**Friends of Slingsby School (‘FOSS’) Annual General Meeting**

Wednesday, 21 October 2020 on Microsoft Teams

Attendees Staff: Leigh Smith and Emma Massey

Attendees Parents: Liz Wilson, Sam Burnett, Sonja Sedran, Mary-Ellen Staley, Kate Pope, Helen Mackinder, Lu Turner, Jayne Goldsmith, Charlotte George, Kathryn Fairweather, Nicola Buchan and Bev Quarton.

1. **Welcome**

Liz Wilson (‘**LW**’) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone over Microsoft Teams.

1. **Apologies**

Jill Watts

1. **Minutes of the previous AGM**

The minutes of the previous AGM held on 15 October 2019 were circulated. It was agreed that they are a true and correct record of the meeting and that there were no matters arising from the minutes.

1. **Chairman’s report**

LW delivered her Chairman’s report (**see attached**).

1. **Treasurer’s Report**

Sonja Sedran (‘**SS**’) delivered her Treasurer’s report.

*Halloween -* It was noted that Halloween is typically a very well patronised paid event fundraiser. This year the staff have volunteered to run a Halloween party for each class bubble and FOSS and the parents are very grateful to the staff.

*Bag2School -* There was a short discussion about Bag2School, noting the decrease in price to 30p per kilo and the need to promote it more effectively, but it was generally agreed that it is a very easy way to raise funds. SS noted that Bag2School should be discussed at the next ordinary meeting.

*Christmas Events* – On behalf of FOSS, SS thanked the families and businesses that donated to the raffle prizes. The raffle did very well, as in previous years. There was a 79% increase in takings for the tombola and refreshments. Improved physical positioning and spacing in the village hall and better advertising probably contributed to the increase. FOSS would like to receive any and all ideas for Christmas this year as the usual events may not be able to happen. Leigh Smith (‘**LS’**) acknowledged that it would be very difficult to hold the regular Christmas events this year. SS noted there have been several ideas for new events being considered and FOSS will discuss it with the school to see what is possible and what everyone is comfortable with. Nicola Buchan (‘**NB**’) noted that in years past there was a coach trip into York at Christmas time and, while that may not be possible at the moment, it seems like the school events are getting smaller in scale and experience for the children. Bev Quarton (‘**BQ**’) suggested it might be possible to hold an outdoor event at the right venue and questioned whether Castle Howard could be approached. SS noted the current relationship between FOSS and Castle Howard through the marketing department with Mel Staley (‘**MS**’) and that this could be followed up for Christmas activities. Charlotte George (‘**CG**’) suggested that it may even be possible to take class bubbles inside the house. SS noted that these ideas for Christmas should be on the agenda for the next ordinary meeting.

*Plant sale* – This was a really nice and successful event that occurred on the last day of school before it closed and was right before Mothers’ Day. Everyone seemed to really enjoy the opportunity to support FOSS by buying a plant or two for their mums. Lisa Boland organised the event and SS informed the meeting that Lisa is happy to run it again next year. It was agreed that the timing before Mothers’ Day is ideal. SS noted that now we are more experienced with Covid-safe measures and we should be able to run the event very safely.

*Decorate a Duck and Family Sponsorship –* These online fundraisers were devised by FOSS to try to capture some of the fundraising that would ordinarily occur through the Scarecrow Trail weekend and Duck Race. Historically, those events generated around £4,600. We had fantastic support for these fundraisers and SS noted that it was impressive that we were able to generate almost £1,300 during lockdown when no one could meet, mix or come to school. SS informed the meeting that Pat Thompson on the Slingsby May Day Committee and Sam Burnett are interested to see if there is an opportunity to do something for the May Day/Scarecrow weekend in May and this will be discussed at the next ordinary meeting. It is very unclear as yet whether we will be able to do any events for Scarecrow weekend or Duck Race and we will need to monitor the situation, generate some ideas and continue to discuss possibilities.

*easyfundraising –* This is a very easy way to raise money for the school that doesn’t require any extra spending by families, just a different process when you shop online with the supporting retailers. FOSS needs to work out how we can make easyfundrasing a regular method of online shopping for everyone.

*Contributions to school for 19/20 year –* SS informed the meeting that the contribution to the school for the 19/20 year was about £3,100, including the Year 6 leavers’ hoodies. The meeting agreed that this is a fantastic result for a year that had some very unexpected and difficult limitations. FOSS has retained almost £1,200 to address the small admin costs and as a contingency/buffer for future events. This is about the same as the contingency retained last year, and LW and SS noted that it has been shown to be very useful in the 19/20 year.

*Discussion following Treasurer’s report –* Nicola Buchan (‘**NB**’) noted that Halloween was very different this year, being a continuation of the classroom bubble without organised entertainment or substantial food, and perhaps payment should have been made optional. Families are more constrained financially at the moment and some children may miss out. LW acknowledged NB’s concerns as being very understandable and some discussion followed among meeting attendees including the need to provide fundraising opportunities being the primary purpose of FOSS, balanced with concern for any students who could miss out due to the costs of events, especially in these more difficult times. SS noted that for the Halloween event almost all children had purchased a ticket which was encouraging but that this concern should be kept in mind for future events.

*Audited accounts –* LW drew the meeting’s attention to the audited accounts for FOSS (**see attached**) which have been independently verified. LW noted that the audit provides transparency but it’s not a legal requirement to audit the accounts and it is up to next year’s committee to decide if they want to continue with that. There were no questions arising from the audited accounts.

*School FOSS expenditure –* SS noted that FOSS is grateful to the school for the breakdown of expenditure of FOSS donations because it provides excellent transparency (**see attached**). The playground resurfacing is a good example of the wonderful value that FOSS can add to the school for its students. LS informed the meeting that the school obtained quotes for the resurfacing before lockdown ranging from about £8,000 to £15,000. Emma Massey (‘**EM**’) went on to explain that before lockdown the school engaged in a lot of preparation work to get the resurfacing done but then lockdown prevented it from going ahead. The upper playground needs work and grants are so far not available, but the school will continue to look at grant options. EM noted that much of the FOSS donation for 19/20 has already been spent – approx. £2,900. SS suggested encouraging donations by having an online tracker showing funds raised, the funding target and identifying something specific that would be paid for with donations. The meeting agreed that it would be a good idea to track the funds towards a stated cost target. LS noted that the school regularly discusses needs and targets with FOSS and it is a transparent process. For example, recent targets included laptops and wifi in the reading rooms. EM noted that the school keeps records that are available to everyone to review. The difficulty would come if the school/FOSS identify a funding target, but circumstances can change requiring funds to be spent elsewhere. It’s not always possible to anticipate changes to the school’s needs. For example, curriculum changes can require additional spend on resources for the classroom. The school historically has had the full trust of the parent body to spend FOSS donations in accordance with the school’s rules. The school always endeavours to spend the donations in the most appropriate way for the benefit of students. EM suggested that perhaps we could use both – a fundraising tracker alongside a contingency that can be used for unforeseen costs. BQ said that the aim should be to raise as much money as we can. If there is something tangible, like the playground resurfacing, we can identify it and potentially encourage people to be more generous. The meeting acknowledged that the school needs an element of flexibility in how to use the FOSS donations and hopefully parents would appreciate that need. Even though the information is available from the office, until it is articulated, many people don’t know how FOSS donations are spent. Everyone is understandably very busy and may not have the time to seek out the information so FOSS should present it, perhaps in the newsletter. It’s important to keep targets clear and apparent and update them if necessary. Kate Pope suggested an outdoor weatherproof fundraising tracker that the students can update and is visible from The Green. Lucy Ponting (‘**LP**’) agreed that demonstrating the fundraising could be very encouraging and suggested keeping the tracker on the Facebook page as well and possibly including a line in the newsletter to acknowledge the target and when FOSS funds are spent. LS said these are great ideas and noted that tracking signage needs to be within school fences.

1. **Election of Committee**

LS and SS welcomed nominations and said that most day to day committee work happens over emails, but everyone understands if you can’t always engage. Any and all ideas are always welcomed from committee members.

Committee members as volunteered and accepted – Lucy Ponting, Kate Pope, Mel Staley, Lu Turner, Sonja Sedran, Jayne Goldsmith, Charlotte George, Helen Mackinder and Kathryn Fairweather.

1. **Election of Chair**

Lucy Ponting nominated Sonja Sedran. Mel Staley seconded the nomination.

SS accepted the nomination. LW asked for further nominations but there were none forthcoming.

SS duly elected as Chairperson.

1. **Election of Treasurer**

Sonja Sedran nominated Lucy Ponting. Helen Mackinder seconded the nomination.

LP accepted the nomination. SS asked for further nominations but here were none forthcoming.

LP duly elected as Treasurer.

1. **Election of Secretary**

Sonja Sedran nominated Kathryn Fairweather. Lucy Ponting seconded the nomination.

Kathryn Fairweather accepted the nomination. SS asked for further nominations but there were none forthcoming.

KF duly elected as Secretary.

1. **Other business**

No other business.

1. **Closing**

SS thanked the attendees of the meeting for coming along and thanked LP and KF for stepping into their new committee roles. SS thanked LW for her incredible contribution to FOSS. SS also thanked MS for her role in FOSS. The meeting acknowledged LW’s immense contribution to FOSS and the school over the years and lamented that LW shall be very much missed.

**Meeting closed at 9.30pm**