

SWTC has received a grant application from Shhh Experience (Hyperfusion) for a free Town Hall Hire for an event 16th to 20th December 2020 utilising the Assembly Hall and Court Room. Hyperfusion will generate its own income for any event through ticket sales.

The direct cost to the Town Council for the cost of hire and staffing (evening event and weekends) is £2,957.50; the grant application is therefore for this amount. The budget balance within the free grants budget is £5,381.

Under the current Covid-19 regulations imposed on social gatherings and in recognition of the Council's own financial situation, Committee is requested to consider this application being mindful of the following:

- SWTC should attempt to limit its projected decreased income as a result of Covid-19 – this booking would have a negative impact on the budget of £2,957.50
- The application is from a quasi-commercial venture given that Hyperfusion generates an income and pays staff / Directors from this income
- For the foreseeable future the Council should only consider fully commercial ventures where the hirer can prove they are fully Covid secure with a first-class track and trace system in place
- Theatre events such as Pantos have been cancelled by the organisers as they appreciate the difficulties surrounding putting on their events and the potential adverse publicity
- The Council needs to consider the health and safety of its own staff operating in this environment.

Recommendation:

1. To temporarily suspend hiring the Town Hall for any event which would recognise a direct loss to the Town Council;
2. To reconsider this position at the end of the current financial year
3. To only hire any facility where the hirer takes responsibility for putting in place the appropriate Covid-safe and secure measures and for paying the appropriate Covid-19 fines should these measures be breached.