

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE VEM COMMITTEE,
HELD ONLINE WEDNESDAY 10th MARCH 2021, AT 1.00 PM

Present:

The Mayor Councillor M S Robinson (Chair)

Councillors:

B J Canham, C Harvey, T J Jermy, M P Taylor, S N H Wright

Officers in attendance:

David Brooks VEM Officer, Chris Crimmen Committee Secretary

MINUTES

860/20	<u>DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS</u> None.
861/20	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Apologies were received from Councillors C Barreto and D M Crawford.
862/20	<u>MINUTES</u> RESOLVED: The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 10 th February 2021 received by Full Council on 23 rd February 2021 be confirmed as a true record and signed/initialled by the Committee Chairman.
863/20	<u>ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING</u> The VEM Officer reported that to aid him with drafting the Key calendar dates report, councillors were requested that they would send their choices of key dates to the Officer by the 28 th February 2021. To date he had only received one reply to add Holocaust Day 27 th January 2022. After a discussion it was decided to extend the date to 26 th March 2021 and send this request for suitable dates to add to the calendar to all Thetford Town Councillors. Action: The VEM Officer will ensure this is done.
864/20	<u>MARKETING REPORT</u> The Marketing Report (see appendix A) had been circulated to Councilor's and as the Venues Coordinator was on leave the VEM Officer stated he would answer any questions, The VEM Officer reported that the rotunda will be filled with posters next week. Due to the Covid shutdown the Venues Coordinator who was tasked with this, was still awaiting information from contacts at the town museums/groups, however it was agreed to redraft the posters and produce something with information they have. 1:20 pm At this time Councillor M Taylor left the meeting. The Chair asked about Talking Up Thetford which involves speaking with businesses and community groups in the Town and highlighting the tourism attractions. Work has started contacting businesses / community groups in the Town Centre who the Council can create more content with and filming will start as soon as possible. Councillors who wish to participate were asked to nominate businesses and resident groups in their ward for inclusion. The decoration of the Media Suite is now complete and fit out of the workstation and media equipment has now been scheduled. The Venues Coordinator had put together an initial schedule for the first podcasts and contact has been made with perspective contributors.

	It was suggested that this report also include details of press reports that were published in the previous month.
865/20	<p><u>BUDGET REVIEW</u></p> <p>The VEM Officer reported there was little activity since the latest lockdown. Some of the bar stock had been written off as this has passed its use by date.</p> <p>It was hoped that the external Guildhall works would be completed by end of May and therefore when lockdown is scheduled to end in June the facilities would be ready for use. The Tea Room will be staffed by Thetford Town Council staff.</p> <p>Market Traders have confirmed they will return as soon as they can and there has been interest from some new traders.</p> <p>It was agreed to review the VEM Budget as soon as all the venues can open again. Next month the VEM Officer reported he will have a much better idea on what the end of year figures be for the VEM Committee.</p>
866/20	<p><u>VENUES MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS</u></p> <p>The Chair asked councillors to discuss and decide a recommendation that the Venues & Communication Committee take on the overall responsibility of internal and external maintenance for the Town Council venues from 1st April 2021. The VEM Officer reported that councillors will know the issues that were experienced having the Council venues being looked after by ALP (Amenities Land and Property) for exterior work and VEM for interior work. There followed a discussion and Councillor B Canham proposed and Councillor S Wright seconded:</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: That the Venues & Communications committee assume responsibility for all internal and external maintenance of Town Council venues including the upper and lower Market Place from 1st April 2021.</p>
867/20	<p><u>VEM AGENDA FORWARD PLAN</u></p> <p>The following agenda items for the forward plan were discussed and noted:</p> <p><u>14/04/2021</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guildhall Operational and marketing plan (stage 2). • Market Improvements and use (Stage 2). • Review of Committees. • Terms of Reference (Please give committee members 2 weeks' notice. <p><u>12/05/2021</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Space Commercialisation report. • Market Place improvements Development Plan (Stage 3). • Mobile Catering and Bar Service.
868/20	<p><u>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</u></p> <p>None.</p>
869/20	<p><u>COMMITTEE OFFICERS UPDATE</u></p> <p>None.</p>
870/20	<p><u>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</u></p> <p>To consider resolving that, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded for any remaining items of business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.</p>
871/20	<p><u>APPLICATION FOR WAIVER OF HIRE FEES – CARNEGIE</u></p> <p>Councillor S Wright took over the Chair and Councillor M Robinson declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item.</p> <p>To receive, review and decide on applications for the waiver of the Carnegie hire fees –</p> <p><u>White Ribbon Event – 26 November 2021</u></p>

	<p>After a discussion Councillor T Jermy proposed and Councillor B Canham seconded: RESOLVED: That Thetford Town Council waive the fee of £158.50 for hire of the Carnegie Room on 26th November 2021.</p> <p><u>Tara Awards – 4 February 2022</u> After a discussion Councillor B Canham proposed and Councillor C Harvey seconded: RESOLVED: That Thetford Town Council waive the fee of £270 for hire of the Carnegie Room on 4th February 2021.</p>
872/20	<p>Councillor M Robinson took back the Chair.</p> <p><u>WEBSITE REVIEW</u> The Chair asked Councillors to discuss and decide on the development of a new TTC website. The VEM Office reported he had spoken to three IT Website Design Companies who had outlined a format going forward. Each company will give a quotation which will include the set-up cost and the monthly support cost. It was agreed by the VEM Committee to develop a new TTC (Thetford Town Council) website. Examples of the development pages would be brought to the next Committee meeting.</p>

Chairman.

ACTION POINTS	
Action	Person Responsible
<p><u>COMMUNICATION OF KEY DATES IN THE GLOBAL CALENDAR</u> The VEM Officer would draft a report for the next meeting. To aid him with this and get a list of dates to be worked with he will email all councillors to send their choice of key dates to the Officer by the 28th March 2021.</p>	VEM Officer

APPENDIX A - MARKETING REPORT – 10/02/21

ACTIONS

Video Projects

The recent Government announcement outlines a stepped 'road map' to the easement nationwide lockdown restrictions, therefore, we can start preparing with a bit more confidence to re-start our video projects, namely Talking Up Thetford which involves speaking with businesses and community groups in the Town and as agreed in a previous VEM meeting also to highlight the tourism attractions.
We have begun contacting businesses / community groups in the Town Centre who we can create more content with, with the intention of filming as soon as possible.

Media Suite Completion

The decoration of the Media Suite is now complete and fit out of the workstation and media equipment has now been scheduled.

We have put together an initial schedule for the first podcasts and contact has been made with those perspective contributors; therefore, as soon as we can fix a definitive start date we will promote via our social media, giving us another key route in connecting with the town.

Venue presentation & Extras

The Arcade Machine project has also been completed and is now being presented to future hires who want to make use of it.

We use this as an extra hireable item as has been suggested and agreed with some of the event organisers of the Carnegie themed party nights; we also feel that additional uses can be as part of family activities planned for the Market Place – it may also be a good way to use as a fundraiser during mayoral charity events.

EVENT/PROJECTS MARKETING CAMPAIGNS (January 2021)

Thetford Talent Show

A timeline for the talent show has been created.

- First announcement early March
- Applications open mid-March and continue for many weeks.
- Applications close end of April, all applications immediately posted on Facebook page for voting 1st May.
- Short videos highlighting every application will go out during the following week.
- Voting closes May 14th, Top X entries qualify for final event, held in-person at The Carnegie.
- Final event will happen Friday 30th July 2021 at the Carnegie.

The online event will hopefully draw a lot of interactions and attention from the Town and surrounding area. During last year's talent show, we had no upcoming events or regular updates, so the sudden influx of likes and views went to waste. This time around, the intention is to use that momentum to advertise upcoming events for after the lockdown, including the Talent Show finale.

Ideally, the Finale will have a live broadcast too. This may allow online voting but will be very tough to pull off while also running the event. This will require more research.

Then & Now

'Then & Now' has been continuing over the past month, with new posts going out every week. These posts have continued to see various success, with high interaction rates.

Over the past few weeks, we have used this series to assist with archiving, as a recent post went out with a wide selection of unidentified photos.

This was a good exercise in utilising social media to assist with other tasks. While we do already use social media to push Council surveys, we can hopefully use posts like this to encourage feedback from the public to the council in a fruitful manner.

MONTHLY OBSERVATIONS

As requested, we have included the analytics for Mayor of Thetford's page in the report. The Mayor of Thetford page provides a more targeted approach, and these typically receive high reach (similar to the Thetford Town Council page), but with lower average engagement. This page had the highest post reach of this month, with the Lady Gentle Meadow post receiving 7.3k reach, and 700 interactions. An interesting extra note on this page is that it saw

an uncharacteristically huge spike in likes/follows, receiving 31 likes/follows on 10th Feb (28 of which from an external source).

This does not seem to be related to any specific post which means it probably came from a different method.

The highest in-house post was a post from the Conservation group, highlighting the near 5000 trees/hedges planted in Thetford over the past year. This post received 3k reach and over 1k interactions.

The 'Then & Now' posts have continued to see very high interaction rates. The 4 posts of this month have seen reach between 1k and 2k, but the interaction rate has stayed very high, varying between 80% to 160%.

UPCOMING PROJECTS/CAMPAIGN

Guildhall Website Launch

With the completion of most of the decoration of the Guildhall rooms, we will soon be able to take photographs and upload to the new Guildhall website.

It will also contain information associated with the History of the Guildhall, and the relaunch of the Tea Room.

Venue

Presentation

The presentation of spaces to hire is key to the marketing of the Carnegie/Guildhall, and we are currently seeking professional Photographers to pitch for the commission to help us with this.

We will also develop a digital Venue brochure that will highlight those opportunities to event organisers.

Online Educational Content

We are currently working on several projects to support the local Education Trust; these will include audio and visual aids to create an online educational resource for schools.

SOCIAL MEDIA DATA

Thetford Town Council Facebook

Results from 3 Feb 2021-2 Mar 2021

Note: Does not include today's data. Insights activity is reported in the Pacific time zone. Ads activity is reported in the time zone of your ad account.

Organic Paid

Actions on Page

3 February - 2 March

5

Total actions on Page ▲67%



Page Views

3 February - 2 March

411

Total Page views ▲3%



Page previews

3 February - 2 March



We have insufficient data to show for the selected time period.

Page Likes

3 February - 2 March

13

Page likes ▼55%



Post reach

3 February - 2 March

13,065

People reached ▼19%



Story reach

3 February - 2 March

Get story insights

See stats on how your Page's recent stories have performed.

[Learn More](#)

Recommendations

3 February - 2 March



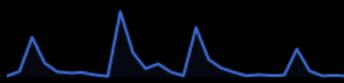
We have insufficient data to show for the selected time period.

Post engagement

3 February - 2 March

9,080

Post engagement ▲16%



Videos

3 February - 2 March

260

3-second video views ▼39%



Page followers

3 February - 2 March

15

Page followers ▼50%

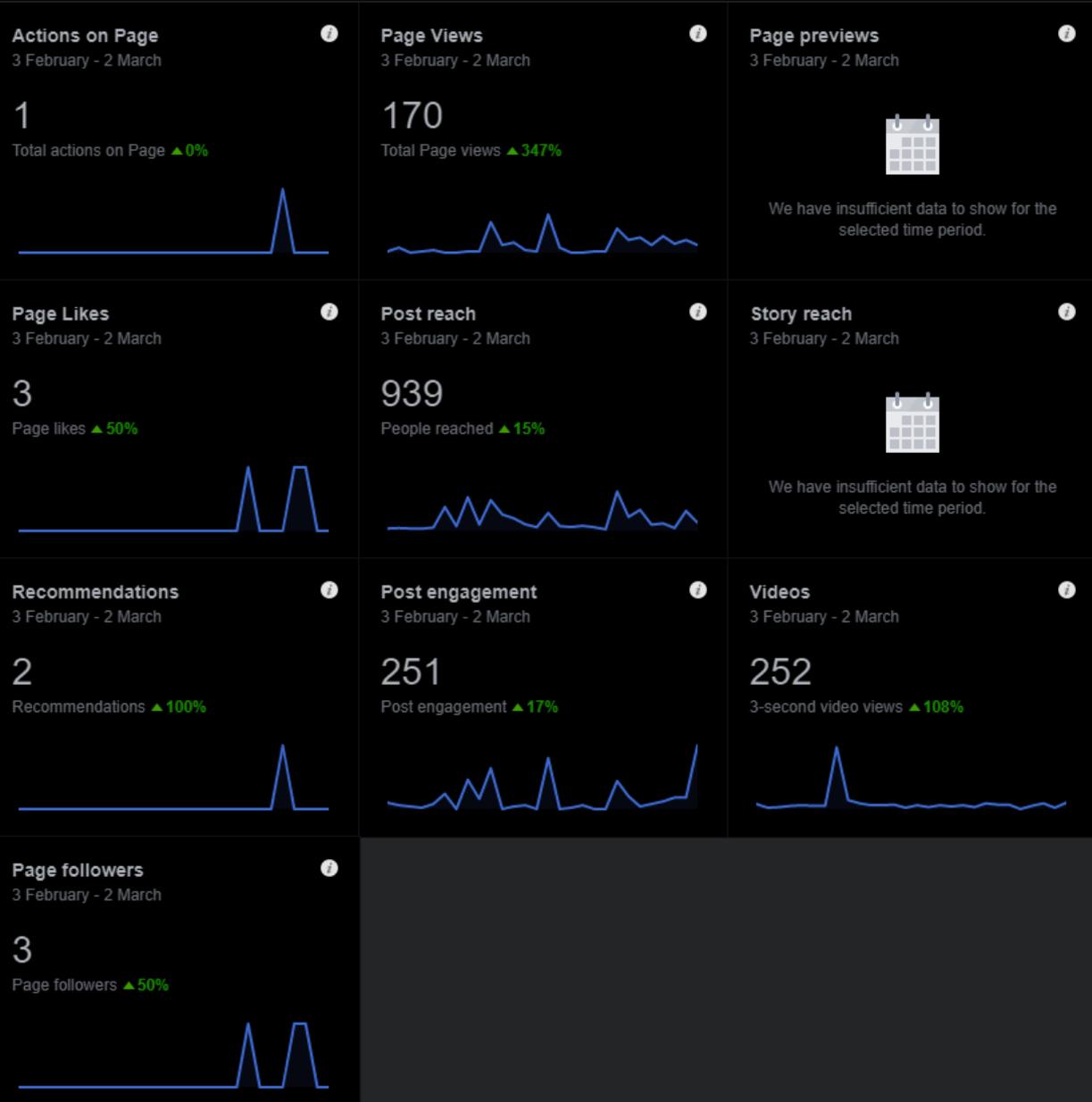


The Carnegie Facebook

Results from 3 Feb 2021-2 Mar 2021

Note: Does not include today's data. Insights activity is reported in the Pacific time zone. Ads activity is reported in the time zone of your ad account.

Organic Paid



Mayor of Thetford Facebook

Results from 3 Feb 2021-2 Mar 2021

Note: Does not include today's data. Insights activity is reported in the Pacific time zone. Ads activity is reported in the time zone of your ad account.

Organic Paid

Actions on Page

3 February - 2 March



We have insufficient data to show for the selected time period.

Page Views

3 February - 2 March

247

Total Page views ▲44%



Page previews

3 February - 2 March



We have insufficient data to show for the selected time period.

Page Likes

3 February - 2 March

59

Page likes ▲354%



Post reach

3 February - 2 March

12,177

People reached ▼14%



Story reach

3 February - 2 March

Get story insights

See stats on how your Page's recent stories have performed.

[Learn More](#)

Recommendations

3 February - 2 March



We have insufficient data to show for the selected time period.

Post engagement

3 February - 2 March

3,268

Post engagement ▼18%



Videos

3 February - 2 March

208

3-second video views ▼67%



Page followers

3 February - 2 March

60

Page followers ▲300%

