

Minutes from RSPA Annual General Meeting on 9th October 2014

Meeting called to order by Mel Horton who was appointed as Chair for the duration of the meeting

Present

Mel Horton, Maggie Berney, Frances Greany, Ashley Robson, Jason Humm, Meenu Paliwal, Hadil Tamim, Ben Graham, Anne Harding, Miriam Graham, Tabarak Ballal, Marion Murphy, Venkat Para, Gangdhara Ambati, Asha Narasimha, Virginia Cullura, Sun Bannister, Michelle Hill, Sofia Asghar, Amit Gupta, Margaret Osborne

Apologies: Richard and Marjorie Briggs, Ameet Phadnis, Louise Nelson, Niamh Sherwood

1. The Chair's Report – Mel Horton

2013/14 has been a year of good progress for the RSPA, we have supported 2 projects during the year, 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 6th Form Leavers party. Our Spring Fayre in May was again our biggest fund raising contributor, and it was great to see the boys stalls making a good contribution to the success of the day. We also ran new events, including a very popular Wine and Jazz evening.

Projects that make a difference

During 2013/14 we reviewed our funding levels and decided it would be possible to support 2 projects instead of the usual one. Our contribution of 10,000 towards the refurbishment of the chemistry laboratory allowed the school team to upgrade the layout of the room, improve facilities and refurbish the original solid wood benches and stools to their former glory. Supporting these infrastructure projects at school is a real demonstration of the commitment of the parent body to the ongoing improvement of facilities at Reading School.

We also funded £10,000 for the provision of outdoor play equipment for the boys. In order to ensure we got the right equipment we consulted with the student council, and they helped to decide how the money should be spent. They have taken their role very seriously, electing to purchase 2 goals for football in the playground. Sometimes it's not as easy as you think to spend money – even other peoples - so

there is still quite a large balance waiting to be invested in further playground facilities. Watch this space!

Fundraising income Streams

The Spring Fayre is our biggest single fundraising event and without it we simply would not be able to fund significant projects at school. Patricia and San co led the team this year and they 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. This year, there was a greater involvement from the boys, who created and managed quite a few stalls. 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 Patricia, San and the team for all of their hard work this year.

Social events are important in bringing Boys, Parents and Teachers together. This year we were very fortunate to be offered a Wine and Jazz evening via a parent who runs a local Jazz club in Henley. This meant we were able to benefit from the full value of the ticket sales, with no costs to cover, and do the event was one of our most profitable ever. It was a real pleasure to meet the Jazz Trio – talented twenty somethings who were already masters of their art. Big School was a perfect venue, and the baby grand piano was particularly appreciated by the band. The Jazz was perfectly complimented by some delicious wines and tasting advice accompanied by a variety of cheese, a very civilised evening all round. Thanks to both the parent and the helpers for making the evening possible.

The Giving Machine continues to build as a source of funding for our school. We now have 92 givers vs 54 last year, 29 of whom are giving regularly, and we have now passed the £1000 mark for donations raised. 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. The Giving Machine 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!** We try hard to get the message out about this – ultimately it relies on parents remembering to do it – making it a habit – and there is still a huge opportunity to raise funds from this method.



We continue to offer valued services

The careers evening in November was again an extremely valuable event for the boys. 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. Ben Graham and Meenu Paliwell helped to make this evening possible—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 – thanks to you all. This is a service that many parents value and use of the shop continues to increase year on year. 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.

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! Maggie Berney has put many hours this year into facilitating this process this year, ensuring a seamless handover from 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. It is so important that we maintain representation on this committee. Virginia Cullura is hoping to be re-elected to this position this year and our thanks go to her, Ameet and Niamh for their continued support. I'd also like to thank Sultan Noori who has continued to support the RF website this year

It's our amazing team that makes all of this possible

As I approach the end of this report there are several people I haven't yet mentioned:

Cheryl Archer who very ably runs the website from behind the scenes,



Helen Barker who has worked very hard to strengthen links with the Sports leadership team at school, including co-ordinating Sports hosting with each year group, whose son will leave Reading at the end of this year

Meenu Paliwell our assistant treasurer who works so hard in many projects to help us make things happen and achieve the right results

Jason Humm our Treasurer who has done a fantastic job with the accounts and steps down this year,

Anita Stone our secretary who supported the committee and also stepped down this year

And of course all of the people who have come to meetings, taken on actions and helped at our events – we couldn't do it without you!

I must also thank Frances Greaney who has never ending patience for our schemes, events and inevitable questions, and Ashley Robson who provides an important strategic link to the aims of the school.

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.

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!

As I step down as chair, after a 4 year commitment to the RSPA I trust that new parents coming through will 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 09/10/2014

RSPA Chairman

2. Treasurers Report – Jason Humm

Reading School Parents Association

Treasurer's Report for the Year Ended 31st March 2013

Income

Total Net Income for the year was £11,286, a very consistent performance in comparison with the previous year's total of £11,370.

The Spring Fayre was the main fund raising event of the year, but the poor weather forecast for the day meant that the attendance was significantly down on previous years and, as a result, so was the income. The net income from this event was £5,571, considerably down on the value for the previous year of £6,924. Despite this reduced income, the Spring Fayre remains the biggest single contributor to RSPA funds and thanks must go to the members of the Spring Fayre Committee, for the huge part they play in the Fund Raising efforts.

The International Evening was a new event for the RSPA and was considered by attendees to be a successful evening. Overall, the event raised £385, thanks to the planning and coordination provided by Mel and the help of many RSPA members on the night.

Membership subscriptions were up this year to £3,105 from £2,370. Since members have the option to pay for several years in advance, this subscription income will

tend to fluctuate from year to year depending on how many members use this facility.

The Uniform Shop had its best ever year with a net profit of £1,521, beating last year's total of £1,147. Many thanks go to Anne Harding for the time she has put into running the Uniform Shop.

The Giving Machine has become an increasingly valuable fund raising route for the RSPA this year. The total funds received this year amounted to £612. There is no reason that this number cannot be increased this year if we continue to raise awareness of the Giving Machine with all parents.

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 final payment of £3210 for the Observatory Garden, bringing the total payment for the project to the £7000 originally pledged. We also made a large donation of £9209 towards refurbishment of one of the school Chemistry Labs. Those parents who were lucky enough to get a tour of the lab were all impressed at the difference this made to the room.

Other annual grants for smaller amounts included £208 to help with the running of the Careers Evening and a total of £151 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 £1,715 leaving the cash position at the end of the financial year at £31,212.

READING SCHOOL PARENTS ASSOCIATION

| <u>CASH SUMMARY</u> | | <u>2014-15</u> | <u>06 October 2014</u> |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Opening Balance | | | £31,211.88 |
| | | | BALANCE |
| | | | £ |
| No 1 ACCOUNT | 04619919 | General Acct | 11,106.04 |
| No 2 ACCOUNT | 15309096 | Uniform Acct | 7,429.12 |
| RESERVE ACCOUNT | 15846733 | Savings Acct | 23,529.21 |
| | | | |
| TOTAL CASH BALANCES | | | £42,064.37 |
| Net | | | £10,852.49 |

Breakdown

| Activity | Receipts | Payments | Net |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Spring Fayre 2014 | £12,190.40 | £4,867.85 | £7,322.55 |
| Quiz 2014 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Wine & Jazz | £1,843.50 | £49.52 | £1,793.98 |
| Uniform Shop | £1,075.58 | £0.00 | £1,075.58 |
| Membership Subs | £3,323.10 | £160.00 | £3,163.10 |
| Giving Machine | £254.16 | £0.00 | £254.16 |
| Playground Project | £0.00 | £2,324.65 | -£2,324.65 |
| Misc | £0.00 | £535.58 | -£535.58 |
| Donations | £101.01 | £0.00 | £101.01 |
| Interest | £2.34 | £0.00 | £2.34 |
| Total | £18,790.09 | £7,937.60 | £10,852.49 |

Spring Fayre Expenses Carried forward from last year: -£595.94
 Net Spring Fayre Profit: £6,726.61

3. Headmasters Address

Mr Robson expressed his thank you to the RSPA's continuing support and acknowledged the amount of time that volunteers gave up to support the school. Mr Robson spoke about the on-going project to fund outside equipment and requested that for this year's fundraising target the RSPA would consider contributing towards the costs of equipping the new science block, work on which will start in early 2015.

4. Election of Honorary Officers

Chair – Vacant

Vice-Chair – Vacant

Secretary – Marion Murphy was proposed by Miriam, seconded by Virginia and elected.

Assistant Secretary – Ven was proposed by Miriam, seconded by Asha and elected.

Treasurer – Vacant

Assistant Treasurer – Meenu Paliwell was proposed by Maggie, seconded by Jason and elected.

Membership Secretary – Maggie Berney was proposed by Marion, seconded by Anne and elected.

5. Election of Executive Members

The following Executive members were elected

Ganga Reddy (Proposed Meenu; seconded Asha)

Michelle Hill (Proposed Maggie; seconded Jason)

Amit Gupta (Proposed Marion; seconded Miriam)

6. Election of Reading Foundation Member

Virginia Cullura was proposed by Anne, seconded by Jason, and elected.



Each year in rotation one of 3 members who represent the RSPA on Reading Foundation must step down or seek re-election. This year the Reading Foundation requested that Virginia be re-elected.

7. Any Other Business

- Meenu requested funding for the next Careers Convention event, to take place on Wednesday 12th November 2014. Asha and Tabarak volunteered to help at the event.
 - Virginia thanked Mel and Jason, who stood down as Chair and Treasurer respectively, for their work and commitment to the RSPA over the last few years.
 - Meenu was requested to ask the Spring Fayre committee for their views on the funding request for next year and report back at the next committee meeting.
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- **Next Meeting**
 - Thursday 13th November 2013 at 7.30pm.
 - Venue to be advised in Agenda.

Meeting closed by Mel Horton at 8.45pm

Minutes created by Maggie Berney