

Friends of Burhill School

Minutes of Meeting Friday 17 January 2020

Present: Gemma Adams (Head Teacher), Toby Wishaw (Sports Teacher), Rhiannon Flury (Chair), Mark de Rijk, Jane Hannaford, Donna Gray, Julia Collett, Lara Hughes, Jessica Forster, Cat Bennett, Heather Webb (Minutes)

Request for Funding

Mr Wishaw presented his request for FoBS to contribute towards the lease of a school minibus. It was felt that this would be of benefit to all children, not just for sporting events but also other trips such as theatre visits. Burhill has recently formed a new local sports partnership which will generate 50-60 sporting events per year, not including the regular football and netball fixtures. Cleves has various facilities including a mountain bike track and trampolines which would be much more accessible to our children if we had permanent transport available to us.

A 5-year lease of a 17-seater Peugeot minibus would cost approximately £7.5K per year which includes insurance and an estimate of petrol (based upon the amount currently used by Cleves School for their vehicle). This works out some hundreds of pounds cheaper than hiring a minibus each time one is required. Mrs Adams added that the school would save further money by using a minibus where it is currently obliged to hire a coach at the cost of £800 per day. Though FoBS has on several occasions discussed purchasing a minibus outright, leasing one means no MOT or maintenance costs. At the end of the 5-year lease period a new vehicle would be provided.

The meeting queried whether or not a special license is required to drive a minibus. Mr Wishaw confirmed that it is now possible to drive on a normal licence provided the holder is over 25. Mrs Adams added that there are several staff who have volunteered to undertake half a day's training on driving the bus, including a trip out on the roads with an instructor.

LH queried whether or not the bus could be signwritten – Mr Wishaw confirmed that this was definitely possible. He proposes that FoBS cover half of the £7.5K cost each year, to be reviewed at the end of the 5-year period. This proposal was approved.

Christmas Fair Update

DG reported that the Fair had gone extremely well and raised just under £5.5K. DG has agreed to run the same event next year. CB added that so far this year after just one term we have raised over 80% of last year's total fundraising. Profits for the Christmas Fair were high due to overall costs being lower – there was a lot of stock available in the FoBS sheds left over from previous events and Elfridges presents cost a lot less than they had in previous years. Mrs Adams recorded her thanks to all of the organising team for being so efficient in clearing up after the Fair. DG replied that this was because she had brought in a special team just to do this job, rather than relying on people who had potentially been on site since early morning.

LH requested that we purchase a new Christmas tree base as the current one is very unreliable This was agreed – LH to source and purchase something suitable.

DG reported that using a card machine on the bar had gone well, though it had been necessary to connect it to her iPad which won't always be available. It was suggested that we could also provide cash back at future events, though this does incur a charge. DG added that the raffle ticket system

we currently use for events needs overhauling – it takes too long to write people’s names on the back of tickets. It may be possible to sell tickets online – DG to investigate and report back in time for the Summer Fair. RF to speak to other local PTAs to see what system they use.

Mrs Adams requested that FoBS anonymously provide free Grotto tickets and wristbands for some families who are on lower incomes. This was agreed.

Spending Ideas and Priorities for 2020

HW to ask for suggestions from parents and carers for how we might spend some of our fundraising money.

LH asked Mrs Adams what long-term plans there are for the school playground and outdoor areas. Mrs Adams replied that the gazebo which was recently damaged will be removed and a new one placed by the big tree as a quiet reading space. The current playground area is extremely cluttered and also needs resurfacing. The climbing frame and slide are now very old and the steps are crumbling. Monkey bars are used a lot but are not in a suitable place. The trim trail is also extremely old. Surrey County Council are to pay for the playground to be redeveloped and extended back as far as the pond area. A new path will be laid to the forest school area. Mrs Adams is meeting SCC soon to discuss proposals and hopefully equipment will be removed over the Summer holidays for work to commence. FoBS will be invited to contribute financially but there is currently no indication as to what we would purchase or how much it will cost. Mrs Adams to report back following her meeting with SCC but realistically there is no chance of any major changes until next Academic Year.

RF suggested a working party to include both parents and children – Mrs Adams agreed that this would be a good idea.

LH commented that FoBS have already agreed to fund repainting of the current playground markings at a cost of £1K but nothing has yet happened – Mrs Adams to follow this up.

The meeting discussed staffing at events and the difficulty of managing to source a whole day’s worth of volunteers from some classes. It was felt that asking people if they wanted to project-manage a specific stall or activity in small groups (regardless of whether or not they belong to the same class) might be an easier way of approaching the problem. HW to include this in next week’s Robin to see if anyone is interested.

Year 6 Leavers Party Contribution

JC reported that this year’s event will take place at Vaux Mead and include use of the Guide Hut. So far hire of the field and hut, a DJ, photo booth and wristbands have all been paid for by Year 6 parents. Other proposals are a silent disco (approx. £300), hair braiding by Academy salons (free), mocktails, football game and inflatables. Parents to bring their own food and drink. Charging £10 per family ticket will raise £600 in total plus £300 has already been received from fundraising events. JC asked the meeting to agree an amount to be donated by FoBS. CB suggested a flat total of £2K per year to be reviewed every few years. This was agreed.

DG requested that in future years the Year 6 Leavers committee avoid trying to raise money during the run-up to the Christmas Fair – this was agreed.

JC suggested that subsequent Leavers committees need a FoBS representative – this was also agreed.

Cupboard Security and New Storage

RF reported that the code for the shed locks has been changed and will continue to be changed after each major FoBS event. An area needs to be agreed to put the Calor Gas canister cage. This could possibly go behind the gate – RF to investigate. DG mentioned that the sheds need thoroughly sorting through and an inventory taken, to be stored electronically on the FoBS Google Drive.

RF asked the meeting to approve purchase of new FoBS noticeboards as the current ones have no keys and are becoming mouldy. This was agreed – RF to find out how much this would cost. The meeting felt that new keys should be kept in a lockable box inside the sheds to avoid the possibility of them going missing again.

Vacancy for Vice-Chair and Second Hand Uniform Coordinator

DG has agreed to be Vice Chair.

RF to ask on Volunteers WhatsApp group for people to run the second-hand uniform sales.

Any Other Business

Mrs Adams reported that Nursery have asked for a playhouse like the one approved by FoBS at this year's AGM. We have received no costing for this purchase – Mrs Adams to speak to Julie Kirwan. An estimated cost would be £3200 for both – this was approved.

CB reported that Lisa Winn had applied for a grant to cover costs of clearing the undergrowth along New Berry Lane in conjunction with Elmbridge Borough Council. £10K was asked for but £5K was agreed.

Mrs Adams asked that the Library be given £500 for them to sign up to some subscription services and buy some new books. This was approved. MdR commented that it would be especially beneficial if some books about diversity were purchased – for example disabilities or LGBTQ issues. Mrs Adams agreed to pass this idea on to Library staff.

RF requested £36 for bark chippings to be used by Carla Dixon for weed control in the flower beds. This was approved.

DG requested that more trollies be purchased to take on school trips for lunchboxes and water bottles. It was agreed to purchase three more.

Date of Next Meeting

26 February from 7pm in the Children's Centre.