

Sandwell Libraries Federation
Financial Statement 1 April 2021- 31
March 2022

Income

c/f £367.52

hire)

Balance

£357.52

Expenditure

£10.00

(Room

Report from the Trustees of the Federation of Sandwell Libraries April 1st 2021 - March 31st 2022

Statement from Trustees:

The first face to face meeting was held for the Federation at the beginning of January 2021. This was held in a Community Centre as Libraries in Sandwell were still not fully operational. The pattern for the year has been to hold a Trustees meeting before a General Meeting of the Federation, sometimes on Zoom and a report from the Chair goes to the General meeting.

The lack of opportunity for meetings in Libraries continued until the early summer months so there was little point in the Federation fund raising for community activities. (One of the major difficulties for larger groups meeting is the smallness of public rooms in the libraries).

In early September work was begun on trying to raise funds to improve some of the outdoor spaces at the libraries. Nine of the libraries

indicated they would be involved. The aim was to make more usable any available outdoor sitting areas with an emphasis on creating a sustainable biodiversity site that library users could enjoy. The inclusion of seating and large planters were part of the plan, with the opportunity for user groups to grow flora that attracted pollinators and possibly vegetables. The first funding group approached was the Council Infrastructure Levy (CIL) run by Sandwell Council for local communities, but it was felt that the costs were generally too high for this funding stream and so the group then made a bid to the West Midland Combined Authority. In December 2022 this bid was rejected by the CA but with encouragement to re-bid using additional ideas. Being so close to Christmas any further action was delayed until 2023.

The Trustees are aware that volunteers were also slow to return to libraries for many complex reasons and we are in the process of building up confidence and encouragement for a return to Federation activities.