

St Ebbe's School Association (SESA) Annual General Meeting 2017

Weds 11th October 2017, 8.00 pm, at St Ebbe's School

Minutes

Present

Noelie Chadder (NC)
Nicky Warren (NW)
Susie Bagnall (SB)
Rachel Wilkins (RWi)
Ciara Shaw (CS)
Cat Bowley (CB)
Betty Cranham (BC)
Sue Whidborne (SW)
Fionnuala Woods (FW)
Megan Douthwaite (MD)
Phil Doubtfire (PD)
Andrew Billen (AB)
Renee Walker (RWa)
Graeme Knight (GK)
Meredith Knight (MK)
Jeevan Vasagar (JV)

Apologies : Tara Pullin

1. Minutes from 2016 AGM

These were approved with no matters arising discussed.

2. Role of SESA

The current constitution from 1996 was discussed ; all agreed it needed an update. PD suggested using a model constitution that could be adapted. A new constitution would need to be agreed at next year's AGM.

3. Chair's Report (NC)

NC summarised her report of events and fundraising activities from last year. This included: starting a closed SESA Facebook group , running 2 movie nights (a successful new venture), raising money through two Waitrose stores. SESA also asked parents to donate directly to their class to buy new literacy resources; this raised £700. EYFS raised money in a similar way for garden equipment, which was funded from this together with cake sale proceeds. Blanchfords kindly donated materials for the EYFS sandpit. Last year we attempted to make and sell bags for life with hand drawn self portraits of the children. However the company who were going to make the bags withdrew shortly before they were due to be made. CS felt we had started on this project too late; this would be a good fundraiser for this coming year. The fete raised £3640, with lots of helpers to set up and to tidy up. The plant stall was a big success thanks to donations from Waitrose of seed packs, and a donation of flowering plants from the Hinksey Park park-keeper. The cafe did not do so well, perhaps because it was located inside. The bar however made a large profit. The year 6 expenses from this year's fete were very high. MD suggested a competition for which year 6 stall makes the most money. This year the summer play didn't make so much money on the bar because it was a lot shorter. We developed a new logo for SESA and RWi sold trolley coins with this design. Unfortunately there won't be a sale of Christmas Trees from Christmas Forest this year.

4. Treasurer's report (CB)

In 2016/7 there was a net income of £21, 992 last year and expenditure (donated to school) of £17,576. Major items of expenditure in 2016/17 were cycling proficiency and extended swimming lessons, library books, literacy resources, Forest School and playground tree maintenance. Currently SESA has a total of £13, 701 unallocated in the bank.

5. Headteacher's report (SB)

SB highlighted the current financial difficulties that the school is in. The current budget was set expecting 371 children to be on role, however there are actually only 343, partly because of a small year 6 but also because EYFS is not full. As the school receives £2900 per pupil on role there is therefore a large deficit. The school was expanded to 2 forms per year at a time when a lot of housing expansion was expected in the area. This has not happened as the Oxpens development has been delayed. An increased number of children coming through is expected in 3-4 years but budgets are likely to be tight until this point. SB is concerned about not being able to replace a teaching assistant in EYFS in November because of a budget deficit.

Grahame Godby left as caretaker early in the term; he has now been replaced but at greatly reduced hours due to the budget deficit, with SB and DF covering for any gaps.

SB asked if SESA could contribute to funding a replacement EYFS teaching assistant from November. This led to the discussion below about what SESA could help finance.

6. Spending for 2017/18

NC felt strongly that it was not the role of SESA to fund staff salaries. NW raised the concern that paying salaries was outside our constitution and also not what parents had expected money to be spent on when they had donated or spent money at events. Therefore SESA couldn't spend money directly on salaries but could spend it on other items in the school budget, freeing up more money to pay staff.

A number of ways of reducing costs or increasing income were suggested. This included voluntary contributions from parents for Forest School (MD), swimming (RWa) and increasing the costs of after school clubs (RWa). As swimming is part of the national curriculum school can only ask parents to contribute towards the transport costs. AB asked if there was a way for parents to donate directly to the school. NC and SB said this would be through SESA. GK asked what percentage of parents pay voluntary contributions; SB reported approx 2/3 of people contribute when asked. He also queried whether after school clubs run by people other than staff could pay more for use of space. AB suggested that Parentmail was a very good way of asking parents for contributions as many parents will just automatically pay what they are asked for through this method.

NW suggested that applying for grants might be a good way to fundraise for large items like the activity trail; this could be done on a percentage basis via a grant writer if a grant was successful. It was felt this was a good idea in principle but was not discussed further.

Monkey bars were discussed. Replacement would cost £12,500 on the current estimate. MD noted that outdoor equipment was exactly the sort of project that could get grant-funding. SB said she did not want new monkey bars due to the number of accidents that have happened in the past.

MD spoke about the opportunities for Forest school. Contacts at Hill End and Oxford Brookes have seen the site and were extremely positive about our Forest School space. MD said that the school could make a lot more of how special our Forest School is and how it benefits our children. She suggested asking parents for a voluntary contribution. MD reported that Oxford Brookes would be interested in some of their teaching students becoming involved; they would be DBS checked already. FW volunteered to be the Forest School lead within the school and to put together some information for the website and for parents about the benefits of Forest School. This could be used in the context of inviting parents to make voluntary contributions if school chose to do this. SB confirmed that she had set aside £2200 from the PE budget to support Forest School this year.

SB and BC both said that they would like SESA funding for increased length of swimming lessons and cycling proficiency to continue as this improves the safety of our children in a cycling city with lots of nearby water.

The following spending was agreed:

Continued funding extended swimming lessons (from 30 mins to 1 hour) £2600

Continued funding of cycling proficiency training £1000

Arena Touring Theatre company visit (whole school) approx £500-600

Class Christmas presents (which SESA has traditionally funded) approx £700

Contribution to Forest School (exact cost depending on whether current grants are successful)

In principle, to fund some additional resources for guided reading. SESA would need more information about the costs for this.

The possibility of having some SESA funds which could be allocated during the year (ie not all funding allocated at the AGM) for additional projects/resources not anticipated at the AGM was discussed. This was felt in principle to be a good idea but was not discussed in detail.

7. Events for 2016/17

AB reported he will kindly organise another Quiz Night. The host this year will be Martha Kearney; as she can only come on a Thurs evening the date of Thursday 30th November was chosen.

It was agreed SESA would hold a raffle at this event again.

8. Election of officers

Noelie Chadder and Nicky Warren stood down as Chair and Secretary respectively. Cat Bowley was re-elected unopposed as Treasurer. Ciara Shaw and Rachel Wilkins were elected as Co-Chairs. Fionnuala Woods was elected as Secretary.

9. Signatories on SESA bank account

Cat Bowley and Rachel Wilkins will remain as signatories on the SESA bank account.

Close of meeting at 10pm.