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Please ask for
Os gwelwch yn dda gofynnwch am
Mike Cavanagh

Dear Councillors

I am writing in connection with the five-year financial support that the Town Council agreed with respect to Saturday afternoon opening of the new Glan yr Afon/Riverside facility in the town centre, and to provide a brief update on our first couple of days of operation.

I am very happy to report that our soft launch on Friday, 7 December was a great success with some 2000 visits. Saturday was even busier with around 2200 visits. The entire facility was buzzing and we were overwhelmed by the extremely positive reaction from the public. It was wonderful to see so many people of different ages, backgrounds and abilities, all using the different services within the facility. The fact that it was so busy throughout Saturday shows just how important the Town Council's support is for this facility, which would otherwise have closed at lunchtime that day.

When I originally wrote to you in September 2017, seeking financial support for Saturday afternoon opening, we were working on best estimates for what we anticipated the staffing levels and costs would be. In recent weeks, leading up to the opening of the facility, and indeed in our opening days of operation, it has become clear that some of those assumptions were at variance with what we now know we need to operate effectively and safely. It is important for example that we have a supervisor level member of staff working on a Saturday, which would be at a higher grade to our standard frontline staff, and we do need to make sufficient provision for the use of relief to cover sickness, annual leave, training et cetera, which was a little light in the original estimate.

In addition, completely outside of the Council's control, the National Joint Council for Local Government Services has agreed a national pay deal, which will significantly increase the pay of our lower paid staff, which includes our frontline librarians. Whilst this is very good news for the staff involved, it does have a financial implication on the

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costs of operating services including at the Riverside.

As a result, we have calculated that there is a significant gap between the amount of funding that the Town Council has previously agreed to provide and the actual cost of delivering Saturday afternoon opening. I am therefore requesting that the Town Council gives consideration to funding the shortfall, such that the Riverside facility can continue to open all day on Saturdays during the five-year duration of the agreement.

Similar conversations are being held with other town and community councils, which support their local public libraries. For example, Fishguard and Goodwick Town Council recently agreed to cover these additional costs under a new five-year deal at Fishguard library. Given the significant increase in costs, we offered the Town Council a 10% discount for the benefits of a long-term five-year agreement. We would be in a position to offer the same to Haverfordwest Town Council.

The financial position is outlined below:

	Total	Estimate of required relief cover	Grand total
2019/20	11,880.96	2,019.76	13,900.72
2020/21	12,284.48	2,088.36	14,372.84
2021/22	12,688.00	2,156.96	14,844.96
2022/23	13,068.64	2,221.67	15,290.31
2023/24	13,328.64	2,265.87	15,594.51
			£74,003.34 over 5 years

As you will see from the above figures, over the five-year period, the gap is effectively £29,000, as five years of £9,000 per annum would total £45,000 against the cost of £74,000.

As stated above, if the Town Council are minded to continue to support Saturday afternoon opening on a five-year agreement basis, we would be in a position to offer a 10% discount worth £7,400. The total payable per annum over the five-year agreement would therefore be £13,320, with a total paid over five years of £66,600.

With regard to the current financial year, I am proposing that the pro rata payment to cover the period 7 December 2018 to 31 March 2019 would be based on the original agreement of £9,000 per annum.

With Best Wishes



Mike Cavanagh
Head of Cultural, Leisure, Tourism and Registration Services