

# HAMBLE PARISH COUNCIL

Monday 11 February 2019

## THE MERCURY LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY HUB UPDATE

### Report of the Eastleigh Borough Council Local Area Manager for Bursledon, Hamble-le-Rice and Hound

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#### **Introduction**

1. The Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC) Local Area Manager (LAM) for Bursledon, Hamble-le-Rice and Hound (BHH) was requested by the Clerk to Hamble Parish Council (HPC) to attend their meeting on 11 February 2019 to update on progress with the Mercury Library and Community Hub (the Mercury). Unfortunately, due to a prior engagement this was not possible and this report is submitted in lieu of attendance.

#### **Background**

2. The Mercury is an Eastleigh Borough Council project, providing a new community resource within Hamble-le-Rice with housing (two flats) above.
3. The building was completed in autumn 2018. However a number of snagging issues meant that the facility could not be opened.
4. Hampshire County Council was unable to support the library beyond providing old stock and some advice. As such officers from EBC and HPC have been working to provide the required resources, systems and procedures.
5. The Mercury will be run on behalf of Eastleigh Borough Council by volunteers managed by Hamble Parish Council.

#### **Recent Issues**

6. Meetings were held between EBC and HPC in December 2018 and January 2019. At these meetings HPC expressed their concerns that they did not have the resources required to deliver key elements of managing the building and services on a day to day basis.
7. A number of issues were identified at these meetings. The following were agreed.
  - HPC would be responsible for sourcing, training and managing volunteers to run the building on a day to day basis.
  - EBC to be responsible for the introduction of systems and processes to meet legal requirements.
  - EBC to arrange a booking system and agree fees so that the building would be available for hire from the beginning of February 2019.

- EBC to make arrangements to open the library service by April 2019. In particular to contact Hampshire County Council Library Services (HCC) and request support and advice.
- EBC to follow up the reduced book stock from what was requested from HCC.

### Current Activity

8. At the BHH Local Area Committee meeting of 24 January 2019 the following charges were agreed:

Area	Charge
Library area	£15 per hour
Large meeting room	£10 per hour

It is proposed that the charges be reviewed after 6 months when there is a better understanding of the market/demand.

9. The EBC Project Manager has been working with an EBC IT Specialist and they have produced the following:

- A Mercury web-page. This is hosted on the EBC website. It can be accessed here: <https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/our-community/the-mercury-library-and-community-hub>
- A room booking system for the Mercury. This went live week beginning 4 February 2019 as promised and can be accessed from the web-page.
- A book recording/ lending system.

These were demonstrated to the Assistant Clerk and Volunteers on 5 February 2019.

10. The BHH LAM has been in contact with HCC and is arranging a meeting for w/b 25 February 2019 to discuss outstanding issues so that the library can be opened.
11. The BHH LAM requested more books as per the HPC request. However HCC are not able to meet the request. EBC are following up a possible lead for more books from Southampton City Council. However in the absence of anything concrete HPC have requested that they provide a book exchange arrangement for members of the public. This has been agreed in principle providing that it is flexible to allow for new stock if available.
12. The BHH LAM has been working with the Clerk to HPC on risk assessments.

## **Conclusion**

13. The Mercury is now available for public hire and work is continuing on delivering the library element of the service.

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LOCAL AREA MANAGER

Date: 11 February 2019

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TITLE: THE MERCURY LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY HUB UPDATE

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