

## Business Report for Rye Heritage Centre, April and May 2017

Louisa O'Shaughnessy, July 2017

There are four main sections to this business report:

1. Sales update
2. Promotional activities update
3. Stock update
4. Staff update and proposed staffing budget changes

### 1. Sales Update

- Town Model viewings

	April and May 2017 Tickets sold	April and May 2017 Income (£)	Last year Income (£)	
Adult entry	960 (average 15-16 per day)	3360	5731	
Child entry	316 (average 5 per day)	474		
Groups through till:	1377 (average 22-23 per day)	1377		
Groups on invoice:	-	671	482	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	-	<b>5882</b>	<b>6213</b>	<b>-331</b>

### Points to note:

- As noted at the last policy meeting, April and May experienced an average group cancellation rate of 15%, which severely affected Town Model takings. Moving forward, from January 1st 2018, we will be asking for a £25 deposit to reserve a specific Town Model show. This will then be deductible from the final total due. We have started informing groups of this as we start to receive enquiries from agents. This is in line with policies for other attractions in the 1066 area.
- Invoice/BACS income is often relating to months previous to the reporting period, so can be an unreliable indicator of current performance. As of the beginning of July, the centre is awaiting payment on £580 on invoice for Town Model shows which will appear on future bank statements. Reporting will be more accurate once online banking is operational.
- **Old Pier Penny Arcade** takings for the period are up on last year, with a total of £773.50 for April-May (averaging £12.68 per day), compared to £657.50 or £10.77 a day.
- **Books and Maps, accommodation bookings and stamp sales** are all up on last year.
- The main loss in takings has come from **gift sales**. This is a result of cancelled groups, and uncertain group spend as outlined at the last policy meeting.

## 2.Promotional Activities: April- June

- **Meetings with Rye Castle Museum and Rye Harbour Nature Reserve to establish closer working relationships.** Planning on sending out a joint email mailshot with the Nature Reserve to boost school trip bookings.
- **1066 attractions meeting:** attended the group attractions meeting to build relationships with surrounding attractions and visit 1066 team. Distributed leaflets to surrounding attractions.
- **Mailshot to schools before half term- did not see much return on the school flyers.** We only had 3 vouchers come back in that week, although the vouchers do cover the summer holidays too, so we may see more. The centre did not see enough of a return on these to repeat this type of action in the future.
- **Leaflet distribution:** These have been distributed around the town, via Brochure Connect and direct to other attractions in the area via the 1066 attractions group meeting. We are now on a second print run that is being distributed to hotels/b and b's, to language schools both inside and outside the UK, and to top up venues in the town. We are also using these in the centre

when visitors express an interest in the model, but don't have the time to see the show then and there, to act as a prompt for later in their visit. Response to the leaflet has been good.

- **Posters:** We now have posters that have been distributed around the town. This has also been sent to representatives of the Cruise companies
- **New A boards:** fresher posters with larger images of the Town Model, these are much more visible from the road and from Mermaid Street to draw visitors in.
- **Social Media:** Facebook is being updated far more frequently and is attracting more attention. Most popular post was a video of the 'Sidney Knows' penny arcade machine which has been viewed more than 1,200 times.

### **3. Stock Update**

- The centre is now almost back to correct stock levels for the peak season after extensive ordering to restock after the changeover of management and financial years. This is the main reason why purchases for April and May are so high.

**Stock purchasing is likely to remain high** for the rest of this financial year, as my plan is to stocktake and deep clean all stockrooms at the end of the main season ( November) to calculate how much has been sold, forecast stock needed for the 2018/2019 season accordingly, then buy it in over winter before we reopen full time for the February half term.

The advantage to this is that management time spent placing multiple orders throughout the season will be minimized, staff time spent sorting deliveries during opening hours will be minimized, freeing them up to concentrate on sales and enquiries, and we will be able to secure better wholesale prices on larger orders. This will also mean that stock purchasing in the 2018/2019 financial year will be significantly lower than this year.

- **New ranges such as Romney Marsh Wools, Olio of Oxney and Kent & Sussex Tea are selling steadily.** By far the most successful new product is the 'Around and About' maps of Rye and Winchelsea, which retail at £4. To date, we have sold 170 since May
- **Sale table working well to clear unwanted stock.** Products being sold at between 70%-50% of original price to at least recoup wholesale price paid.

## **4. Staff and proposed changes to staffing budget**

- Staff have now had 2 full team meetings. The first in May updated the team on the vision for the Centre and the sales targets for the financial year. The second meeting in July focused on upcoming events and sales training. Both have been well received, and staff are motivated to turn more enquiries into sales.
- **Staffing structure:**

The revised staffing structure in the centre is making it very difficult to carry out any management duties in the centre, as I am needed to assist on the shop floor for the majority of my hours.

I have rota'd to utilize the summer temporary staff on weekdays as much as possible in order to allow me to catch up on emails, ordering, reports etc, and am being as frugal as possible with staffing levels.

During a peak season in a retail business, it is to be expected that management are active in delivering a customer facing service, however, I am concerned that the current proposed working pattern for the winter closure period will not allow for any administrative, planning, promotional or centre improvement time.

As it stands, between November and February, I am rota'd and budgeted to work every other Saturday and Sunday only. Gill Pascall (Senior Sales Assistant) is rota'd to work the weekends that I am not, and Jessica Neame (admin support) is not budgeted to continue working in the centre over winter.

There are numerous tasks in the centre that can only be carried out on a weekday, or that need performing regularly. These include but are not limited to: banking the till takings, answering booking enquiries promptly, contacting stock suppliers, receiving deliveries, planning the following years financial budget, timesheets and payroll.

In addition, there are many tasks that are overdue that would streamline and update the centre, and increase the financial viability for the future such as: applying for an alcohol licence for sale of local wines, proactive promotion to new foreign language schools, uk schools and hotels, investigating possible charity status, updating computer systems, producing/ commissioning new town trails and maps for sale in the centre, deep cleaning the Town Model, and updating the ghost walk audio tour.

Looking back on email records and invoices from last year, previous management were working in the centre at least 2 weekdays a week over the winter period in a voluntary capacity.

**Proposed changes:**

I propose that over the winter season, I work for 2 x 5 hour days during the week on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, that Jessica Neame continues to provide the financial administrative support to the centre for up to 5 hours a week on a Tuesday and that Gill Pascall (Senior Sales Assistant) works 5 hours on a Wednesday. If the current summer temporary sales assistant (Kate Smith) was to be kept on, they would be available to work every other weekend in my stead.

This would allow us to carry out a full overhaul of the administrative procedures in the centre, to fully enact our plans to increase the centre revenue as outlined above and at the last policy meeting, to keep up to date with bookings and promotion, to produce an accurate and thorough budget for 2018-2019 and to prepare fully for the 2018-2019 season.

**Cost:**

The current staffing budget for the financial year, excluding NI contributions and pension, is **£49,379**.

I have calculated that my proposed changes to the staffing budget would cost **£51, 694** – again, excluding NI and pension. This is an extra **£2315** in staffing hours and holiday but it is my firm belief that this would be of enormous benefit in moving the centre forward in terms of productivity.

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Accrual Basis

**Rye Heritage Centre**  
**Expenses by Supplier Summary**  
 April through May 2017

	<u>Apr - May...</u>
Adams of Rye Ltd	560.00
Artwrite Ltd	18.32
B & J Hargreaves	84.50
Bargain Box	1.25
Boots	1.00
British Telecom	550.91
Carole Group Ltd	198.00
Casa Grande Limited	1,965.73
Clarence & Bean	517.44
Colemans ABC	33.12
Confederation of Cinque Ports	144.00
Countryside Art	1,158.35
Countryside Books	334.93
Domain Support	45.00
e-on	807.72
Elgate Products Ltd	912.50
Friends of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve	112.70
Gibbons Mannington & Phipps LLP	205.00
Greenworks Solutions Ltd	80.00
Hastings Borough Council	390.00
HM Revenue & Customs	1,442.30
Immediate Media Co	150.00
J M Waste Management	146.25
J Salmon Ltd	272.32
James Dean Pottery	633.20
Jempsons	25.38
Jessica Neame	17.27
John Ryan	115.00
Kent Ramblers	78.00
Kirsty Doherty	175.00
Louisa O'Shaughnessy	242.68
Mayfield Books & Gifts	194.04
Meister Ltd	6.60
Morplan	92.45
Nat West	164.65
Oakridge	0.00
Olio of Oxney	142.00
Outstanding Map Distributors	186.62
Peter Cosstick	337.44
Post Office	3.50
PPL	133.12
Printstation	240.00
Puckator Ltd	-10.68
RMS cash registers	16.00
Romney Marsh Ceramics	278.50
Romney Marsh Historic Churches Tru...	74.00
Rother District Council	2,350.50
Royal Mail	121.34
Rye College Local History Group	42.00
Rye DIY	3.50
Rye Heritage	20.25
Rye Town Council	269.23
SDL Imports	984.17
Smudge	41.50
South East Art & Framing	102.25
Stitchout Embroidery	149.60
The Kent & Sussex Tea & Coffee Com...	54.24
Tracey Brown	386.50
Tradition	207.80
Ulster Weavers	451.80
Universal Mail UK	737.10
Wages	9,928.41
Winchelsea Corporation	15.00
Worldpay	213.93
Yellow Publications	319.22
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>29,674.45</u></b>

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Accrual Basis

**Rye Heritage Centre**  
**Income by Customer Summary**  
April through May 2017

	<u>Apr - May...</u>
CLC - Club Langues et Civilisations	1.00
Embassey Summer	178.33
Intercruises Shoreside and Port Se...	180.83
Langues et Voyages	41.67
P G Trips Association	41.67
Rye Museum	45.23
Senlac Tours	60.83
Till takings	20,893.66
Twin Group	80.84
Verdie Open Class	40.83
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>21,564.89</u></b>

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Accrual Basis

Rye Heritage Centre  
Profit & Loss  
April through May 2017

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	<u>Apr - May...</u>
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
Bank interest	0.41
Vatable sales (model and gifts)	17,082.41
Zero sales (books etc)	4,481.48
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>21,564.30</u>
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>	
Shop purchases	11,458.10
<b>Total COGS</b>	<u>11,458.10</u>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	10,106.20
<b>Expense</b>	
Advertising	1,000.00
Bookkeeping and accountanc...	205.00
Cleaning	231.12
Credit Card / Bank Charges	379.79
Entertainment/ref	2.25
Light and heat	807.72
Music in Store	133.12
Payroll Expenses	11,639.94
Postage HC	26.85
Postage Stamp Retail Costs	340.94
Rates	2,350.50
Repairs & Renewals Office Eq...	42.62
Repairs & Renewals Premises	90.65
Staff Uniform	170.43
Stationery/ Sundry Items	245.72
Telephone/Internet	550.91
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>18,217.56</u>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<u>-8,111.36</u>
<b>Profit for the Year</b>	<u><u>-8,111.36</u></u>