**COMMERCIAL & OPERATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Update for Executive Committee – 3 October 2017**

The following paper contains the Commercial & Operations departmental update for 2017 to date, covering the main areas within the department, these consist of:

IT (ICT)

Catering and Events

Merchandise

Filming

Online Services and Communications

**IT Update – July 2017**

**1.1 Membership System Replacement**

The CiviCRM/Membership system has gone live. There remains work to be done but the basics of the system are live in regards to managing Member data and interrogating it.

In addition we have gone live with online ticketing, where tickets can be purchased for Inn events.

The team are currently working on the ability to apply for Scholarships online, joining the Inn, and other online services are next to be tackled.

**1.2 Venue Management Solution**

New contracts have now been created in the system with other work planned once CiviCRM is more fully implemented.

**1.3 Middle Temple Network Hardware**

**UPDATE:** Due to issues with some of the equipment delivered, incorrectly by the supplier, this project has been delayed. The next Suitable weekend for installation is 28 October.

We are planning to refresh the network infrastructure hardware this summer. We are reviewing current refresh of hardware or new next generation switches which will give us better traceability of traffic on the network. Currently we are in early phases of talking to suppliers.

It is anticipated this will be completed during the close period.

**1.4 Estates Network**

Installation and configuration is now complete. It is now for estates to add their own devices and configure as needed.

Internet access will be provisioned later this month for remote access.

**1.5 Saffron – Food Management Solution**

During the summer this project has begun again. Work is being carried out on the supplier and product information in the system.

With the kitchen now fully staffed it is expected this project will gain momentum.

**1.6 Wi-Fi Extension**

(NO CHANGE SINCE THE LAST REPORT (NO CHANGE WAS EXPECTED).

We continue to struggle in deploying the external Wi-Fi Access Points. Our colleagues in Estates are having issues with positioning, and gaining permission from the relevant authorities.

Discussions have continued with Estates and we are exploring the use of different aerials which should be more discrete. Equipment and cabling is being purchased to conduct a small scale trial.

In addition, we are reviewing the Wi-Fi coverage in the Advocacy Suite. It may be necessary to deploy additional units in the training rooms that currently do not have their own Access Point.

As a project this is not a top priority, as such, it may take some time to progress.

**1.7 Replacement of Archive Software**

This solution is now in place and awaiting user acceptance testing.

**1.8 Finance System Replacement**

(NO CHANGE SINCE THE LAST REPORT (NO CHANGE WAS EXPECTED).

This is a project due to start in 2018, dependant on resource and other project timings.

The Finance System will form a hub solution in terms of the other systems currently under implementation. All financial information for the Inns various activities will flow between the systems.

This will provide a more accurate, up-to-date picture of the Inns finances, with a primary aim of reducing administration and manual tasks, in order to accurately produce the Inns financial reports.

**1.9 Unplanned Projects – EPOS**

An iPad based solution has been implemented, and used, for the sale of merchandise at the Inn. First use has been very successful.

During tests, requirements gathering, it became clear that one solution would not fit both our merchandise and lunch time/bar requirements. A decision has therefore been taken to deploy two different solutions.

The lunch time/bar solution will be worked on later in 2017, once the Inn is back in to the routine of sales/service.

Rob Meyer – October 2017

**Catering and Events Update**

**2.1 Events**

Please find below, events occurring before the next Commercial & Operations Sub Committee meeting.

**2.1.1 Upcoming Main Domus Events:**

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**2.1.2 Upcoming large Commercial Events:**

The Hall roof project was delayed until September and possibly extended in further in to 2018. We continue to discuss this work with clients, some of which have decided not to book events with us during this work, some guests have been offered discounts, different rooms, to secure bookings.

**2.2 Catering**

The major news in Catering is our successful recruitment over the last few months. Assuming no changes to the current situation, we will have a full brigade as of 19 October, with no vacancies in the kitchens.

During the summer our suppliers have confirmed significant increases in some produce, in the region of 12% to 18% in some cases. They have also stated that further increases are likely in 2017 and 2018. In the main this is down to the exchange rate with Europe and the USA, plus issues with some goods, such as eggs.

**2.3 Filming**

Disney are back at the Inn over 14/15 October to carry out filming on a new Disney production.

There is no other filming booked at present. We also believe the roof works will impact filming, as most lucrative filming projects use the outdoor spaces of the Inn. It is unlikely we will see more filming this year, or early 2018.

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**2.4 Merchandising**

A targeted strategy has been created with the assistance of a 3rd party specialist.

What remains is agreement, between the various departments concerned, as to how we can best display and sell these items. There have been some proposals but these are yet to be discussed and agreed. We would hope to move forward during October on these ideas.

**2.5 Strategic Direction**

The Champagne bar was not as successful this year due to poor weather, and will not open again during 2017. We have decided to open only on Thursday’s and Friday’s in 2018. This is mainly due to cost increases on wine and staffing, that we are unable to pass on to the customer at this time, as our “competitors” are yet to increase their prices.

The new Venue website should be live by the end of October. The site is in the final stages of build with most of the content in place. Some final testing and tweaking is required, and we would hope to complete this during October.

Anne Atkinson – October 2017

**Online Services and Communications Update**

**3.1 New venue hire website**

The website project is almost complete and is expected to be delivered in October.

Part of the development has included creating a new FAQ’s section, a room capacity planner and uploading a variety of testimonials.

We have completed a photoshoot to update our images and are in the process of uploading them onto the website.

A new domain name has also been purchased, changing it from middletemplehall to middletemplevenue.

**3.2 Social media**

Social media is progressing well and we are posting regular engaging content on all channels. In August we reached 68.5K users on Twitter, gained 99 retweets and 101 likes to our posts.

Our corporate social media pages are still strong and Middle Temple is still above other legal organisations on LinkedIn (see the image below). We currently have 2,975 followers.



Live-tweeting is our strongest method and we will continue to do this for upcoming events such as the next Survive & Thrive event.

**3.3 Newsletters**

We are reviewing this process in line with Data Protection to ensure that only readers who opt-in receive the emails. Due to staff shortages, we will re-launch the newsletter when the Civi project is live as this is where newsletters will be created from then on. In the meantime, we are publishing a weekly menu on the Middle Temple website.

We hope to implement new changes to The Lunch Times to remove lengthy copy and include strong images. We are also looking at developing a new template for the quarterly events newsletter. This will hopefully help us to re-engage with key people within the events industry.

**3.4 Online promotion**

Our Time Out campaign promoting the Champagne Bar was successful and we had 2,182 profile views. We will be re-launching this next year.

**3.5 Press and media**

This area is being led by our PR company, replaced in January 2017. We have written new copy and press releases for the sandwich cart, the venue in general, food history, conservation and business press to promote the venue in these areas.

The ITV documentary is still in the planning stages but the production company is very keen to go forward with this.

We have been focusing on gaining editorial coverage and have secured features in publications such as Evening Standard, City Matters, Metro, BBC History Magazine and Your London Wedding.

**436 Collateral Creation**

We have been working to create a new, fresh look for all collaterals starting with the champagne bar and sandwich posters. We have had brochures, banqueting menus and other print materials quoted on for future productions in a bid to save money and tighten up on the budget.

Tamara Obeng – October 2017