

TCE/06/21

Minutes of a meeting of an **Extraordinary** meeting of the **Town Centre and Events Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 7.00pm in the Council Chambers, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham, MK18 7RP.

**Present:**

Cllr. F. Davies  
 Cllr. Mrs. M Gateley (Town Mayor)  
 Cllr. S. Hetherington  
 Mr. D. Jones (co-opted member)  
 Cllr. A. Mahi Vice Chair  
 Cllr. L. O'Donoghue  
 Cllr. R. Stuchbury Chair  
 Cllr. R. Willett

**Also attending:**

Mr. P. Hodson Town Clerk  
 Mrs. A. Brubaker Events Co-ordinator (Via Zoom)  
 Mrs. N. Stockill Committee Clerk  
 Cllr. J. Harvey Town Councillor (Via Zoom)

**PUBLIC SESSION****Comedy Night Venue (Agenda item 3)**

A Member of the public attended the Public Session and asked Members to consider an amendment to report recommendation 1.2 of:

*It is recommended that the Committee recommends to Full Council that, providing suitable disabled access can be arranged with the Hotel, the Council resumes use of the Villiers hotel ballroom to hold comedy nights in.*

Members were reminded of the Council's duties under the Equalities Act 2010.

Another member of the public attended the Public Session and the following points were highlighted:

- Lack of suitable disabled access into the Ballroom of Villers Hotel
- Lack of disabled toilets in the main building of Villers Hotel
- By booking the Villers Ballroom, the Town Council would be endorsing the venue and its lack of disabled facilities

Cllr. Harvey spoke in the Public Session and reminded Members of Full Council's decision during their meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018:

*that that due to the inadequate disabled access to the Ballroom in the Old Town Hall and the lack of disabled facilities in Villiers, this Council resolves not to use either of these venues for Town Council events until the access problems are resolved. 501/18*

Members were urged to maintain the agreed policy from 2018 and not use any entertainment venues that are not accessible to all.

Cllr. Stuchbury thanked all of the speaker for attending the Public Session and reported that three new Members of the Committee had attended a site visit to view and assess the facilities for themselves. It was noted that Cllr. O'Donoghue had attended on her mobility scooter. Cllr. Stuchbury reminded Members that Committee could only make a recommendation to Full Council.

**506/21 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies received.

**507/21 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**508/21 Comedy Night Venue**

Members received and discussed a written report from The Events Coordinator, and feedback from Members who had attended the site visit.

**436/21** Members **AGREED** for the office to arrange a site visit to Villiers Hotel & Ballroom for new Councillors, and an Extraordinary meeting of TC&E to be arranged to finalise any recommendations to Full Council.

Cllr. Gateley had attended the site visit to Villiers Hotel and Ballroom and stated that the access route to the service lift was completely unacceptable and an alternative venue must be sought or, the comedy nights should not continue.

Cllr. Davies said a mobile bar could be used at the Community Centre and it was not necessary for the Town Council to bear the additional costs of obtaining a temporary license, paying door staff and buying drinks.

Cllr. Hetherington had also attended the site visit and was unclear on how the disabled access could be improved within a Grade 2 listed building.

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that popular acts were only available on Sunday evening as they were always booked by larger venues during peak times. The Radcliffe and Vinson Centres had been explored as alternatives but they both had a smaller capacity and more of a lecture theatre feel.

Cllr. O'Donoghue informed Committee that the hotel staff would always help anyone with access issues and had agreed to investigate the use of a stair lift from the conference rooms to the Ballroom. The Hotel Manger had said the access route would be cleaned and any obstructions removed.

The Town Clerk explained that when Full Council agreed the original motion to no longer use Villiers Ballroom, it was implicit that an alternative venue could be sought for the Town Council's Comedy Nights. Mr. Jones said more reasonable adjustments could be made to accommodate everyone, including paying more for a suitable venue.

Proposed by Cllr. O'Donoghue, seconded by Cllr. Davies and unanimously **AGREED** for a written report to Committee on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 reviewing all suitable venues in Buckingham, including an assessment of facilities, pros and cons and breakdown of costs.

**ACTION EVENTS COORDINATOR**

Members discussed the lack of disabled access to the mobile breast screening clinic, currently parked in Tesco Buckingham's car park. Members **AGREED** for the Town Clerk and Town Mayor to write to NHS Buckinghamshire expressing the concern of the Committee.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue and unanimously **AGREED** for Cllrs. Donoghue, Willett, Hetherington, Davies and Stuchbury to work with the Events Co-ordinator on a list of essential and desirable facilities for all future venue bookings. A report is to be drafted and brought back to Committee on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022

**ACTION EVENTS COORDINATOR**

Members unanimously **AGREED** for the Town Clerk to draft a press release to be issued only enquiries are received about the matter, and to write to former Town Councillor Strain-Clark explaining the decision taken at tonight's Committee.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

**509/21 Chair's Items**

**510/21 Date of the next meeting: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

Meeting closed at 20.11pm

Signed

Date