

## Friends of Burhill School

### Annual General Meeting 16 October 2019

Present: Gemma Adams (Head Teacher), Emily Webb (Deputy Head), Clare Whittington, Julie Kirwan-Smith, Siobhan Patterson, Michelle Hinsley, Shona Waller, Joanna Russell, Hannah Wickham (HWi), Karen Simpson, Rhiannon Flury (Chair), Jessica Forster, Cat Hinchliffe, Diane Dewar, Lara Hughes, Julia Collett, Jamie Dawkins, Donna Gray, Emma Cairns, Cassie Austin, Amy Hayes, Jen Harryman, Salena Townsend, Charlotte O'Farrell, Cat Bennett, Ella Leavey-Bell, Heather Webb (HWe) (Minutes)

GA welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave an overview of the purpose of the AGM – to gather opinions on projects that went particularly well over the last year and to think about what we want to plan over the year ahead, to go over key events in the diary and to receive a financial report from the Treasurer. GA then introduced RF as the Chair of the meeting.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

CB distributed a sheet detailing the current state of the FoBS bank account and listing the major fundraising income and outgoings over the 2018-2019 school year. To summarise, over the course of last year we raised £4,300 less than what we spent. However, the account does still look healthy with a balance of just under £31K at the end of last term. CB commented that some of these funds are already committed to forthcoming projects e.g. the new changing rooms.

Major purchases made last year - £10K to the school Library, new PA system in the Hall, Circus Day treat for all children, new musical instruments and SEN resources.

SW gave a report on the various SEN resources that had been purchased. These included Widget Online, subscriptions to Nessie, boxes of construction materials and fine motor skills "Handies" boxes as well as various online resources.

Looking at the financial report it is clear that bake sales and second-hand uniform sales are very successful.

The Year 6 Leavers Committee spent more money than they had the previous year. The current committee have requested a clearer idea of how much FoBS are going to donate this year (has always been £600 in the past).

CB remarked that the Christmas card project had been unsuccessful last year. It was noted that this was due to unavoidable technical issues with the partner company which meant many orders were not fulfilled. The partner company has been changed for this year and no further problems are anticipated.

#### **Plans for the Year Ahead**

RF invited suggestions from attendees about ways in which we could be more successful over the year ahead.

Volunteers WhatsApp Group – this has been very successful but it does need to be confined to solely requests for help and not become a general chat group. HW commented that a separate group had been suggested for FoBS Chat, but this runs the risk of becoming too much to manage. Various other suggestions were made including a Facebook group and a Suggestions Box. It was generally felt to be

very important to have somewhere where people could ask FoBS-related questions without having to send an email.

Another suggestion was made that we produce “Job Descriptions” in order that people know what might be expected of them were they to volunteer for our various projects. It was agreed that this would be very useful. These to be written and published on the FoBS website.

HW mentioned the importance of getting new parents to sign up to receive the Robin each week. Barely any new Reception or Nursery parents have registered since the start of term. GA agreed to send the link out via Studybugs again, and to keep doing so going forward.

CO mentioned the general lack of male volunteers at FoBS events and the need to recruit more.

### **Quiz Night**

Preparations for this are well underway. Timings need to be provided regarding locking up of the school etc – Quiz Committee to advise.

### **Burhill Fireworks**

Several people mentioned the lack of information regarding which classes are to run which stalls at the Fireworks event. No representative of the Fireworks Committee was present to advise on this.

### **Christmas Fair**

DG reported that the Christmas Fair was still in its early planning stages but that a small committee had been formed and was looking at what worked well last year and what needs to be changed.

Communication to be sent out inviting external stalls to come to the Fair at a cost of £20 plus a donation to the Raffle.

### **Spending Limits**

CB reported that she had had a meeting with RF and Sarah King (Co-Chairs) regarding spending limits and what expenses can be signed off by Chairs and Treasurer rather than being voted on at meetings. Outcome of this meeting: £50 or less can be signed off without consultation. Amounts between £51 and £200 will require signing off by two out of three of the Co-Chairs and Treasurer. Between £201 and £500 will be put to the FoBS committee via their WhatsApp group. Anything over this amount will be discussed at a FoBS meeting and voted on.

### **Spending Requests**

JK requested a donation towards the building of a new “Wendy House” in the Reception playground. Various suggestions were made on how to achieve this including possibly involving some of our regular sponsors. The idea was agreed in principle – JK to research pricing.

CW requested some made-to-measure tarpaulin covers for the Nursery mud kitchen and sand pit. CB felt that it was important to be clear on what types of resources/equipment that FoBS should fund and what should be covered by the School budgets. CW responded that no funds were available in the Nursery budget. Purchase was approved.

HWi and GA are shortly to meet with the representative of a charity called Delight which is involved with drama and literacy projects to enhance children’s learning. This meeting is likely to result in some new projects which could potentially be funded by FoBS. It was felt that this would be an excellent alternative to the usual major FoBS fundraising which has often in the past made large

purchases for the school (for example the Outdoor Stage) which have then not been fully utilised. Donations towards workshops and other experiences give every child another opportunity for learning outside the usual curriculum that otherwise would not be financially possible.

Wellbeing – GA commented that the school has no budget for wellbeing but that children would benefit hugely from such resources as play therapy sessions, exercises for managing stress and raising self-esteem. CB has a contact who provides this sort of thing to schools and local organisations and has asked for a quote. The Hersham Brownies also know of someone similar. CB to report back.

GA reported that the usual donation that FoBS make to the school's Hardship Fund has now been matched by another donor. GA wondered if FoBS would be willing to "transfer" this allocation to be used to fund the provision of resources for wellbeing across the school. A donation of £5K was agreed.

GA made a request from Vicky Macken that FoBS purchase the candles, sweets, cocktail sticks etc for this year's KS2 Christingle Service. LH suggested that Waitrose or Lidl be approached to see if they would donate the oranges. Alternatively these could be provided by parents. The meeting agreed to purchase all the "extras".

RF reported that FoBS need a new Barbeque, griddle and aluminium table for events at a cost of around £300. This was approved.

GA requested that FoBS contribute towards training costs for volunteer beekeepers. This was agreed in principle – costs to be advised.

### **Sustainability**

CO reported that a Burhill Sustainability WhatsApp group has been formed and is very active. Meetings have been held with the pupil parliament and everyone consulted has been very receptive.

A cross-schools meeting will be held shortly bringing together teachers and parents from 6 different local schools to share ideas and resources.

Current plans/achievements:

- Carry on with second-hand uniform sales and expand this to include Nativity costumes and Book Day fancy dress.
- Bring the Burhill apiary up to spec so that children can go on visits to see the bees.
- Obtain more water butts to collect water for our school plants.
- Helping children build bug houses
- Compost heaps – one has already been donated and another is shortly to be built by parent volunteers.
- A "donation day" for Christmas jumpers will be held – date to be confirmed.
- Donations of wellingtons – need to speak to Mr Hill regarding the provision of shelving in the FoBS freezer shed.
- Crisp packet recycling bins – one to be put in the Dining Hall and others by the school entrances – not suitable to go in the main playground because of the likelihood of unsuitable items being posted through the slot.
- LH asked if there is a bin in the playground at lunchtimes. GA replied that there is but it cannot be left outside permanently due to wasps etc.

- Three collapsible carts have been purchased for school trips meaning disposable bottles and bags for lunches are no longer needed.
- A houseplant to be provided for each classroom.

### **Any Other Business**

GA invited attendees to write down any suggestions or ideas they have on the sheets of paper provided.

Comedy Night (RF/CO) – this may have to be postponed until next school year due to the availability of the Scummy Mummies act and also the school calendar. This was discussed at length and various suggestions were made including moving the event to an external venue and adding other elements to it which could form a major fundraiser equivalent to the Burhill Ball. It was felt that the Comedy Night was an excellent idea, though possibly the Scummy Mummies act was more aimed at women thereby potentially limiting attendance. No Ball committee has been formed yet – GA suggested that we run a survey asking parents if they would like this event to continue or be replaced with something else less expensive and suited to a more diverse audience.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

15 November 2pm in the Children's Centre