

TENTERDEN TOWN COUNCIL – INTERNAL COMMITTEE

TOWN HALL FOCUS GROUP

MINUTES OF A MEETING ON 28TH JUNE 2017

Present: Cllrs. Dr. Lovelidge & Mrs. Smith, John Crawford, Brian Fagg, Rev. Lindsay Hammond, Carol Mitchell, Mike Pearson, John Scudder (Chair), Jo Vos (Community Warden). The Town Clerk, Phil Burgess took notes.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Apologies received from Dr Freyja Cox Jensen, Giovanna Gandolfo.
2. **Introductions.** Introductions were made again as there were new attendees.
3. **Minutes.** Minutes of the last meeting were agreed
4. **Matters arising.** John Scudder said that points circulated in various e-mails could be covered later in the meeting. Lisa Lovelidge informed the meeting that the council would be considering project priorities at a meeting on 17th July and would set guidelines for budget available for this project. There still remain several unknowns however.
5. **St Mildreds.** Lindsay Hammond advised that brochures had been circulated and all the information was on the church web site www.tenterdencofe.co.uk. Display boards were used to show the architect's initial plans. The next step is a more detailed set of architectural plans after feedback from parishioners. The financing needs to be in place before too long. The aim is flexibility, better use of church for non-service activities to open to the church to the community more.
Usage The intended use of the space includes arts and culture events such as fund raising, concerts and even formal meals. This does require further consultation as there are some events which parishioners would find incompatible with the main function of the church (this will be handled by a "red lines" consultation). The photographic "365" exhibition was held at the church for 2 weeks and was a great success. Friends of St Mildred's will liaise with community representatives to see how it will work best. A steering group has been formed and Cllrs Lusty and Isworth represent the Town Council with Siggie Nepp representing the TDRA (residents association). St Mary's at Ashford and St Mary's at Willesborough are possible models to be considered and they will be looking for a wow factor and a sustainable result. TODS would only be likely to use the facility for bigger productions.
General This project could go ahead independently of any Town Hall changes. A suggestion was made that focus group member could attend the church steering group although this was not pursued at this stage. The church capacity would remain at around 360 (similar to the current situation).
6. **Scope of Focus Group.** This would be revisited after information from the listed buildings officer regarding what can and can't be touched within the Town Hall. This would be arranged by the Town Clerk. A comparison between village hall usage would be carried out by Cllr Mrs. Smith in order to assess the need for the assembly room as a bookable space. (The public consultation had reported that average usage is just 3 hours per day and they regarded a successful hall opening/booking times to be over 12 hrs per day).

7. Re-order or extend. The business case needs to be made for either option. Re-ordering supporting only (or mainly) community services, cheaper in the short term but attracting significantly less revenue. The extension option would of course result in greater capital expenditure but has the potential, if well-planned to return a sustainable income which could also subsidise the non-profit services at the Town Hall.

8. Suggestions for Improvements.

- Make the Town Hall more inclusive with particular attention paid to the foyer being more inviting.
- Perhaps allow pop-up shops on a limited basis.
- Provision of a “one-stop” secure domestic violence facility (not a refuge but a lockable private interview/support space).
- The Town Hall to be a centre for delivery of the majority of community services.
- The majority of spaces should be flexible to allow multiple hirers of the same spaces at different times of the week
- Provision of computer facilities which allow social interaction in addition to the main purpose
- A touch-screen notice board with regular updates

Many of these facilities would involve agreements with ABC and KCC.

9. Next Meeting. Weds 26th July at 6.00 pm