Cherwell Collective report
Produced by the Clerk
February 2024

The Council has asked to formalise the arrangement with Cherwell Collective to better understand the support they have received in the form of discounted use of KPC properties.

Main Hall and Kitchen Hire
Last year CC booked three short days each week from 8am to 2pm (3pm on Saturdays although they used the facilities for much more than that including other days of the week on occasions when the hall was empty)
The rate card value of that last year would have been
Thurs/Fri 8am to 2pm @ £35 = £210 plus £90 for kitchen = £300 per day
Saturdays 8am to 3pm @£55/hour plus £90 for the kitchen = £475
Total for three short days should be £1075 per week
The Council agreed to a discount on the two weekdays and the use of the Main Hall for free on Saturdays – so they were invoiced £360 per week.

Annual cost	Ratecard	Invoiced	Discount/Grant
Main Hall Hire	£55,900	£18,720	£37,180 (67%)

Cherwell Collective have asked to reduce their days at Exeter Hall as they no longer have the regular supplies of waste food to distribute. From 1 April 2024 they intend to operate on Thursdays (9am to 3pm) and Fridays (9am to 9pm). We have asked them to submit an application for a discount on the use of the hall and kitchen on those days. I have been trying to arrange a meeting with Emily since the autumn to discuss this and help her with the forms but she has not been able to make the time for this.
The rate card value of the days/hours they have requested is £1005 each week.

Cost to KPC – there is a cost for caretaking staff, cleaning, utilities and administration – I can't put an exact figure on that but around £350 to £400 would be a reasonable estimate.

It is my recommendation that the Council consider what level of grant they might be prepared to offer 'in principle' at the P&F meeting on 29 Feb so that the Collective can make any decisions they need to make. They may decide to reduce their hours on Fridays as the rate does go up for Friday evenings as there is high demand. This grant would not be given if the Collective are not able or willing to submit grant applications with the necessary information about their finances and governance.

	Ratecard	Invoiced	Discount/Grant
Bar/Office Hire	£12,000	£4,800	£7,200

We have had to estimate the cost of renting the bar. Aly assumed hiring the room for 10 days per month for 4 hours at a time. At present the Collective have full use of the bar for an office (mainly used for storage) although there are times when it is difficult or impossible for them to access if there are bookings in the main hall and small hall. This causes regular problems and we allowed them to use the patio doors but they kept leaving them unlocked at night so we discourage that. They have not decided whether they want to continue with their use of the bar area.

	Discount/Grant
Barn	£6,000

The barn is leased to Cherwell Collective free of charge. We have not assigned a value to this but would anticipate that £500 per month is not unreasonable. We recharge all electricity usage to CC

and as a result of them leasing it we no longer pay the Non-Domestic rates on the building. This therefore represents a financial saving to the Council although we have lost the use of the barn for our own storage.

Barn electricity	£1440 recharged

In addition, Cherwell Collective are invoiced for:

	Annual invoice (approx)
Waste	£2,280

The Council had to increase our waste collections to weekly because of the additional waste produced by Cherwell Collective. CC are billed monthly although we have been informed that they received a grant from CDC to cover these costs.

Printing costs	£600

All CC's printing for the larder is done by KPC staff using our copier. The recharge is currently £50 per month although they exceed this due to the large amount of colour printing they request. We do not factor in staff time supporting this. We expect to increase the charge to £100 from April 2024. We would prefer they had their own photocopier.

Catering

When the Collective first came to Exeter Hall in 2020 we were in the first lockdown and we were not taking any bookings or doing any catering. Our catering staff (Sue and Joanne) worked as caretakers over this period and continue to do so although they have done some catering when the Larder has been unable to help such as on Remembrance Sunday.

We worked closely with the Climatarian Kitchen arm of the Collective and increasingly they took over the in-house catering although this was never a formal arrangement.

It is now appropriate to change this arrangement so that we revert to providing our own catering for bookings. This is the recommendation of the Working Group. Sue and Joanne are still working for KPC and keen to take this on.

Key Holding/Access

A couple of years ago we made the decision to allow the Cherwell Collective to be keyholders (checked with insurers) so that we did not need to have caretaker cover for all the times they are here and so that they could access the bar/office when required if the building isn't staffed by KPC. This has proved to be problematic as they regularly leave windows or doors open which sets off the alarm and Graham or another member of the team has had to come in out of hours to sort it out. We suggest that having access to the building when KPC staff are not here is no longer appropriate particularly given the decrease in their use of the facility.