

MBC Trustees Meeting: 1st September 2021

Attendees

Present: Silabodhi (SB – Chris Effendowicz) - Chair, Vidyapala (VP – Paul Whitehead), Dharmakarunya (DK – Ursula Tidd), Aparajita - AJ Gilbert), Suryaka (SK – Helen Ellis), Lilasuri (LS - Claire Morris), Mary Tait (MT).

Apologies: Aryaraksita (AK - Sundeep Grewel), Mahahsraddha (MS – Mark Leech), Prasadu (PS), Vishangka (VS – Keith Green)

1. Welcome	Actions
SB welcomed all to the meeting.	
2. Apologies	
AK, MS, PS and VS sent apologies.	
3. Check In	
All present checked in.	
4. Spiritual Welfare of MBC Sangha and Centre Team	
5. Approval of the Minutes of 4th August 2021	
a. The minutes were approved as a true copy b. Matters Arising	
Ongoing Actions	
Analysis of the visioning session to be discussed when Prasadu has returned.	Prasadu/Vidyapala
Gender Inclusivity:	
Various conversations are taking place which will be brought together from September onwards.	
A question was asked regarding the way retreats are described in terms of gender. It was decided that, as the conversations currently being held have thrown up differing views, decisions on gender descriptions should remain as they are until an agreed way forward has been established for both men and women.	Dharmakarunya/ Lilasuri September onwards
6. Financial Report	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have now received a rebate on the rates of £16,000 and there may be more to come, although the complexity makes it hard to tell whether this is the case or how much it is. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our charitable status has been reinstated. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Now the businesses are rated separately, our rates have fallen from £20,000 to £10,000 and with an 80% reduction for charitable status, we are now paying £2,000. 	

- Furlough payments from the government have added £40,000 to our reserves.
- Although the loss per month is reducing, we are still losing £,2000 - £3,000 per month.

Reasons for Shortfall

Courses and Retreats

Although incomes from courses and retreats is coming up again, it has not yet reached pre-Covid19 levels.

Restrictions on numbers are slowing this down.

Rent

- The Pizza restaurant has closed, with a loss of rent of £900 a month.
- Breathworks is back to paying full rent
- Bodywise is still only paying a quarter of the rent. Reserves are depleted, but the level of business is increasing, and will probably allow them to pay half the rent in the near future.

Communities

- The Gosinga Community is fully occupied.
- The numbers to pay rent at the Akashaloka Community has been agreed at five, but there are still two empty spaces. A new resident is to move in towards the end of the year.
- The Women's community has one space.

The communities have 2- 3 years left to pay off the mortgage. The agreement is that the MBC will cover any shortfall of funds due to empty spaces.

Positives

- Changes in hours have reduced salary costs
- There is a proposal that Amalasiddhi, an order member from Sheffield, should open the basement as a cafe. He has been part of a team running a successful café in Sheffield. He would use the front room initially. There is also a possibility that he might share the space with some other vegan food store organisation. It is proposed that Amalasiddhi will not pay rent immediately but will eventually pay the full amount. This would not be the case if the collaboration were agreed. Proposal to be firmed up in next conversations.

Comments

- The finances are definitely rescuable, but we need to be able to project the speed of recovery.
- Need to focus on finances to enable projections regarding the recovery and make provision for depreciating assets. It was suggested that a meeting just to discuss financial planning be held.
- This might be the time to revisit contributions from the Sangha. It is important that we can describe the way

Silabodhi

<p>forward to the Sangha if we want to ask them for money.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The future of communities: consider whether location is important in terms of filling the communities. The city centre seems to be popular. • Are we too generous as a landlord by offering rent free periods for new businesses? There was a feeling that some rent should be paid from the outset. • Possibility of involving the Sangha in deciding what to do with the space in the basement. <p>7. School Visits</p>	
<p>These have been delivered in the past through a funded role (Clear Vision) and volunteer support. The requests for school visits, either to the Buddhist Centre or to the schools have been increasing.</p> <p>There is an organisation called SACRE which is run by local authorities and advises on religious education. Part of their remit is to ensure that religious education reflects the ethnic mix in their area. The Thameside SACRE reps met with Silabodhi; they advise six local authorities in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>Work was previously be done by Clear Vision and volunteers.</p> <p>Doing the visits would add to our income and demand seems to be high, but the question is how would it be resourced?</p> <p>The bulk of the work is the administration rather than the contact hours</p> <p>Suggested Models</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person is paid for two days work and the money is paid to the MBC • The waged person manages all the money and gives some to the centre • The MBC team does the organisation and administration, and the volunteer pool does the visits on a freelance basis. • All done by MBC team. <p>If the visits were marketed, it could become a right livelihood business</p> <p>Could ask for volunteers at the volunteer's meeting.</p> <p>There was strong support for the proposal to resume school visits</p> <p>8. Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 20th October 2021 at 7. 00p.m. at 73, Singleton Road, Salford. M7 4LX . In Person</p>	