

Update for Policy Committee – Monday 18th September 2017

Jessica Neame, General Assistant.

Rye Town Hall

- The purchase and installation of a PC for my use and a laptop for the Town Steward (as we were both using our own laptops) is now complete.

The aim is now to ensure all computers are networked, and begin working through the current digital filing system to upload to a main Town Hall OneDrive account. This is a 'cloud-based' storage system meaning all users can access the relevant documents easily. This will improve the file sharing capabilities to ensure greater efficiency and promote digital archiving.

- A new email structure has now been implemented. This means all applicable staff have a named email address, as well as greater access to the main 'townhall@' email address. For reference the new email addresses are as follows:
townhall@ryetowncouncil.gov.uk remains our main contact email address for general enquiries. This can be accessed by the Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk and I from our individual PC's meaning that enquiries can be dealt with promptly by the relevant individual.
richard.farhall@ryetowncouncil.gov.uk
judy.pettitt@ryetowncouncil.gov.uk
jessica.neame@ryetowncouncil.gov.uk

- Wedding marketing activities – Richard and I attended a Wedding Fair at Hastings Museum on Sunday 10th September. This was a useful day, and resulted in a number of enquiries and viewing appointments. Hopefully we will see some bookings as a result, over the coming months. It was also a useful networking opportunity with other wedding service providers along with talk of potentially holding a wedding fair at the Town Hall in the future. We felt it was successful enough to warrant considering attending others in future.

Due to logistics and weather, I was unable to obtain the desired film of the Town Crier, and the inside of the Chamber in time for the wedding fair (however Paul was in attendance so they had a live demo!) However I have secured the services of local organisation 'Entertainment Workshops' who are happy to assist us, and we aim to produce this in the coming weeks.

We will also be implementing a new wedding booking checklist. This will ensure that all relevant information is gathered as early as possible to help the operational management of bookings, enabling us to be more flexible on taking multiple bookings for a single date. This will also contain a prompt to ask how couples heard about us - a valuable tool in tracking the success of our marketing endeavours.

- I am continuing to work on the website and our social media presence. This has been slightly delayed by a secondment to the Heritage Centre to assist there, but it remains a priority.
- I continue to manage the Mayoral Diary.

Rye Heritage Centre

- I am currently on a secondment to the Heritage Centre, from the Town Hall. Although I continue to manage the Mayoral Diary, and cover holiday periods. My aim for this period is to establish links with new, local suppliers and obtain new stock in order to capitalise on the end of the peak season. This should help to improve on some of the forecast figures from this years amended budget. I will also be undertaking a mail-out to foreign language schools, cruise lines and local schools regarding group bookings. This is an urgent task to ensure that we are able to secure group bookings for next season.
- We continue to review procedures and operations, particularly in relation to the financial management of the business.
 - Implementation of online banking. The application has now been made to Unity Trust Bank, and we are awaiting the outcome.
 - Conducting a review of credit/debit processing card charges. During my secondment, this is an item that I am investigating as a matter of urgency to ensure savings can be made as soon as possible
 - Conducting a review of utilities. The current electricity contract expires in December, and it is diarised to review then. I am also aiming to try and establish the approximate electricity costs of the Old Pier Machines in light of their meagre turnover. The telephone expenditure is another area of urgent consideration during my secondment.
- A new PC has now been installed at the Heritage Centre, which has significantly improved the IT facilities. This has necessitated an upgrade of QuickBooks to the online version. A discounted license for the software has been obtained from GMP, and I am about to organise the migration of our historical data to this version.
- I continue to undertake the day-to-day financial administration including issuing invoices for group bookings, handling supplier invoices and payments etc. I also undertake other administrative tasks including, but not limited to, monitoring figures for accommodation bookings, and general statistics to enable us to get an overview of financial performance and SWOT analysis for the centre. I also assist with marketing endeavours.