfert (*Manager, All Saints Centre*); Ms C Slijpen (*Lewes Film Club*)

### **ASCSG2013/09 QUESTIONS:**

There were none. (No public or press were present)

### **ASCSG2013/10 APOLOGIES for ABSENCE:**

Apologies were received from Cllr M Milner who had an unavoidable work commitment, and Cllr R O'Keeffe, who was attending an East Sussex County Council meeting.

### **ASCSG2013/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

There were none

### **ASCSG2013/12 MINUTES:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2013 were received and signed as a correct record.

### **ASCSG2013/13 BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:**

1 The Chairman welcomed Ms Carmen Slijpen, who was attending to offer insight and advice on matters related to film production and screening.

2 In answer to a question: it was noted that whilst withdrawal from the market of films in 35mm format had been slower than anticipated and many titles were still released in that form, it could only be matter of months before this ceased. Almost all screenings at ASC were now in DVD format and it had been accepted that programming, and the delay before release of new titles, would be constrained by that factor. A further question arose as to choice of titles, and it was confirmed that Ms Slijpen had continued to recommend films to the Steering Group's "task-group" within the constraints described, and that the choices had been generally popular. TC referred to a detailed analysis of film screenings for the current season, being the second of the *Film@AllSaints* operation. The programme had so far shown 24 film titles; with 35 screenings over 13 weekends, and stood at a modest surplus of £620. Average audience numbers had grown, despite ongoing problems with publicity material being defaced or removed

3 An issue had arisen some weeks earlier regarding the ASC Manager's refusal to accept a booking from a prospective hirer, who had complained to Members. Ms Slijpen and Miss Zeyfert recounted their discussions with the lady concerned, and explained how they had come to be aware that her proposal was for a commercial film operation related to a business venture. TC confirmed that he supported the decision taken by the Centre manager, and considered that her actions had been appropriate. A question arose as to the use of the Centre by profit-making enterprises, and it was confirmed that there was no overall prohibition on these, but that the Council had decided to exclude commercial film operators when it instigated the *Film@AllSaints* programme. The proposed venture was understood to conflict with that policy, and the work of Lewes Film Club and its offshoot:

Lewes Teen Cinema. Members agreed their support for the Manager's decision.

4 The discussion moved to future options, and issues such as the anticipated planning application for a small multi-screen purpose-built cinema at the Harvey's depot site. It was advised that this was expected to open in the Autumn of 2015. Miss Zeyfert referred to the latest *Film@AllSaints* screenings, over the previous weekend, which had not yet been analysed and were not included in TC's earlier statement. These had attracted viable audience numbers and it had been apparent from several individual conversations that the reputation of the operation was slowly spreading. In light of this, and evident growth in audience numbers, Members considered it appropriate to continue with the operation in its present form, with a review at the next meeting. It was **agreed** to recommend that Council continues the *Film@AllSaints* operation on the existing basis, for the next year.

5 *Report by the ASC Manager:* It was reported that lighting and acoustic improvements were underway, with a new stage lighting truss frame scheduled for installation in mid-April. This offered pre-installed dimmer units and standard connections which would allow hirers to bring their own specialized equipment and connect easily. The Centre's own lighting units would be routinely updated and augmented in the natural course of operations. Supplementary speaker units had been identified as the best means of improving sound quality, and research was underway into the availability and cost of suitable units.

An induction loop for those with a hearing impairment was being planned and would be installed soon. The portable dance-floor surface was proving extremely useful and popular and new trolleys allowed equipment to easily be stored beneath the stage, releasing the "wings" area for more appropriate uses.

Sussex Downs College had, for a third year, used the ASC for their Art & Design students' exhibition, which had brought another new group of young people into the Centre who had expressed their very favourable impressions. A Member who had attended and conversed with students and college staff noted very positive feedback.

New curtains were being planned for the stairwells, which would have an added benefit of improving draught-proofing and thereby help with heating. Permanent boarding was to be installed at strategic points on the street side of the stage and this would reduce the volume of sound which could be heard by neighbours.

In answer to a question on staff matters, it was reported that the Caretaker/venue assistant had suffered a serious infection following a scheduled joint-replacement operation and had an extended absence. Although now returned to work, Mr Reay was currently able to address only reduced duties. Miss Zeyfert and Miss Roxx, the Assistant Manager, continued to cover that situation with support and assistance from Town Hall-based staff, and Members offered their appreciation to them all for their dedication.

There was a resurgence of interest in playing the organ, and a programme for any necessary maintenance was being investigated.

It was confirmed that dates were being held in reserve, in June and August, in anticipation of events to commemorate the First World War, being considered by the Council's Commemorations Working Party.

The general performance of the Centre was reviewed, and it was noted that there were 25 regular weekly hirers, plus significant *ad hoc* hires. There had been several new bookings recently, taking-up most of the unoccupied periods in the operating diary. These included a monthly Vintage Fair, a Healthy-eating "pop-up" café, and a Sunday charity swap-shop. New regular weekly hires represented a range of activity: a "Dancercize" class, a toddlers' activity group (*Cherry Tiddlers*); a film school for young people; a Martial-arts school (Tae Kwon-Do), and a new yoga class. The New Sussex Opera had booked to present *The Beggar's Opera* at the Centre in May. It was agreed that future meetings would receive a brief update on recent performance.

Members were extremely pleased to note the way in which the Centre was fulfilling its purpose in offering a range of community; youth; and art facilities and events.

**ASCSG2013/14**

**RECOMMENDATIONS /CONCLUSIONS:** It was agreed that Council be recommended to continue the *Film@AllSaints* operation in line with the discussions recorded above.

**ASCSG2013/15**

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed and thanked everyone for their contribution.

*The meeting closed at 11:45am*