



Marsh Gibbon CE Primary School PTA Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th Nov 2017

In attendance:

Philip Blazdell	Julie Hickey	Hannah Lyon
Kelly Cheek	Liz Bruce-Kelly	Peter Ferens
Jayne Sinclair	Claire Scott	Verity Davis
Karen Barber	Sarah Reveler	Mark Mackintosh
Karen Maciejewski	Claire Howitt	Becky Fitzpatrick
Gareth Owens	Julie Hickey	Louise Mew

Apologies:

Marion Riley	Sarah Jane Buckle	Katie Blazdell
Sheila Kronfeld	Fi Adams	Katy Kelly
Judy Toes	Andrea Healy	

Matters arising from previous minutes

1. Costings to be presented of projects for PTA to fund (Julie Hickey: covered in 4th agenda item)
2. PTA Class reps to ensure Facebook pages are up-to-date
3. Constitution

Chairperson's Report

- (Presented by Phillip Blazdell (PB))
 - * How to make the PTA more accessible – Phillip outlined reasons why Julie Hickey and he were exploring ways to raise the profile and appeal of the PTA. One idea is to change the time of the PTA meeting to directly after school, to help more parents attend. Input from a number of others at meeting included fact that daytime meeting could exclude some parents because of childcare requirements or work commitments. PB reiterated his belief that the PTA needs to be inclusive and appealed for any good ideas to get more parents involved. PB said parents could be surveyed – to find out what steps could be taken to get more parents along.
- PB expressed desire to get agenda published some time ahead of meeting – so that more parents could contribute in a meaningful and positive way. After some discussion about the nature of the AGM, there followed consensus among those present that PTA meetings should be positive and predominantly focus on fundraising to help improve children's school experience. ACTION: PB and Julie Hickey (JH) to discuss and decide upon a framework for

when the agenda should be published ahead of the meeting and communicate this to the secretary.

Headteacher Report

- JH began by paying tribute to the positive feedback she'd received about the pupils' attitude from a recent visitor to the school. JH then referred to the academic achievements of the school (as outlined in the newsletter) and repeated how important it is to celebrate the positive things the school is doing (Science Day and sport options in KS2). JH appealed for any parents with any musical skills to get in touch, as she would very much like to offer music options for pupils.
- Respect towards teachers – JH outlined how important she believed mutual respect between teachers and parents is to the school, and appealed to everyone present to continue the good relationship they had with their class teachers. There was general consensus in the room to support the school's continued efforts to ensure the school is a place where teachers and parents are treated with respect and verbal abuse is not tolerated.
- Photocopying, printing and parentmail requests – due to the high volume of these type of requests, JH is to formulate the best way for the PTA to get this done without overloading the school secretary. General consensus in the room to be mindful of not bombarding requests. ACTION: JH to formulate and communicate the preferred way for PTA material to be photocopied and printed.

Treasurer's Report

Figures kindly provided by Treasurer Sarah Reveler (SR)

- Account balance is £14254.75
- Raised so far:
- Film Night - £227.90
- Stall @ Marsh Gibbon Beer Festival - £22.30
- Donation - £50.00 (Stratton Audley Barn)

- Jayne Sinclair (JS) suggested that with healthy reserves, it made sense to spend some of the funds the PTA has raised. Number of questions from around the room asking what the PTA needed to retain in order to fund events later in the year. PB suggested a detailed financial plan relating to the fundraising events is needed. ACTION: PB offered to create a 12 month projected spending plan.

Latops/lpads – Mr Owens

- Mr Owens explained why the school's IT equipment needed upgrading (school currently has only 5 working laptops and as a result is unable to fulfil some aspects of the national curriculum)
- Mr Owens presented a written proposal to purchase new laptops and Ipads for use by all years in the school.
- There followed some discussion about the merits of Apple v Android tablets and the nature of the software upgrades that would be required. The suitability of the chosen company (Turn It On) was also raised.
- In particular PB raised specific concerns about the potential financial liability this system could place upon the school, insisting that knowing the overall cost of ownership over 5 years is key to deciding whether this system is a shrewd purchase for the school
- JH and Mr Owens responded. JH clarified that the ongoing maintenance was a cost that would be shouldered by the school budget. Mr Owens made point that Turn It On supply IT equipment to a number of schools in the Bucks area and as such are a trusted supplier with experience.
- Peter Ferens asked whether PB could speak directly to the supplier to put the valid questions he raised. PB declined as he said that he has invested significant amount of time in this last year and the questions had been raised then

- PB stressed the need to further investigate before committing and expressed concern that going ahead with this could cost the school dearly.
- A number of others repeated the desire for the school to improve the IT kit available for the children and gave support to the suggested spending.
- Nicola Lawrence proposed motion to spend £7k of PTA's funds on the upgrade as outlined by Mr Owens. The motion went to a vote. 14 voted in favour. 1 person abstained and 2 people voted against. (One person appears not to have voted, or was not counted.) The motion was carried.
- PB wanted it on the record that he strongly disagreed with the decision.

Programme of events:

- **Christmas Fayre: 24th November 2017**
Liz Bruce-Kelly (LBK) and Karen Barber (KB) provided an update including information about the school choir's performance. LBK asked parents and teachers to remind children to return their decorated baubles. There was some discussion of classroom Christmas trees – and clarification of who would decorate these. After being asked by LBK, JH and Verity Davis (VAD) confirmed that teachers and TAs would be present to help run the refreshments stall.
- **Pig Roast:**
KB delivered concise update confirming that everything has been booked for this event.

Fundraising suggestions

- **School Disco (School Council have asked for one)**
Louise Mew (LM) kindly offered to find out about one popular supplier's availability and cost for a school disco to be held in February. LM will report back at next PTA meeting.
- **Circus**
KB mentioned very popular circus fundraiser that parents at other schools have spoken highly of. She will find out more and report back to next meeting.
- **Vale Lottery**
Sarah Reveler (SR) mentioned Vale Lottery as a potential fundraiser.
- **Easy fundraising**
PB urged everyone to sign up for Easy Fundraising which is a no-effort way to raise money for the school. Some suggested it could become a monthly competition for each class – which parents can raise the most for the school.
- **PTA UK**
SR suggested looking at the PTA UK website for ideas of events that have raised lots for other schools.
- **Merry Go Round**
Jayne Sinclair (JS) drew attention to fact that after a strong start, Merry Go Round takings have dropped off sharply. JS said this could be down to the new drop off arrangements – parents feel unable to view what's available. JH and VAD contributed – suggesting perhaps set afternoons could be arranged for parents to access the stock. ACTION: VAD and JS to chat and decide how best to improve access to Merry Go Round.

AOB

- **Film Night Feedback**
Generally positive feedback for this event organized by LM that raised £227. Several parents said how much their children had enjoyed themselves. Some parents suggested that age groups

could be split, in order to prevent older children being disturbed by younger children, or vice versa. Karen Maciejewski and LM discussed how best to keep things orderly amongst those who attended. Suggestion that the price could be raised to £5.

- **Drop Off and Pick Up**

Claire Scott (CS) raised this – and relayed feedback from other parents (particularly those with younger siblings and pushchairs) that it can get very crowded. CS said some younger children had been accidentally knocked over and that it can be tricky for buggies. Hannah Lyon and Nicola Lawrence agreed that access with buggies is tricky. VAD and JH explained the reason for the change – predominantly because the new arrangement provided a safer way for teachers to hand over children (particularly younger children). VAD and JH explained why the vehicle gate has to remain closed – because at another Bucks school a child was knocked down by a car and the pedestrian gate is the far side of the vehicle gate. VAD and JH explained that they had been unable to put the pedestrian gate on the side closest to the school because of the extensive tree roots. LM asked whether the very narrow gateway inside the grounds could be widened, JH and VAD said they would investigate. VAD said the new arrangements were a trade off between addressing health and safety concerns and making things easier for parents. VAD and JH said they could look at ways to improve the access, for instance by sinking slabs into the steeper grass section and resurfacing the drive.

- **After School Science Club**

JS explained briefly about the Atomic Science Club run by Atomic Tom at some schools in Bicester. Widespread interest in the room for more information about his availability. JS to report back at next meeting.

Meeting closed: 9.40pm.

THE NEXT MEETING IS THE AGM **January 17th, 2018**

7.45 FOR 8.00PM AT THE SCHOOL

EVERYONE IS INVITED SO PLEASE COME ALONG!