

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Business and Commercial Services Board held on 21 January 2020

Present

Councillor Robinson (Chairman)

Councillors Branson, Davis, Sceal, Scott, Thain-Smith and Weeks

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor(s):

25 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Francis.

26 Minutes

The minutes of the last Business and Commercial Services Board held on 12 November 2019 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

27 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

28 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest relating to matters on the agenda

29 Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that a draft copy of the Litter Review 2018/20 been circulated to all members of the Board for examination, and that any proposed amendments be forwarded to Cllr Branson as Scrutiny Lead of the Business and Commercial Services Scrutiny Panel for consultation.

30 Asset Management & Strategy

The Effective Working Manager introduced himself and explained he was to give an overview of what the Plaza building, which teams and partners operate from the building and services that they offer.

The Effective Working Manager delivered a presentation which is attached to these minutes, in which he explained existing partners, potential new partners, existing partner occupancy, and conference centre income.

The list provided of existing partners included: Hampshire County Council, NHS, Victim Support, CAPITA, National Probation Service, Citizens Advice Bureaux, Six Councils Partnership, Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership, Two Saints, RegenCo, East Hampshire District Council, Hampshire Registration Service, VIVID, DVLA, and Wise Catering.

In response to questions by members of the Board about current partners, the Effective Working Manager explained that:

- 1) the Plaza building was refurbished and made habitable by the Council and its partners in 2012;
- 2) Hampshire County Council teams presently utilise 42.96% of desks in the building and mostly used those desks for Adult and Child Services, leaving roughly 57% of desk space to be used by HBC and other partners who deliver services to Havant Borough residents;
- 3) there is a hot-desk policy across all partners which allowed for flexibility and greater utilisation of the space, this has enabled more officers to be able to work in the building; some teams work on a 4:3 to desk ratio, others a 3:2, depending on the nature of the services they are providing;
- 4) CAPITA have two teams on site, the first supporting HBC to deliver services to residents of Havant, the second supporting the delivery of services to other authorities. HBC receive a per-desk revenue for use of that space where services are delivered to other local authorities;
- 5) access to the building is restricted and controlled by the HBC Facilities team, so whilst HCC have desk space and use the meeting rooms, only specific authorised personnel have access through the badge-controlled doors to use the building, and this was reviewed frequently by the Facilities Management team.

The Effective Working Manager then elaborated on a number of organisations which they have been in contact with since the refurbishment. Colleagues were always looking at opportunities around the property strategies and possible synergies. Possible partners included: MIND, Police and Crime Commissioner, Hampshire Constabulary, Job Centre Plus, Department for Work and Pensions, Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, and Southern Hampshire Primary Care Alliance.

In response to questions about possible future partners, the Effective Working Manager explained that:

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- a) the next step for any team to occupy the Plaza would be to consider how the use of space may require a reshuffle or change of workstyle and practice of the existing teams using the space as well as the strategy for Regeneration;
- b) parking permits and allocations have to be carefully managed and flexibility around workstyles has enabled the Civic Centre Car Park East to be used by permitted drivers and conference centre users. The Plaza was also close enough to different transport links to allow for other methods of transport to be used;
- c) any partners identified as viable who had not yet joined HBC could still do so in the future dependant on a variety of factors including timing, money, customer access strategy and how they fit in HBC's Core Strategy;
- d) the Council's service delivery strategies more closely align to other partners in the public sector, so their needs had been easier to accommodate within the shared spaces. Their adherence to regulations such as GDPR, and interaction with the same client base has proved to be more successful and easier to manage than working with private partners or provision of touch down space for smaller businesses.

In response to questions about existing partner occupancy, the Effective Working Manager explained that:

- i) there were five hundred and forty desk spaces in the whole building, and presently only ten were unassigned to any company or organisation;
- ii) if Regeneration of the Havant area identified wider opportunities to use the Plaza campus site or altered the footprint of the building, then use of the space would be reviewed and relevant teams would be looking at other assets held by the Council in the Borough which could be used to achieve this too;
- iii) the Plaza and management of it had to consider and balance the need of the community and the customer experience when accessing services as well as consider the opportunities for economic development, and maximising income as a commercial asset;
- iv) working patterns of officers and meeting patterns affect how much desk space is used at any one time, e.g. Mondays and Wednesdays are the busiest days in terms of foot-fall but the review of the digital strategy and workstyles enabled the Council to support teams and constantly change how we used the space on site.

When directed questions about the Conference Suite in the Plaza, the Effective Working Manager informed the Board that:

1. the Conference Centre had risen from a £6.6k a year profit prior to its refurbishment in 2011/12 to £30k in the current year. The marketing and retention of users had enabled year on year growth in this area;
2. with the mixture of external users and onsite teams that had the opportunity to utilise this space there was a need for the Facilities Management team to constantly review bookings and look at how occupancy could be best managed and increased;
3. the target income for the Facilities teams in the coming year was increased by 3% each year, but the main challenge was to increase visibility and appeal to different groups in the community to come and use the suite;
4. the price of renting the Conference suite was decided yearly in the fees and charges and was subject to change, but generally consideration was to be given to competition in the market and overall service offering available;
5. contacting private firms to offer them the Conference Suite for meetings and events would be through advertising on the internet, inclusion in procurements portals, as well as interaction with user groups that the Community teams, Economic Development Manager, Facilities team and partners may have;
6. there was very little competition in the area for the same style conference building as The Plaza, but the business drive in The Plaza is different to any other conference centre due to the nature of the council.

The Effective Working Manager offered to find out from Property Services the basis of one of the agreements in place with a partner presently operating from site, but also highlighted that each agreement is commercial in confidence and negotiated on a case by case basis to update depending on what services area offered within the contracts. He also agreed to update those on the Board as to the specific services offered by a partner based on site.

The Chairman closed the meeting.

The meeting commenced at 5.03 pm and concluded at 5.56 pm