

2nd Orpington Scout Group

Annual General Meeting Minutes

18th May 2013

In attendance:

Neil Williams – Chairman
Steve Goswell – Treasurer

Philip Lamprell – District Representative

Karen Smurthwaite – SL
Graham Mackenzie – ASL
Tim Birse – ESL
Mark Hudson – CSL
Jason Price – CSL
Steve Moore – BSL
James Polson – ACSL

Dorothy Marsden
Peter Marsden
Tara Mendez
Kay Williams
Denis Reidy
Ian Stringer
Ajam Golam
Bibi Golam
Jackie Fowle
Mandy Kirby
Vincent Green
Lisa Lawrence

Apologies:

Giles Barrett – District Commissioner
Gary Peppiatt – Deputy District Commissioner
Nikki Brown – Assistant District Commissioner
Jean Jones – Group Scout Leader
Tammy Jennings – Secretary

Minutes from last AGM on 19th September 2012:

These were circulated and approved

Section Reports:

Brief reports were provided by SM, MH, JP, KS and TB. They report generally healthy sections with a range of activities and achievements.



Chairman's Report:

As many of you will know, I was asked to be the Chairman last summer and started the role for real in September. I was a Sub Scout, scout and Venture Scout and also a volunteer for one of the first aid charities so I hope I have a good idea of the great benefits and values of Scouting.

- Integrity - We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.
- Respect - We have self-respect and respect for others.
- Care - We support others and take care of the world in which we live.
- Belief - We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.
- Cooperation - We make a positive difference; we cooperate with others and make friends

Since starting in September I have been fortunate enough to see these values of Scouting displayed in all sections having attended meeting nights for each (this is helped by having a Beaver and Cub Scout in the family). Apologies to the Explorers – by Thursdays I'm tired out so rather less visits! I've also been lucky enough to have been invited or 'roped in' or generally interfered with a number of group and District Events including:- Ready Steady Cook, Beaver Pirate Day, Group Cub Camp, St George's Day in Bromley and with the Windsor Queen's Scout Parade.

So what have I seen?

Absolutely, overwhelmingly, young people having fun; but scouting is more than just this, although of course this is important. It has been a pleasure to see various groups-teams- working together, enjoying, learning new skills and developing new friendships, and demonstrating positive values of Scouting. We all hope that our young people will continue and use Scouting values as they grow up.

As Chairman, I have a prime function in facilitating the Executive Committee in the safe provision of Scouting in maintaining the premises and in ensuring the appropriate 'business' of the group, which includes insurances, maintenance, risk assessment and finances.

The group has had a challenging few years in this area for various reasons. However, and importantly, my role is one of using my experience to support the Group in moving forwards ... and on this front we have already made some significant gains.

Finances

This has been a challenging job. The difficulty here, in my view, has been not having stable processes in place which has made the auditing of finances difficult. To reassure you, I have absolutely no doubt that all funding has been used properly, to benefit the group, and your children. It is the demonstration of this happening to meet various regulations which has been the issue.

So in the last 6 months we have worked VERY hard in auditing the masses of information and for this, the Group is extremely grateful to Steve Goswell and Philip Lamprell. We now have firm processes in place to ensure the audit ability of all funds; we have some jobs to complete to finish things off, but in summary, we are there. We also have a 'live' view of all accounts and in terms of leaders; I hope they will agree that we are very responsive to requests for payments and supportive of all matters of finance.



Governance – Areas of Essential Development

This term, coined, I think by the NHS amongst others, is about working within a structure, that ensures thoughtful planning, safe running of the core work and ensuring processes are in place to review our activities and ensure learning. Within the Group it means the safe running of activities which leaders ensure and the safe provision of the premises, which the Executive has the job of ensuring. The Scout Association are, as a matter of interest, increasing safety within its training for leaders and managers of Scouting which highlights the importance of this area on a national scale. For us, it means completing various assessments of risks and acting accordingly. On this front, we have already looked at Fire Protection, and can inform you that subject to clarifying some questions from leaders, have agreed in principal to spending £2500 to upgrade the fire protection within this building. We are also looking at replacing some doors at a cost of £1000.

We are also completing other risk assessments which, I am pleased to say, will be somewhat less expensive to implement. I should say that it is a myth in thinking that Scouts is 'exempted' from some areas of risk management and legislation – it certainly has to comply with ALL legislation. We are making good progress and would call on your support in us completing this work.

On a bright note – long term plans

One piece of legislation that we must adhere to and the Scout Association also fully supports in its values is that of Access to All (Disabled Access). Now it has to be said that our premises is quite good in this area in some respects – it has a slope, large doors and is all on one floor. However, we could do more and I see any improvements as benefitting the whole group at the same time – and by this I am referring to improving the front end of our headquarters – the entrance hall area and toilets. When the premises were built in the 80's it not doubt suited the need well, and it is a credit to those who put huge efforts in building it. However, times have moved on and we have an opportunity to make improvements enabling our HQ help us develop Scouting. We have all come to collect our children and see steam as we breathe out on a cold night. With your agreement, I plan to make enquiries into securing grant funding to make these improvements.

On a group front, in providing for our community I would like to expand scouting. I personally know of a Group with 45 potential Beaver scouts on their waiting list – that GSL has offered us half of the list already! However, in order to provide for this we do need new leaders and assistant leaders who are willing to undertake some training (which is provided for free). If you are inspired ... and I hope you are, please come to speak to us to 'join the adventure'.

Subscriptions

All of our Scouting work sadly comes at a cost. There is no way around this. We have looked at subs, when the last increase was (which was some years ago) and Steve has independently completed an assessment of our income/expenditure and subs payments.

On the basis of this work we recommend an increase in subs to £10 a month = £120 a year.

This will provide for expected increases in running costs, and also a small contingency fund for essential maintenance.

We realise that times generally are not easy, but we believe this still represents good value for money.



Steve and Phillip will shortly present the accounts.

A final and very important word – and that is a massive THANKS to all of our leaders and volunteers.....

So in summary:

We have a generally healthy group

A hard working team of leaders supported by us with the business aspects of our work

We have had some challenges that we have resolved or are resolving

We would like your support in the various possible roles ... or why not just come and join the adventure.

Acting Treasurer's Report

Steve Goswell, assisted by Mr Philip Lamprell presented the accounts (attached as separate document)

Questions from the Group Scout Council

The overriding topic for questions was the issue of an increase in subs; main question being what appears quite a significant increase. NW explained that we had been operating at a small loss for at least the last 2 years and whilst there are funds in our account, this situation cannot continue for a number of reasons, primarily so that we can meet our ongoing financial obligations and maintain the HQ in a good state of repair and effect essential improvements. NW stated that he had completed a survey of other local groups to ascertain subs in the area and there was a broad range of amounts. Whilst 2nd Orpington isn't the cheapest, it also isn't the most expensive (Range £25 - £44 per term). Philip Lamprell explained to the audience that whilst it may seem that we have a healthy income; approximately half of that amount is paid out directly for Scout Association insurances for each and every member.

The question was raised regarding fundraising the short fall. NW stated that whilst this is a good idea, we need guaranteed income and fundraising can be used as a supplement, not a prime income stream. There were discussions about whether to increase to £36 per term rather than £40. NW said that this would be considered by the Exec Committee and a final decision made in due course.

Election of Officers

NW stood down as Chairman and offered himself for re-election. He was nominated by Tim Birse and seconded by Mark Hudson with no other candidates so was re-appointed.

Steve Goswell offered himself as Treasurer and he was nominated and seconded unopposed.

Tammy Jennings had recently stood down as Secretary and rather than elect a replacement at this stage, NW stated that a group advert will be posted asking for interested parties to contact him.

Any other business

There being no other business, the meeting was duly concluded.

