

ARMSTRONG HALL
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**REPORT of the Meeting of the Committee held
on 5th October 2016**

Present:- Mr J Smith(Chair)(U3A & Thornbury Musical Theatre Group)
Mr. M Brooks (Northavon Youth Theatre)
Mrs H Dutton (Severn Vale Flower Club)
Mrs Shirley Holloway (Hall Management Committee Chairman)
Mrs G Page (Thornbury Arts Festival)
Mrs C Nelmes (Hall Manager)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs K Burgess (St Peters Hospice)
Mrs B Ray (Thornbury Picture House)
Mrs. P. Denney (Townswomen's Guild)
Mr Brian Haley (Hall Supervisor)

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST REPORT

Members queried whether minutes are sent out to all user groups. It was agreed to refresh the invitations and mailing list to encourage more users to attend the Hall Advisory Committee.

(a) Redevelopment of Complex – Update

The new Hall Manager was introduced to the Committee, who then went onto provide an update on progress on the hall redevelopment.

The Hall Manager has been reviewing the plans and has identified a range of work that needs to be undertaken to provide the foundation for any new funding bids and redevelopment plans. This includes research into usage, needs and demands, business plans and communications plan. Firming up designs and requirements and the costs and potential phasing of the redevelopment is also being studied to look at the best way to fund such a large project. This may include refurbishing existing and some new build elements, utilising a range of grant funding, fundraising, sponsorship and other sources of funding. Considerable work needed to be done to improve the existing user experience and to keep the building in a safe operational manner and this was the priority.

There was some criticism from user group reps as to the length of time the redevelopment project has been ongoing without any delivery and the poor and deteriorating condition of the building. User groups are leaving and looking at alternative sites that better meet their needs. It was also felt that the Hall, its facilities and the activities that go on it should be better promoted and publicised.

The fundraising total now stood at £64,445.

(b) Resignation of the Hall Supervisor

The resignation of Brian Haley as Hall Supervisor was noted and users wanted their thanks to Brian recorded for his years of service and support.

The Hall Manager provided an update on the recruitment process and it was hoped to have a new Hall Supervisor in post before Brian leaves at the end of November to ensure a handover.

(c) Bookings and Fees and Charges

The Hall manager advised that the traditional 1st October system for bookings for 2018 had been postponed to allow for a new online booking system to be introduced which would allow for easier booking and checking of availability by users. It was hoped that this system would be in place in the New Year ready to accept 2018 bookings from regular users. The system of prioritising performances and the arts festival would continue.

The current hall fees and charges are very complex and outdated and as part of the move to the new online booking system would be reviewed with the aim of simplifying them with effect from April 2017.

The Hall website would also be upgraded as part of this process.

(d) Other operational matters

The hall bar, bar store and kitchen are being repainted to try and lift the appearance of these areas.

Quotations are being sought for replacing the fascia boards which are in a poor state of repair.

Quotations are also being sought for fire doors and replacement windows in the bar and kitchen areas.

The hall floor condition has been problematic over the summer and we have had to re-arrange hirers as the floor was repaired on several occasions. Quotations are being sought for professional advice on the best way to maintain the floor to extend its life, refurbishment and/or replacement.

A replacement ladder for the hall has now been purchased and is operational.

Issues with the Hearing Loop were reported and this was being looked into.

3. REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS AND QUERIES

(a) U3A Travel and Tourism

The AGM will be held on 2 November

(b) Severn Vale Flower Club

Hazel Dutton reported that the Club's Open Evening was planned for beginning of November and that a demonstrator representing England would be in attendance which was hoped would be a good draw.

(c) Northavon Youth Theatre

Martin Brooks reported that the Northavon Youth Theatre production at Easter would be Hairspray.

(d) Thornbury Arts Festival

The arts festival are currently finalising their programme which would be in a similar format to previous years. Will continue to have a technical meeting to ensure set up can be achieved.

(e) Thornbury Musical Theatre Group

Tickets for Wizard of OZ half term production are selling well and buzzing with activity so close to the show

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Armstrong Hall has been selected as the chosen charity for the Christmas Lights 'Switch On'.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee will be convened on Wednesday 7th December, 2016 at 4.15 pm.