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Milton Rooms Working Party

Held at Meeting Room 1 - Ryedale House, Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 7HH
on Monday 11 November 2019

Present

Councillors Joy Andrews, Burr MBE, Duncan and King

In Attendance

Alan Bardet, Esther Graham and Phillip Spurr

Councillor Paul Andrews

Minutes

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor John Raper

2 Urgent Business

None.

3 Declarations of Interest

None were declared by members of the Working Party.

It was discussed whether or not trustees of the Milton Rooms will be permitted to attend future meetings. It was agreed that it may discourage invitees from speaking their minds if a trustee is in attendance, although a regular dialogue should be maintained during the process on any issues that are raised.

4 Brief Overview/Introduction

Members discussed RDC's lease agreements for the Milton Rooms, including sublet agreement with the Milton Rooms Management Committee for the whole building as well as a separate sublet agreement with the Masonic Lodge and a licence agreement with the Malton Museum.

The possibility of renegotiation options for both the Malton Museum and Masonic Lodge agreements was noted.

It was noted that as part of the lease agreement, RDC are currently responsible for repair and maintenance of structural parts of the building, service conduits, cleaning of the outside of windows and the fire detection and pump system.

5 Governance

Members discussed the structure of the Milton Rooms Trust as it stands, with questions fielded by Councillor Paul Andrews, in attendance as a trustee.

Concerns were raised that there are a small number of trustees based on the maximum of 13 allowed.

It was discussed how a larger trustee body can be achieved in future.

A venue manager has recently been appointed on a trial voluntary basis, with the view to being paid on a consultancy basis in future. Members discussed how the roles and responsibilities of trustees and venue management should look and how a possible new paid position fits in to any future of the Milton Rooms.

6 **Malton Museum Licence Agreement**

Members discussed the current agreement in place with the Malton Museum how it may look in future including:

- Recognition that the Milton Rooms may want to receive more money from the arrangement, but that the museum may not be able to meet these demands
- The Malton Museum needing to justify their costs, similar to how the Milton Rooms do already.
- The responsibility of RDC to the funding of Malton Museum.

Separately, the lease agreement with the Fitzwilliam Estate was discussed, including RDC responsibility for cleaning and maintenance, identification of elements of the lease that restrict revenue raising for RDC.

7 **Finance**

Members discussed the Milton Rooms' accounts from the past three years and Councillor Paul Andrews fielded questions on this as well as giving predictions for the coming year.

The expectation for an employed venue manager and their effect on revenues was discussed. A business plan has already been commissioned by the Milton Rooms.

It was noted that 11 trustees have resigned and the chair has changed in the space of one year and members seek an understanding of the reasons for these resignations and how the trust can return to a wider body of trustees.

8 **Overall Vision for the Venue**

Members agreed on the need to determine a clear vision as to the Milton Rooms' purpose, commensurate with the listed charitable aims.

9 **Comparable Venues**

Members agreed that before it is decided on comparable venues to visit, a table comparison of key facts on these venues be produced for consideration, focusing on governance, management and identity of each venue.

10 **Witnesses**

Members agreed that the Trustees of the Milton Rooms will be consulted after initial investigation and testimony from other parties.

The three persons identified to invite to the next working party are:

- Frances Maietta, an ex-trustee of the Milton Rooms.
- Helen Barry or another representative from the Fitzwilliam Estate
- Development Manager for Pickering Memorial Hall

Further discussions to take place at later meetings.

11 **Setting of Priorities/Timetable for the Review**

Any recommendation made by the Working Party should be realistic and achievable.

If a venue manager is to be employed, they should have a business plan in place with regular feedback given to members on progress.

RDC should show that they are prepared to invest in the Milton Rooms, but want to safeguard any investment and state views on governance.

Reviewing agreement with the Fitzwilliam Estate, Malton Museum and The Masonic Lodge.

Date for the next meeting of the Working Party and a site visit to the Milton Rooms to be arranged.

12 **Any other business that the Chair decides is urgent**

None.

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