

Minutes from RSPA Annual General Meeting on 3rd October 2013

Meeting called to order by Mel Horton

### **Present**

Mel Horton, Maggie Berney, Frances Greany, Ashley Robson, Jason Humm, Niamh Sherwood, Meenu Paliwal, Hadil Tamim, Adrian Drew, Carmel Smith, Elaine McCann, Ameet Phadnis, Ben Graham, Anne Harding, Miriam Graham, Tabarak Ballal, Louise Hopkins, Sarah Hooper.

Apologies: Richard and Marjorie Briggs, Virginia Cullura, Marion Murphy, Gary Butler

### **1. The Chairman's Report – Mel Horton**

2012/13 has been a year of good progress for the RSPA, we have completed 2 projects during the year, The Observatory Garden and The Reading Generation Project, and commenced a further 2 projects – Refurbishment of the Chemistry Laboratory and Provision of Outside play equipment for the boys to use during break time. We have also continued to support important events in the school calendar – The Wine and Welcome for new parents and the 6<sup>th</sup> Form Leavers party. Our Spring Fayre in May was again our biggest fund raising contributor, despite a 25% reduction in numbers through the gate. We also ran new events, including a very popular Family Quiz night and an International evening where we worked in partnership with the school to promote the International Culture we are privileged to enjoy here.

The Reading Generation project was our major focus last year, and it was a project which initially divided opinion. How could it benefit all of the boys, even the reluctant readers? There were different ideas on how the money could be spent and a need for practical initiatives to bring the Reading ethos to a wide and varied audience. Niamh Sherwood and a team of volunteers took up the challenge and working with the library staff at school implemented initiatives to benefit many different groups. Highlights of the project were new seating in the LRC, the launch of The Family Book Club, investment in books, author visits at school and the funding of a new Reading Generation trophy at prize giving. Thanks to Meenu Paliwell, Michelle Hill and Paula-Jayne Ridge for assisting



One of the privileges of being involved with the RSPA is that you occasionally get invited to restricted access events – and thus it was that I, Miriam and a few other parents were invited to the talk that Poet Simon Armitage gave to our 6<sup>th</sup> form English cohort. I still have a shiver up my spine thinking back to that afternoon, when the boys heard his poetry and probed his style, values and motivations to discover some of what made Simon Armitage tick – I certainly hope it helped them tackle their A-level paper later that year.

The other project completed was the Observatory Garden project. This ran over several years and was a perfect demonstration of what we can achieve through both cash and skills. Maggie and Aaron Berney masterminded the operation supported by Ben Roberts and Wendy Holden and their family members with other helpers who generously gave up several Sundays to work in the garden. Finally both the outdoor classroom and Pergola were completed and the garden can now be enjoyed as a creative and open learning environment.

The Spring Fayre is our biggest single fundraising event and without it we simply would not be able to fund significant projects at school. An event like this gets a huge boost from the weather and this particular May Saturday in 2013 was sunny but rather blustery - so thanks go to both the attendees and the stall volunteers – especially the ones located on the field. Adrian Drew and his team again pulled out all the stops to bring us an excellent May Fayre, built on regular Saturday morning meetings to plan and prepare all of the activities for the day. Whilst numbers through the gate were down, the team still returned an excellent profit. This committee of around 15 people really does need a regular influx of new volunteers – a good role to volunteer for if you can be available on a few Saturday mornings and want to focus on one project. Or just come on the day and man a stall. Grow some plants for us to sell, make a cake, donate a silent auction prize, buy a raffle ticket – you get the picture! I'd like to extend my personal thanks to Adrian and his team for all of their hard work this year.

Social events are important in bringing Boys, Parents and Teachers together so this year we set out to arrange more events and to try to make them more profitable. The first, our family quiz night was very well supported with 20 teams in Big School. The quizmaster tested the teams to their limits, with younger team members making a significant contribution to questions like “What element has the atomic number 13?” and “What was on the menu in the refectory this Friday?” Answers on a postcard please! The mystery objects round was also very popular with some very creative (but sadly incorrect) answers. This event



made a really good profit and we plan to run it again in 2014. Thanks to Maggie & Aaron Berney and Ben Roberts and their families for designing the quiz and Miriam Graham, Paula Humm, Marion Murphy, Simon Blake and Debbie for helping with the bar and raffle.

Our second event, The International Evening happened in the summer term and was a joint collaboration with the school to promote its' International Culture. The idea was suggested by a pupil and it was great to see that idea culminate in a special evening. Guests, including a delegation from the Shanghai High school were entertained with an eclectic mix of acts. An Irish band, a Barber Shop group, the Haka and a Chinese Lion Dance, and some beautiful Indian Music and Dance. The excellent French Choir proved themselves to be magnifique! It was really good to see the boys performing, and the evening ended with an English High Tea in the refectory, with time to socialise with other families. Our thanks go to Anne Hardwick and all the staff, the performers and helpers who made the event possible. We still have some work to do around managing ticket sales for events like this, and this year will look to implement an online payments system – we are currently still in the dark age of cheques and the royal mail! I'm looking for someone to help get this up and running before our next event.

The careers evening in November was again an extremely positive event. Many professionals from a wide range of industries and educational establishments were available to provide one-to-one advice. The event was enthusiastically attended by the boys and their parents with long queues at many stations. Angela Spooner has run this event for many years, even though her son left Reading several years ago, so we would like to thank her for her outstanding commitment. Angela has now stepped down and it is time for a new group of parents to come forward and help to run this event. It's a very self-contained project, from July to November with flexible hours so very manageable in terms of workload. It would be great to have some new members on this team this year. Meenu Paliwell and Lesley Judd are also on this team – thanks go to them.

The Uniform Shop continues to be a significant contributor to our fundraising efforts – ably run by Anne Harding and a wider team of volunteers. The new system of operation implemented last year, in which our volunteers set pricing, control the quality of items and retain all funds raised for the benefit of the school, is working well. Net takings are up 40% vs. 2012 and this remains a valuable service to all parents. Uniform donations can be dropped off at the school office



at any time. This group also organises a termly uniform repatriation session and volunteers to help with this activity are always welcomed.

This year we have also launched a new fundraising initiative – The Giving Machine. The Giving Machine is a social enterprise which allows charities to benefit from online sales referrals – the money online retailers pay when you are directed to them via a link. Every year, online shops pay hundreds of millions of pounds to other websites for sales referrals. TheGivingMachine converts these commissions into free donations for charities like Reading School after taking about 25% to run their own operation and website. **That means free money for Reading School when you do something you were already planning to do!**

This year we have raised over £350 so far – and here's the challenge – we only have 54 givers registered. Imagine how much money we could raise if even half the school parent population used it regularly – if 700 parents signed up and used it we might raise nearly £4500 in a year. When you want to achieve something it's always good to set a target, and so we are trying to raise £1000 by the end of this year. The target sounds tough but with all the Christmas shopping planned over the next few months I still believe we could get there. There is a lot of untapped potential in this idea, and I would welcome a general committee member to help us publicise and recruit more supporters over the coming months – perhaps one day this income source will be as big as the Spring Fayre.

One of the big challenges for an organisation like ours is effective communication, and we are extremely lucky to have a Class Rep system that means we can informally reach most parents in the school. It is not just communication though, the system facilitates inter parent support, friendships and most importantly searches for missing items of lost property! Miriam Graham has been instrumental in fostering the development of the CR system from the vision of how it could work to the hours of organisation and support that she puts in each year. Miriam is handing this role over this year as her son nears the end of his time at Reading and we would like to thank her for her significant contribution in this role. Miriam you are not totally off the hook yet – we know that like a stick of rock, if we looked inside you would have Reading School written down the middle so please continue to enjoy (and help with!) our events through the next 2 years– thank you Miriam! Thanks also to the class reps themselves who make sure communication reaches you and organise class activities for parents and boys.

Importantly we are also allowed to place 3 RSPA representatives on Reading Foundation – a group that manage an investment to support the long term future



of Reading School. It is they who own all the land that the school occupy, as well as a considerable financial lump sum. Representatives on this committee serve for 3 years and ensure the interests of the boys are always front of mind. Sultan Noori is stepping down after 3 years in this role and so we are seeking his replacement tonight. It is so important that we maintain representation on this committee.

As I approach the end of this report there are several people I haven't yet mentioned – Jason Humm our Treasurer and Anita Stone our secretary who both work extremely hard behind the scenes to make things happen. Also Frances Greaney who has never ending patience for our questions, and Ashley Robson who attends our meetings regularly, thanks to you all.

Now, looking to the future, there is much to be done at Reading School. Years of inadequate funding have left buildings under maintained, resources stretched and staff asked to give ever more in support of our son's education. The school, particularly Frances and Ashley work extremely hard to access funding from all sorts of sources, and as a Parents Association we must play our part. This year we decided to review our cash reserves policy and fund not just one, but two major projects from retained funds. I'll let Jason talk more about that in a moment.

The contribution we make is not just about cash, in line with our aims we also give our time, our practical skills and our support. As we have seen, money we raise doesn't always have to come from parents pockets. However, to do that we need new parent involvement, to help us coordinate events, to help us raise extra funding, and to help us to be involved in the right way with Reading School. So please think about getting involved as the evening progresses – start with something small and defined or jump right in!

If you need any final encouragement then here are the some of the benefits I have experienced of being involved:

I've make friends with some really great people

I've got to know the headmaster and the teachers and they know me and my son

I've to know the school and the way it runs, something which is more difficult to achieve at secondary school level.



I've helped to make a difference and that gives me a real sense of satisfaction

I've met poets, professors, rocket scientists and other interesting people that I wouldn't normally have the chance to meet

So please, get involved in some small way, make a difference and benefit from the rewards.

Now, Jason will go through the accounts and then we will elect members to the committee. Just so you can be thinking the roles which involve elections are:

Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Membership Secretary. These are the executive members. Our Reading Foundation rep. We also need committee members – people who come to the meetings and are the main driving force of our initiatives. Lastly, we need people who are prepared to take on specific leadership roles associated with our different projects, many of which I've mentioned through this report. We will be electing people to these roles after the Treasurers report. So now I'd like to hand over to Jason Humm.

Yours sincerely

Mel Horton 03/10/2013

RSPA Chairman



## **2. Treasurers Report – Jason Humm**

### **Reading School Parents Association**

#### **Treasurer's Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2013**

**AGM 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013**

#### **Income**

Total Net Income for the year was £11,370, a remarkably similar value to that of the previous year at £11,406.

As always, the Spring Fayre was the main fund raising event of the year and continued to be well attended. The net income from this event was £6,924, only slightly behind the value for the previous year of £7,003. Special thanks must go to the members of the Spring Fayre Committee, for the huge part they play in the Fund Raising efforts.

The Quiz Night proved a great success, both financially and socially, raising a total of £852. Thanks to Maggie Berney and Mel Horton for organising and running a very enjoyable evening.

Membership subscriptions were slightly down this year from £2,930 to £2,370. Since members have the ability to pay for several years in advance, this subscription income will tend to fluctuate from year to year and this is to be expected.

The Uniform Shop has made a very significant contribution this year, with a net profit of £1,147. It should be noted that the profit would have been even greater except for payments of £206, carried over from the previous year. Many thanks go to Anne Harding for the time she has put into running the Uniform Shop. Since we now retain the full profits from the Uniform Shop, we can expect the contribution from the Uniform Shop to grow in future years.

The Giving Machine income made a small initial contribution this year of £37. It should be noted that this year included only the initial payment for this fund raising method and it has the potential to be a significant contribution to income in the future.

Deposit interest earnings continue to be very low, due to the suppressed interest rates available (0.10% p.a.)



## **Expenses**

The main running expenses continue to be our Membership fees for PTA-UK (formerly the NCPTA) and the Web Hosting fees for the website. It is worth noting that membership of PTA\_UK is stipulated in our constitution and provides public liability insurance for the organisation.

## **Grants/Donations**

This year we made the first payments for the Observatory Garden, totalling £3,624 of the £7000 pledged in the previous financial year. We also made a very significant donation of £9000 towards the School "Reading Project".

Other annual grants for smaller amounts included £276 to help with the running of the Careers Evening and a total of £443 for miscellaneous events, including the Wine and Welcome Evening, and the School Leaver's Party.

## **Net Spending**

Net spending for the year after all income and grants expenditure totalled £2,699 leaving the cash position at the end of the financial year at £32,893. The only liability at year end is an outstanding payment for completion of work on the Observatory garden, leaving total assets at year end at £30,314.



READING SCHOOL PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended

31/03/2013

<u>Fund Raising</u>	Gross £	Cost £	2013 Nett £	2012 Nett £
Spring Fayre 2012	10,806	3,882	6,924	7,003
Quiz Night	1,234	382	852	-66
Barn Dance				77
<b>Total Funds Raised</b>			<b>7,777</b>	<b>7,014</b>
<u>Other Income</u>				
Uniform Shop	1,353	206	1,147	812
Membership Subs			2,370	2,930
Donations			25	534
Deposit Acc Interest			14	11
Sundry Income			0	105
Giving Machine			37	
<b>Total Other Income</b>			<b>3,594</b>	<b>4,393</b>
<b>Net Income</b>			<b>11,370</b>	<b>11,406</b>
<u>General Expenses</u>				
PTA-UK Subs / Insurance			112	35
Web Hosting			111	111
Misc Expenses			45	41
2012 Expenses			458	
			<b>726</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Net Funds Available</b>			<b>10,644</b>	<b>11,219</b>
<u>Annual Grants/Donations</u>				
School Observatory Garden			3,624	81
Reading Project			9,000	0
Careers Evening			276	0
Leaver's Party			443	81
			<b>13,343</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>			<b>-2,699</b>	<b>11,057</b>

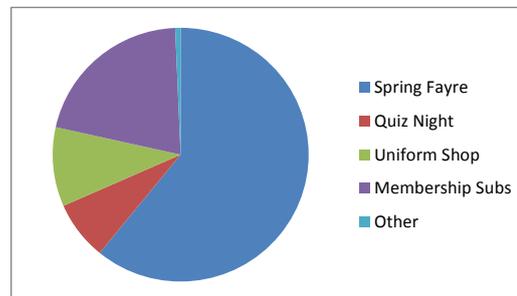


## READING SCHOOL PARENTS ASSOCIATION

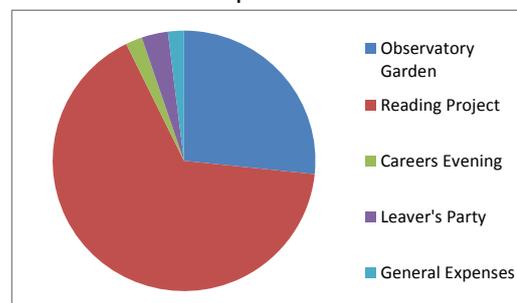
### Balance Sheet As At 31/3/2013

	<u>£</u>
<b>Opening Cash Balance</b>	36,222
<b><u>Current Assets</u></b>	<u>£</u>
Debtors/Prepaid Expenses	631
Cash in Bank:      Current Acc No. 1	6,123
Current Acc No. 2	2,253
Reserve Account	<u>24,517</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b><u>33,524</u></b>
<b><u>Less: Current Liabilities</u></b>	<u>£</u>
Observatory Garden Completion	3,210
	<u>3,210</u>
 <b>Net Current Assets</b>	 <b><u><u>30,314</u></u></b>

**Income Breakdown**



**Expenditure Breakdown**





## **Reading School Parents Association**

### **Treasurer's Report for the Year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 To Date**

#### **AGM 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013**

##### **Income**

Total Net Income for the year so far is £8,738.

Attendance was about 25% down for the Spring Fayre this and consequently profits were down slightly this year to £5,571, compared to £6,924 last year. With the unhelpful May weather this year and the current uncertain financial climate, this should be viewed as a creditable result, though I am sure that the Spring Fayre Committee will be slightly disappointed not to at least match last year's excellent result.

The International Evening was a new event which was well attended. The final profit total is not yet known, as we are still awaiting an invoice from the School for food, but the figure is expected to be in the region of £300.

Membership subscriptions so far this year are £1,885, which is in line with expectations.

The Uniform Shop has so far generated a good profit of £1042, including the £328 taken on the day of the Spring Fayre. I am sure the uniform shop will continue to make an important contribution to our income.

The Giving Machine income received to date stands at £153, although the total amount raised to date is just over £400. The money is received roughly quarterly in arrears, so we have a minimum of £200, yet to be received.

Deposit interest earnings continue to be very low, due to the suppressed interest rates available (0.10% p.a.)

##### **Expenses**

The main running expenses continue to be our Membership fees for PTA-UK (formerly the NCPTA) and the Web Hosting fees for the website. It is worth noting that membership of PTA\_UK is stipulated in our constitution and provides public liability insurance for the organisation.



### **Grants/Donations**

We have made the final payments for the Observatory Garden, totalling £3,210 giving a grand total of £6915 compared to a budget of £7000. We have also made a donation of £9209 towards the refurbishment of the School Chemistry Laboratory.

### **Net Spending**

Net spending for the year to date, after all income and grants expenditure, totals £3,901. This leaves the current cash position at £29,623. We have also committed a total £10,000 towards a project to provide a play area for the School, leaving total net assets at this point of £19,512.



READING SCHOOL PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year To Date

01/10/2013

<u>Fund Raising</u>	Gross £	Cost £	2014 Nett £	2013 Nett £
Spring Fayre 2013	8,145	2,246	5,571	6,924
Quiz Night			0	852
Intl Evening	764	462	302	0
Bar Stocks		217	-217	0
<b>Total Funds Raised</b>			<b>5,656</b>	<b>7,776</b>
<u>Other Income</u>				
Uniform Shop	1,042		1,042	1,147
Membership Subs			1,885	2,370
Donations			0	25
Deposit Acc Interest			2	14
Sundry Income			0	0
Giving Machine			153	37
<b>Total Other Income</b>			<b>3,082</b>	<b>4,393</b>
<b>Net Income</b>			<b>8,738</b>	<b>11,406</b>
<u>General Expenses</u>				
PTA-UK Subs / Insurance				112
Web Hosting			111	111
Misc Expenses			110	42
			<b>221</b>	<b>265</b>
<b>Net Funds Available</b>			<b>8,518</b>	<b>11,219</b>
<u>Annual Grants</u>				
School Observatory Garden			3,210	3,624
Reading Project			0	9,000
Chemistry Lab Refurb			9,209	0
Careers Evening			0	276
Leaver's Party			0	443
			<b>12,419</b>	<b>13,343</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>			<b>-3,901</b>	<b>-2,124</b>



READING SCHOOL PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Balance Sheet As At 1/10/2013

	<u>£</u>
<b>Opening Cash Balance</b>	32,893
<b><u>Current Assets</u></b>	<u>£</u>
Debtors/Prepaid Expenses	
Cash in Bank:      Current Acc No. 1	2,655
Current Acc No. 2	3,448
Reserve Account	<u>23,520</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b><u>29,623</u></b>
<b><u>Less: Current Liabilities</u></b>	<u>£</u>
Play Area Development	10,000
PTA-UK Subs	111
Accrued Expenses	
	<u>10,111</u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b><u>19,512</u></b>



### **3. Headmasters Address**

Mr Robson expressed his thank you to the RSPA's support for the completion of the Reading Generation Project and the Observatory Garden Project. Mr Robson also talked about the refurbishment of the Chemistry Laboratory and the outside play equipment development.

### **4. Election of Honorary Officers**

Treasurer – Jason Humm was elected

Assistant Treasurer – Meenu Paliwell was elected

Secretary – Anita Stone was elected

Assistant Secretary – Vacant

Membership Secretary – Maggie Berney was elected

Chair – Mel Horton was elected

### **5. Election of Executive Members**

The following Executive members were elected

Adrian Drew

Niamh Sherwood

Miriam Graham

Tabarak Ballal

Elaine McCann

Ben Graham

Carmel Smith

Marion Murphy



## 6. Election of Reading Foundation Member

Niamh Sherwood

Each year in rotation one of 3 members who represent the RSPA on Reading Foundation must step down or seek re-election. This year it is the turn of Sultan Noori to step down.

## 7. Any Other Business

- Meenu Paliwal requested funding for the next Careers Convention event.
  - The event will take place on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013.
  - Ben Graham, Anita Stone, Tabarak Ballal and Sarah Hooper volunteered to help at the event.
  - The next RSPA meeting will be postponed to Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2013.
- 
- **Next Meeting**
  - Thursday 21st November 2013 at 7.30pm to 9pm.
  - Venue to be advised in Agenda – either LRC or Conference room.

Meeting closed by Mel Horton at 9.00pm

Minutes created by Anita Stone