



Saxmundham Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Gannon Institute Trust held on Monday
11th December 2023 at the Market Hall, High Street Saxmundham at 7:00 pm.

Minutes

24/23GIT

Attendees

Cllr Di Eastman (Chair)
Cllr John Findlay
Cllr Elizabeth Clark
Cllr Marianne Kiff
Cllr Benjamin Gulliford
Cllr Jeremy Smith
Cllr Charlotte Hawkins
Cllr John Fisher
Cllr James Sandbach (part of the meeting)

Apologies

Cllr Tim Lock

Also Present

Sharon Smith (Town Clerk)
Five members of the public

25/23GIT

Declaration of Interests

Cllr John Findlay declared a non-registerable interest in item 29/23GIT.

26/23GIT

Open Forum

Two Trustees from the Ipswich 17 Good Neighbours Scheme (IP17 GNS) addressed the Council. They referred to their previously circulated written report which set out the proposals to expand the services of the charity to meet the wider needs of the diverse community. The Trustees explained they had outgrown the current office space licenced at the Town House and they requested exclusive use of the main hall and kitchen of the Gannon Rooms, licenced for three years at £3,000 per annum plus a contribution towards the cost of utilities.

27/23GIT

Minutes

- a) It was **unanimously resolved** to approve the draft minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2023 as a true and accurate record.
- b) The Council received the draft minutes of the Gannon Institute Management Committee meeting held on 20th November 2023.

28/23GIT

Finance

- a) The Council noted the payments and receipts for September, October and November 2023.
- b) The Council noted the bank balances as at 30th November 2023.
- c) The Council noted the budgeted versus actual income and expenditure report as at 30th November 2023.

29/23GIT

Future Use of the Gannon Rooms

The Council received and noted written reports from the Town Clerk and IP17 GNS regarding the request to licence the main hall and kitchen exclusively.

Cllr Jeremy Smith said his preference was to adhere to the previous decision to offer preferential, but not exclusive, use to IP17 GNS. Cllr Smith said he wished to support IP17 GNS

Signed _____ Date _____

but the front room of the Gannon Rooms was licenced to ABC Radio and the intention was for the main room to be a community hall. Cllr Smith said he does not view the main room as a permanent administrative basis, and while he does not object to the social supermarket operating from the Gannon Rooms on a short-term basis, but the main hall is not for the long-term storage and display of food. Cllr Smith said the written report from IP17 GNS had not persuaded him to change his position, but he continued to offer support.

Cllr James Sandbach (who was not present for the IP17 GNS presentation during the Open Forum session) said he wishes to keep the main hall for community use but he was not clear about what IP17 GNS were proposing and he needed to understand the operational issues around the social supermarket and offering a Warm Welcome service. The Trustees responded that their service users needed a warm space to access services, including the social supermarket, and that they had failed to find suitable alternative premises in the High Street. The Trustees also said many of their service users were vulnerable and not comfortable coming to the Town House. Cllr Sandbach said he was interested in continuing to rebuild the relationship between the Council and IP17 GNS.

Cllr Benjamin Gulliford said he understood the changing needs and that he would support granting IP17 GNS exclusive use as he felt the partnership would meet the community's needs. Cllr Gulliford said he was aware that the current licence at the Town House expires in March 2024 and therefore this alternative use of premises will help to meet the Council's accommodation needs at the Town House and ensure IP17 GNS's community work is ongoing in an asset which the Council has control over.

Cllr Charlotte Hawkins said the Council was not 'wringing their hands' looking for a smaller space they could offer for community use, but preferential use was offered as it would be useful to have a smaller space for hire when IP17 GNS were not using the hall. Cllr Hawkins felt a three-year licence was too long when neither party was certain of their long-term needs therefore she proposed offering a one-year licence on a trial basis to further understand IP17 GNS's expanded service offer, particularly when the Council were pouring funds into the refurbishment of the Gannon Rooms. The Trustees responded that they were happy to regularly report their activities to the Town Council and they would consider allowing others to use the space.

Cllr Charlotte Hawkins proposed allowing IP17 GNS exclusive use of the main hall and kitchen on a trial basis for one year, from a date not later than 1st April 2024, and to develop further partnership working between both parties. Cllr Benjamin Gulliford seconded the motion. It was **resolved by majority** to offer IP17 GNS a licence on these terms.

30/23GIT Administration

The Council authorised Sharon Smith, as Town Clerk, to be the main contact person with the Charity Commission.

31/23GIT Next Meeting

The next meeting was not scheduled.

The meeting closed at 7:40 pm.

Sharon Smith
Town Clerk

Signed _____ Date _____