



# Devizes Town Council

[www.devizes-tc.gov.uk](http://www.devizes-tc.gov.uk)

## **RECREATION AND PROPERTIES COMMITTEE**

You are summonsed to attend a meeting of the Recreation & Properties Committee at the following, place and date.

**Date: 8 December 2009**

Time: Immediately following the Planning Committee Meeting

Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Devizes

Enquiries: 01380 722160

The Town Mayor (Councillor Leighton)

Councillors: Mrs Burton Callow Mrs S Evans  
Gudgeon Hopkins Parsons  
Smith A R Taylor Mrs Winchcombe

## **AGENDA**

### **1. MINUTES**

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the meetings held on the 2 November 2009, which have been circulated with the agenda.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### **3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

To receive any disclosure(s) of interest by a Councillor or an officer in matters to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with provisions of Sections 94 or 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the National Code of Local Government Conduct.

### **4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

At the Chairman's discretion, members of the public attending the meeting will be allowed to ask questions, make a statement or address the Council upon a matter of concern to that person which is relevant to the Council. A time limit of 5 minutes per person will be permitted, but this may be extended at the Chairman's discretion and a maximum period of 20 minutes has been allocated by the Council for this item of business

**5. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES INCOME FIGURES**

Income figures for the Council's venues for the period April 2009 to July 2009 are attached (doc 5/1-5/5). These figures indicate the monthly income and cumulative income against budget.

Figures for the Corn Exchange are below budget by some £2,500 which is largely reflected in bar income figures. Given the financial climate this is to be expected.

**6. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES – CUSTOMER SATISFACTION FEEDBACK**

October and November returns (12 and 11 respectively) show excellent levels of satisfaction with an average of 100%.

We are seeking to address the lower numbers of returns on customer feedback forms. Whilst we get many positive verbal comments, we need to ensure that we have written evidence of satisfaction if we are to continue with our high levels of service.

Feedback forms are given to the customer contact at every "meet & greet" and should be collected by the Venues assistant on duty after each event. The forms are then passed to the Direct Services Manager who scrutinises them, deals with any issues promptly, contacts the customer if necessary, congratulates Venues where appropriate and collates the information for this report.

**7. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES OCCUPANCY FIGURES & MARKET INFORMATION**

**The Room Usage Summary** shows bookings for October and November 2009 as compared with 2008.

**Average Covers** is the average number of people catered for in each room. It is important to record this information because the catering figures impact upon our revenue.

**Average Booking Hours** is the average number of hours booked for each room.

**% Utilized When Booked** refers to the room capacity (say 100) in proportion to the number of people actually using the room. We need to ensure that we use the most suitable room in terms of size for each event; for example, an event for 50 people might be booked for a room which could hold 150.

**Total Covers** is the number of people in total using the room during this period. There may be several functions happening on the same day – for example, a breakfast meeting, training event with lunch, and an evening reception with bar and buffet.

**Total Hours** is the number of booked hours – to reflect multiple functions in one room in one period.

**% Total** is calculated from the number of **bookable rooms hours** in the report, i.e. 15 hours per day.

Total number of bookings for October/November 2009 was 332 compared with 359 in 2008.

### **Business Share Charts**

The pie charts illustrate the proportion of business from various sources.

The **Type of Booking** chart shows a full breakdown of the total actual bookings. In October the highest proportion of bookings is for Meetings and Training. In November there were more Training events and a larger share of Free Use events.

The **Enquiry by Source of Business** chart shows the largest number of bookings came from Repeat Business, with more in October than in November.

## **8. REPORT FOR INFORMATION - BRITAIN IN BLOOM 2009 – JUDGES' COMMENTS AND UPDATE**

Devizes & Roundway was awarded Silver Gilt for our 2009 entry, and the Drews Pond Wood Project received an award for Outstanding Achievement. The written reports of the judges for 2009 South West in Bloom are attached. Breakdown of points awarded for each of the 3 sections have not been issued.

Areas for improvement have been identified and have already been discussed in detail with the Town in Bloom Committee, which is meeting more frequently to ensure year-round activity:

- More community involvement
- More business-supported projects
- Improvement of the look of main roads and roundabouts

A community project for Waiblingen Way Residents' Association has been launched with a planting day with support from Devizes Town Council and Sarsen Housing. This is just one of the several Neighbourhood Scheme community projects we plan to include in our 2010 entry.

A meeting has been held with Wiltshire Council representatives to discuss ways to improve the general look of the town and its roads. We intend to use the roundabouts at the gateways to Devizes to promote the town. We also intend to encourage more involvement of local businesses in the Town in Bloom scheme.

The Committee have agreed to implement a "Devizes in spring" competition for gardens and hanging basket displays to raise the profile of the event earlier in 2010. We will also identify the judging route early in the year and circulate private and commercial residents along the route to make them aware that they will be "on show".

We will arrange workshops on planting hanging baskets to encourage as many as possible to enter in the summer.

The spring planting for the town has been completed, and plants ordered for the summer bedding and containers. We have decided on new designs and colour schemes, including planting a cottage garden in the Chequers using perennials, a poppy design for the War Memorial Garden and a formal bed in the Pennybank for the Guides Centenary celebrations. We are liaising with other businesses in Devizes on the colours and plants selection for some harmony in the displays.

The five banks on "Banks Corner" and the Market Place have all been contacted and we have received encouraging replies from 3 of them that they would be interested in helping to make this area look good for next year. The recession has been given as the main reason why they did not participate this year.

## **9. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – CHRISTMAS EVENTS**

### **Trees**

93 business trees were ordered this year compared with 99 in 2009. As in previous years, the costs went out to tender and the contract was awarded to John Osborne (same supplier as last year). The price charged to a business for the installation of a tree dressed with lights was £39.50 plus VAT. Once again, the only bank in town to order a tree was Barclays. All the other banks were called, but declined on the grounds that they could not justify the cost during a recession.

### **Christmas Festival and Lantern Parade**

The Festival started with a Christmas Craft Fayre in the Corn Exchange, Christmas Market in the Market Place and The Shambles, street entertainers, Lantern Parade and grand switch-on of the lights by Father Christmas at the Bear Hotel at 6.45pm with fireworks.

The event was a great success.

### **Mayor's Christmas Concert**

Community event 9 December in the Corn Exchange with local primary school choirs and Devizes Town Band.

### **Christmas in the Park**

Friends of Hillworth Park community event with Santa's Grotto organised for 13 December.

**10. QUESTION TIME**

Members will be allowed a short period in which to put questions on matters within the remit of this Committee which are not contained in the reports of matters formally considered by the Committee at this meeting. The question may be answered at the meeting or may be referred back to the Committee at a later date. The question may not be the subject of any further details.

TOWN CLERK