



**CITY OF ELY COUNCIL
TOURISM AND TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF TOURISM AND TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT
SESSIONS HOUSE, LYNN ROAD, ELY AT
7.00 PM WEDNESDAY 25TH JANUARY 2023**

THOSE PRESENT:

Cllr Dian Warman Cllr Virginie Ganivet
Cllr Peter Harris

Mrs Anna Bennett (Tourism and Town Centre Manager)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Every and Cllr Wade.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of last Tourism and Town Centre Meeting held on 28th November 2022 and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting, held on the 28th November 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Pages T&TC 76 and 77 refer. There were no matters arising.

4. To Receive an Update on the Service and the Town Centre

Mrs Bennett briefed the committee members regarding the plans for the Etheldreda 1350th celebrations for the year. It was explained that a steering group, consisting of Cathedral/Other Council Members/Visit Ely/Stained Glass and Cathedral staff (including learning dept) met every few weeks to discuss the plans. Visit Ely continue to play an integral part of the group, responsible for the website page with all the events listed, and promotion from the TIC. It is hoped that footfall from these events, dovetailed with Visit Ely and other city events, would increase the annual footfall to the city considerably. The overall visitor numbers are low as expected this time of year with a hopeful increase around Feb half-term.

Mrs Bennett gave an example of the new 'Visit Ely' Guide 2023, shortly due for print and distribution. The Committee responded very positively and were pleased the campaign was yet another huge success, with new business partners joining us, and loyal businesses remaining.

The combined ticket projects are proving successful with the 'Ely Experience' selling as a direct result from MK Travel Show meetings. The latest ticket is OCH/Ely Museum combined, which we hope will be a success. There is also development with co-promotion with The Cromwell Museum with more artefacts and a co-educational programme being put in place.

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Committee Chairman
20th March 2023

New tours and walks are currently under development. Cllr Harris asked if Mr Routledge had received updates regarding Dr Welch's proposal for the nature walks. Mrs Bennett confirmed she would chase Mr Routledge for updates so we could launch the new walks on our website.

Mrs Bennett discussed the new 'Escape Room' with the committee members, explaining that the puzzles are hugely popular, with bookings received well into the first quarter of 2023. The current puzzle is revolutionised, in the sense we offer multiple puzzles with a plan to launch a 'Sessions House' puzzle later in the Autumn.

High Street initiatives led by Ms Reddick were hugely successful and the team are working hard to plan new ones for the forthcoming festivals and Royal Coronation celebrations.

The presentation concluded with a brief overview of the main events produced by Visit Ely for 2023 and where we are with the planning. Mrs Bennett explained to the members that we are finally returning the two-day food and drink festival, but with a 'coronation' theme in May.

5.Budget Updates for TIC and SO

The budget updates, dated the 31st December 2022 were noted. There were no matters arising regarding either.

6.To receive an update regarding the Digital Signage project

Mrs Bennett explained to the committee that dates had changed yet again with an imminent date of early February! The signage totems will be replacing the currently manual boards, meetings have been very successful with Greater Anglia/Hereward/CRP regarding the marketing and comms delivery and eventual launch – together with funding. Further updates will be provided in March.

7.Discussion of Mike Rouse Books

It has been proposed by the family of the late Cllr Mike Rouse that Visit Ely/City Council purchase the bulk of stock, promote the titles and continue the legacy of Mike. However, it was felt that Visit Ely could take the stock and quarter produce and agreed 50% royalty fee and sale price to the family in return. It was also agreed that the books will be sold at all our events for the foreseeable future.

8.Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on the 20th March at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8 pm.