

## **St Edmundsbury Masonic Hall Co Limited**

### **Commentary on the Accounts 2019-20 and 2020-21**

In the year to 30 June 2019 there was a fall in the income from non masonic activities, with the resulting fall in net profit by £32,000. Unfortunately the pandemic and lockdowns in 2020 and 2021, meant we were unable to build the non masonic income to previous levels.

As we have repeatedly stated, the success of the Masonic Hall company relies on non masonic income. Our fixed overheads run at over £50,000 per annum, which equates to approximately £150 per day, on a 6 day week.

Masonic income from resident lodges, chapters and other units run at around £26,000, this has been supplemented by other Masonic hire of around £5,000 per year, so we are some way short of the £50,000 needed. The fall in membership and attendance since lockdowns means that to maintain the current income we will have to look at how lodges are charged. Historically this has been based on membership numbers, number of meetings, LOI's etc. For the last 2 years charges have been based on the year to 2019 charges.

Basically the business model is not a good model as to breakeven we rely heavily on outside income. Normally it would be expected to breakeven on masonic income, with other income providing the surplus, enabling repayment of loans large repairs and improvements to facilities.

We have of course in the last 2 years received various grants, which have enabled us to keep all staff on the payroll and to carry out some major repairs and improvement.

We also did not charge the caterer any rent between March 2020 and October 2021.

Although Masonic activities resumed in October the reduced numbers have had an effect on bar income. Bar income has already fallen in recent years as alcohol consumption has reduced, so with reduced numbers as well the income and thus profits have fallen. The staff cost of opening the bar is the same however many Customers there are.

As regards non masonic income, the numbers attending conferences is probably 50% of those before lockdown. Again, a fall in profit against before lockdown. The number of businesses using our facilities is also down. The contribution to overheads is therefore smaller, thus we need more events.

We are basically at the point we were when the Masonic Hall first opened, we need to build up the business again and hope that numbers attending conferences and other events increase.

It is necessary to monitor all income activities to calculate the profit on each event, this may result in certain size of events being not taken, or an increase in hiring charges. We are looking at all aspects, staffing of all events, other associated costs to build a picture of where the profits come from.

We now have a fixed loan, the interest is paid monthly so no accruals are built up. We are looking to reduce the loan, but this relies on the profitability building up to the levels pre pandemic.

It is likely to be a long term project and does rely on members of all lodges etc that meet here supporting and promoting the centre however they can.

It is a long term project which all members will benefit from in years to come.

Ian S Gray  
Treasurer.