

# MBC Trustees Meeting: 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Present:**, Silabodhi (SB - Chris Effendowicz) - Chair, Sanghadhara (SD), Lokeshvara (President), Upekshapriya (UP - Jeff Cole), Suryaka (SK – Helen Ellis), Aparajita (AJ - Ajay Gilbert), Vishangka (VS – Keith Green), Mary Tait.

**Apologies:** Aryarakshita (AR– Sundeep Grewal), Lilasuri (LS - Claire Morris),

## 1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

## 2. Check In

All those present checked in.

## 3. Spiritual Welfare of Sangha and Centre Team

The women's GFR weekend retreat went very well with a high proportion of both mitras and order members attending. There is an upcoming meditation retreat for men and a meeting is being arranged for when Vidyadaka is visiting re men's ordination.

There have been no further changes in the team and the health and safety group have made a good start.

## 4(a) Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

## (b) Matters Arising

All actions completed or covered by the Agenda.

The café is to go ahead and the document has been signed.

Cost of Viryanaga report will be £700 - £1,000

## 5. MBC Project Update

### Strategic Report

- Repairing the roof, secondary glazing, disabled access to include lift, toilet and refuge areas. Basic disabled access alone would cost a minimum of £120,000 (ex VAT). It is possible that the Fire Officer may require more safety on other floors in relation to the Fire Regulations.
- Trustees need to consider whether they are satisfied with this basic level of disabled access which may not be in line with the vision.
- Split the building vertically. This would involve selling the front or back of the building and the Buddhist Centre continuing in the other half. In this scenario, it would definitely be necessary to evacuate the building for a period of time.
- Sell the building and rent a space in the city centre.  
Would be vulnerable to rising rents
- Sell building and buy smaller place in city centre.  
Might not get higher spec.  
Might be a long search as not many buildings available for sale.

The advice is that the windows could be repaired, secondary glazed or replaced. There is not an option to repair the roof, which would have to be replaced.

The report was optimistic about the sale price with estimates of between £1.5 and £2.5 million

It made the point that whatever was decided it would have to be compliant with the vision statement and communicated to the Sangha in this context.

### Ajavin Report

This report provides ballpark figures and areas to explore. There are no recommendations for action. Ajavin has offered to come back and look at the building again if required.

Insulation of the Building:

The columns of brick take the heat out of the building and conduct cold in. We would probably get planning permission to solve this problem, but it would cost £500,000, and by covering up

the brick, change the ambience on the inside. It would be unlikely to reach the point where it was regarded as sustainable. Insulating the outside would be unlikely to be permitted. There is an area in the light well which is rotting, which is difficult to get to and would cost an estimated £100,000 to repair.

It will cost around £400,000 to replace the roof and additional costs which may arise need to be taken into account, for example:

Guttering

Better designed roof windows

Temporary roof during construction

Roof insulation, at around £150,000

There is the possibility of increasing the cost to £600,000 - £700,000.

Since Grenfell, requirements have become more rigorous.

The electrics may need replacing. This was confirmed by remarks made by the Fire Officer during a previous inspection.

The costs could double if the repairs are attempted whilst the building is occupied. The repair of windows is doable whilst the building is occupied, replacement is not.

Strong project management is needed which is an additional cost.

Beware of unexpected costs. For example:

- Hiring car parking spaces to hold materials,
- Skips
- Road closures (charged)

Thorough inspection of risks needs to take place.

Total estimated total cost, excluding wall insulation, of the project: £1.1 - £1.6 million.

The Trustees were asked what further information they needed to make the decision.

- Clarity of the wording of each option. For example, the inclusion or not of right livelihood and communities.
- Transport links for any venues considered outside the city centre.
- What are the options if a wider area around the city centre is considered.
- London, Birmingham and Worcester could be regarded as models for having a smaller central centre and local hubs.
- More accuracy about money, time and effort for non-stay options.
- Decision and strategy to reflect vision.
- Urgent/important matrix.

Martin Hamer to be asked:

- The sale value of the building after refurbishment.
- The price of buying land in the city centre.

**Action: SB**

Do further work on costs and possibility of recouping VAT

**Action: SB/SK**

### **How will the decision be made?**

Need to start thinking about creating some principles around the decision-making process.

For example:

- People might make provisional decisions.
- The decision could be broken down into its constituent parts.
- Does the decision 'feel' right as well as rational.
- What else is needed to make the decision.
- Has everything been aired – nothing is off limits.
- The decision has been given the time it needs.
- The decision 'tells the story' of the MBC – current events in relation to history and how it relates to the vision.

- Look at it against an urgent/important matrix.
- Stages of decision making – stay or go then the decisions falling out of that.

LS and AR to be updated,

**Action: Project Team**

#### 6. Update Risk Register

Trustees were asked to suggest risks to update the risk register

**Action: Trustees**

#### 7. Heritage Lottery Fund Application

If we were to stay in the building, would we apply again to the HLF for funding as part of the fund-raising strategy?

It could be part of the discussion if we decide to stay.

#### 8. Conversion of OneTek Office

It was decided the space was not viable to rent and a small amount of money would be spent to make it into a usable space e.g. study, shrine room, workspace.

#### Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 10.00a.m. – 1.00p.m. in the Library, Manchester Buddhist Centre or on zoom

### Ongoing Actions

#### Manchester Buddhist Centre Constitution

Little progress has been made, so AR kindly offered to do the work needed.

**Action AR**

#### Admitting Ex Offenders

This is being considered nationally and we will await the outcome of these discussions. If any decisions need to be made in the meantime VS will consult SB who is privy to the national discussions.

#### Engagement of Manchester Membership

Proposal:

- Order days

**Action: AR**

Agenda item for the future on the composition of the Trustee Group.

**Action: SK**