

Mendlesham Community Centre Charity Chairs and Financial report for the AGM 27.5.20

Chairs report:

The challenge over the past year has been financial. You will recall that last year it was reported that overheads had increased outside our control, particularly utility costs, so after much consideration, we have reviewed our charging system and increased fees from 1st September 2019. It was hoped that the reviewed hire fee structure to make the arrangements fair and transparent for all would also attract new hire, particularly over weekends and school holidays.

We have received continued support from Mendlesham Community Centre, increasing and continuing its annual grant to £3,000.

Our regular hirers accepted the increased fees with no known loss of bookings. However we must continue to be aware that if we are to retain our regulars, this is a fine balance. Review of fees was planned to commence at the time of writing, but has had to be deferred due to the current Covid 19 emergency.

However, we did lose a significant hirer with the closure of Mendlesham Preschool without notice on 26th November. We have been left with an unpaid debt of £1564 (November hire £943 and Cancellation fee 2-19th December £621) with at present no indication as to if or how it will be repaid. The preschool has removed all the contents of equipment stored in the Community Centre, with the exception of a cupboard containing what we believe to be sensitive information, although Mendlesham Preschool has advised this is not the case and does not wish to clear the information. The cupboard is now under the sole control of Cllr Exley and at some point will need to be cleared responsibly by the Trustee. There are some outside items still to be cleared/removed.

Due to the Covid crisis, the community centre closed for public use on 19th March 2020 with no indication at present, when or how we will be able to reopen for community use.

In the meanwhile, it has been agreed that Mendlesham Primary School can use the entire building until July 2020, in order to facilitate arrangements for more children to be able to return to school.

Thank you to Mendlesham Community Council and all hirers for their continued support.

Mendlesham Community Centre Charity, Financial Accounts for the year ending 31.3.20 :

The year end 31.3.20 initially shows a much improved financial situation with an increased year end figure of £13431.24 compared to the year end 31.3.19 £7568.06.

However caution is required. The full utility reimbursement to Mendlesham Primary

School has not been made, with electricity information not currently available and other utility information lower than anticipated compared to previous years and rising costs. Questioning if the data from the school is accurate?.

Due to the Co vid 19 emergency, all hire income has been collected with no " pipeline" now existing. Whilst the Community Centre has benefited this year from a £3k (£2k) grant from Mendlesham Community Council, next year this may not be possible.

At the end of December, our professional cleaners terminated the contract ,with our employed Community Centre co ordinator agreeing to take on the cleaning " in house" . Before the centre closed in March, we had seen two months of in house cleaning costs, no costs relating to cleaning materials whilst existing stocks were used so financial consequences of this new arrangement are yet to be determined. The scrubber drier also failed with quotes for replacement in excess of £1500 with no current decision made to replace at present.

So as of 31.3.20 we have ongoing employee costs, no income, possible reduction in cleaning costs but it is too early to confirm plus ongoing costs such as insurance, broadband etc. There is also still the possibility we may need to cover professional valuation costs for the Community Centre part of the building for insurance purposes.

Cllrs Exley and Gardiner, Messrs Downie and Whomes have continued to help with maintenance repairs which make a huge difference to the finances and our Coordinator Rachel Brown continues to provide an excellent service to hirers as first point of contact for the Community Centre. Thank you.

The Community Centre Charity holds ordinary meetings monthly which are open to the public so if you have any issues that need discussing, either speak with Rachel or Sharon or come to a charity meeting.