

Town Hall and Events Management Report

July 2020

Town Hall

All Town Hall bookings remain cancelled up to the end of September based on the current Government Guidance. It may be necessary to cancel future events/bookings post September subject to further developments, of which the Town Hall and Events Manager is currently reviewing and liaising with hirers on.

All hirers of the Town Hall continue to be offered either a full refund in respect of their booking(s) or the option to transfer their balance to a re scheduled date in the future. All refund requests have been processed as soon as possible via cheque in the first instance although flexibility has been applied to those who are shielding and unable to accept that method of refund.

The poster and banner advertisement mediums were cancelled during lockdown due to staff resource and utilising the space for public information. From October one poster board will be made available for hire based on a Tuesday – Tuesday hire basis at the standard rate of £20 per week. Banners will remain unavailable for the foreseeable future due to the staff resource required for erecting and dismantling.

The Town Hall continues to receive interest from new potential hirers for future bookings in 2021 and thereafter and a meeting is scheduled week commencing 13th July regarding a new prospective wedding booking for 2021.

With the Town Hall closed for the foreseeable future the Market and Events staffing resource will be focused on supporting the trading days of the Pannier Market (Thursday – Saturday) as well as the re opening of Butchers' Hall at the beginning of August. Where capacity allows both the market and depot teams provide additional support for the respective areas e.g. we have one member of the market and events team who is on Jury service in the near future and so a member of the depot will be available to assist market operations.

The Town Hall continues to provide welfare facilities for the market and events staff and appropriate measures have been taken to ensure their health and welling e.g. hand sanitiser units, appropriate PPE, separate toilet facilities.

Discussions are taking place regarding the possibility of putting the installation of the Town Hall lift on hold, currently scheduled for mid September. Quotes pending for the repair work to the Town Hall roof and localised leaking above the Mayors Parlor and office.

Quotes for the replacement (on a like for like basis) for the Town Hall doors due to the ongoing issues are on hold.

Butchers' Hall

All Butchers' Hall external hire bookings remain cancelled up to the end of August which at the time was based on the Government Guidance pertaining to markets and events however in light of the recent updates relating to markets, the Butchers' Hall TTC themed markets will re open in August.

The first themed market will be our Tavistock Arts Market, scheduled for two consecutive Saturdays (1st and 8th) in order to accommodate those traders who had originally booked on to this event on our reduced trading footprint (approximately half of our previous capacity). Due to ongoing concerns in regards to COVID19 we have received seven trader cancellations for the August market, four of which wish to extend that to the end of the year.

Discussions are underway in regards to Butchers' Hall hosting an Antiques Market on one of our trading days (Thursday – Saturday) on a regular basis and will be a combination of the previous Pannier Market Tuesday Antique traders and the Butchers' Hall Sunday Antiques traders. Work is also underway to open a mixed market in order to providing trading opportunities to the extensive portfolio of interested traders and exhibitors.

Prior to being permitted to trade all traders and exhibitors must produce management with an appropriate COVID19 risk assessment and a copy of their public liability insurance (previous Council Policy).

All hirers and traders of Butchers' Hall continue to be offered either a full refund in respect of their booking(s) or the option to transfer their balance to a re scheduled date in the future. All refund requests have been processed as soon as possible via cheque in the first instance although flexibility has been applied to those who are shielding and unable to accept that method of refund.

Butchers' Hall continues to receive interest from new potential hirers for future bookings in 2021 and thereafter.

The stud wall within Butchers' Hall has been redecorated in house and Wi-Fi system has received an upgrade which is hoped will support the further increase in card payments which traders have expressed within their COVID19 risk assessment they wish to utilise more.

Appropriate signage and cleaning materials and equipment have been sourced by the Town Hall & Events Manager for the re opening.

Trader interest in Bedford Square continues and the new system of using our RBS booking software and payment in advance is working well.

Staffing

The Market and Events Department welcomed a temporary new member of staff (MEA) to the team recently therefore the current staff resource is three Market and Event Assistants and One Duty Officer which based on current commercial activity is believed to be an adequate staff resource.

Works Department

The Town Hall & Events Manager continues to manage both Plymouth Road and Dolvin Road Cemetery whilst supporting the General Manager in the management of the Works Department, arranging fortnightly team meetings with staff.

The Meadows are available for hire for certain TTC approved events and it is anticipated the first one will take place in September.

Following Council decision, Goose Fair 2020 has been cancelled and all stakeholders including the traders have been notified. It is also noted that the Harford Bridge Park and Ride site will now no longer be available in the future. For this year the Town Hall and Events Manager has requested feedback from WDBC regarding whether the fairground will still operate in the Bus Station and Bedford Car Park.

**REBECCA HADFIELD
TOWN HALL AND EVENTS MANAGER
JULY 2020**