

Joint Meeting of the Finance Committee and Queen's Hall Committee
Minutes of a Meeting of the held on 17th September 2009

Present: Mrs King (Chairman), Mrs Macintyre, Mr Salisbury, Mrs Revell, Mr Gregory, Mrs Burgess
In attendance: Mrs Jones (Clerk)

Mrs Macintyre was delayed and in her absence it was agreed to take the items relating to the Queen's Hall at the start of the meeting.

117. Apologies for Absence were received from Mr Gallagher

118. Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest regarding any items on the agenda.

119. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting The minutes of the joint meeting held on 25th June were taken as read and confirmed as a true record.

120. Risk Assessment Action Plans

Unfortunately, these had not been circulated with the agenda. It was agreed that these be placed on the agenda of the next committee meetings for approval.

121. Maintenance of the Queen's Hall

The surveyor's report on the possible subsidence had now been received and it did not appear that the work required to repair the store room would be as great as originally thought. It was hoped that the repair work could be carried out within the existing budget. An estimate was now awaited but it was possible that additional repairs would be required once the work started.

A quotation had been received for two new windows for the Council Chamber. These were now in an extremely poor condition and it was agreed that this quotation be accepted and the work put in hand as soon as possible.

No action had been taken to commission the exterior redecoration due to the uncertainty around the work needed to the green room. However, in the light of the surveyor's report, it was agreed that this work now be put in hand as agreed at the meeting held on 25th June.

The drain in the cellar was blocked and needed to be cleared. This would be inspected and action taken to have this work undertaken as soon as possible.

It was agreed to ask Mr Gallagher regarding the alterations to the bronze plaque at the front of the hall.

Several samples of chairs had been delivered to the hall and much debate had ensued. The old chairs were now in a very poor state with nails coming through the seats. After discussion, it was agreed that the folding chairs were the most practical and suitable for everyday use at the hall. An estimate had been received for new chairs, with trolleys, for a sum of £4,600 and an alternative quote was awaited. The Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Finance Committee had reviewed the reserves with the Clerk and it had been agreed that sufficient funds were available for this expenditure. It was therefore agreed that the purchase of new chairs be put in hand as soon as possible.

The electrical testing had now been completed and the report was awaited. Concerns were expressed over the time and manner in which this had been conducted. It was anticipated that the work involved in this would be much reduced in future years.

122. Wedding Brochure

No progress had been made with this. However, the Clerk reported that there had not been any requests for a brochure as all enquiries were coming through the internet. It was therefore agreed not to go ahead with the advertising but to arrange for a very small number of brochures to be printed to have available as and when a request was received.

Mrs Macintyre arrived at this stage of the meeting.

123. Budget Statements & Reserves

The budget statements for each committee had been forwarded to members with the agenda. Expenditure and income were largely in line with the budgets. However, additional expenditure had been incurred by the Environment Committee with the purchase of the water bowser and this budget would overrun by approximately £200. Additional expenditure would also be incurred with regard to the electrical testing at the hall but this would be absorbed by the building maintenance budget, as would the work to the Green Room. The new chairs would be purchased from the reserves which remained at a healthy level of about £48,000.

124. Three Year Financial Plan

Mrs Macintyre reported that she was reviewing the current financial regulations. However, new standing orders would be released from NALC shortly and these could impact on the financial regulations. It was therefore agreed to await their publication before undertaking a full review.

Financial Regulations stated that the Council should have a three year financial plan. This was in place for the Queen's Hall and, in the light of the work that has been commissioned, would need to be reviewed. The Environment Committee would need to prepare a plan for consideration at the next meeting in November.

125. Staffing Matters

The clerk reported that one of the caretakers was to undergo knee surgery shortly and would therefore be off work for an extended period. It was not considered that it would be practical to try to employ temporary staff and that it would be easier to manage in-house. This had been discussed with the other staff who had agreed to take on additional cover during this period. The wedding season had nearly finished and weekend events at the hall would not be as difficult to manage during the winter months.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.