



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Ashlyns School Association

19 October 2020 – 7.30pm

In attendance: Gary (Chair), Dhrooti, Helen, Liz, Jo, Andrea, Mark, Gloria, Angela, Rob, Suzanne, Dan, Sheryl, Mary, Mr. Shapland, Sarah E, Alison (Secretary)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Attendees introduced themselves.

Apologies for late attendance were received from Sarah Edwards.

Mr Shapland gave a vote of thanks for the great work the ASA does at school, in particular in carrying on during such trying times and finding inventive ways of continuing to raise money. He also praised the work by ASA members in the LRC sunken garden, which had been revamped over the summer.

2. Chairs' Annual Report 2019/20

The report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Dhrooti mentioned the drive to fully document the planning and processes behind all ASA-run events so that there was a comprehensive handover to subsequent ASA volunteers.

She thanked all the volunteers who helped to make the events a success, but stressed that there is still a need for more people to come forward to take over the running of events – at present the same small group of people were responsible for all of them and this was not sustainable.

3. Trustees' Policy Feedback

Gary advised that there are five trustees in post. Trustees meet separately to review risk and liability of the ASA charity as a whole and ensure it acts in accordance with the Constitution.

4. 2019/20 ASA Accounts and Treasurers' report

The papers had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were taken as read.

Rob gave thanks to Alison W for her audit of the accounts. Fundraising was down in 2019/20 as expected, due to the decision not to run the Festival. Events had taken place through the early part of the financial year (September to August), in particular the craft fair in November 2019. Rob summarised the major purchases for school this year, including the minibus, science equipment and improvements to the chapel.

Currently there is £12,000 to be allocated. Most fundraising takes place in the Autumn term and given the cancellation of major events such as the craft fair, ideas for alternative fundraising activities are always welcome.

Not all allocations have been used and the ASA is keen to understand if the school is still planning to purchase the approved items, or if they are no longer required and the funds can be reallocated. (See further discussion under item 8)

5. Other financial matters

- a. Card readers - Additional readers are £45 each or £160 for four. It was agreed that the ASA should purchase these, but first check the likelihood of a future change of fees. **Approved subject to Suzanne looking into any change of fees.**
- b. Addams Family Production ticket refunds – all monies had been refunded via school, thanks to Bobby in Ashlyns' Finance Team.
- c. Craft fair refunds – Only 15% of bookings have been refunded, the majority of stallholders want to retain their place until 2021 (at 2020 prices).
- d. Paypal – Suzanne has been looking for an alternative online payment platform. Paypal cannot be used for raffles and the ASA cannot take cash or cheques at present. Conversations with school are ongoing to see if this can be achieved via Wisepay.

6. Appointments for 2020/21:

The following appointments were agreed:

- a. Co -Chairs – Dhrooti and Gary
- b. Co- Treasurers – Rob and Suzanne
- c. Secretary - Alison
- d. Easy fundraising – Sarah E was happy to carry on, but the ASA should look to find someone to handover to.
- e. 100 club - Angela
- f. Good as New Uniform – Helen and Alison
- g. ASA email account – Gary, Dhrooti and Alison
- h. Craft fair – There was a need to find a team for the overall organisation. Jo H is happy to run the café.
- i. Gardening club – Alison will lead this. **There will also be a call for Woods receipts from parents.**
- j. Grants – It was essential to have someone to look out for funding opportunities. **There would be a general call for a volunteer.**

7. ASA Constitution

Subject to a couple of minor changes received after the papers had been distributed, the revised ASA Constitution was approved. **Gary will ensure the final version is published.**

8. Allocation of funding

- a. New requests - none

- b. Film studies (camera etc) – now ordered.
- c. Music department (mixing desk) – a query about the £500 spend against £1,000 allocation – **Andrea will follow this up.**
- d. 3D printer – now ordered.
- e. ASC interactive equipment– **Andrea will follow this up.**
- f. Inclusion – literacy toolkit, phonic books etc – all ordered.
- g. Upgrade chapel sound system – pending.
- h. Long jump pit – Mark is researching this, but is not certain he will be able to bring price down significantly.
- i. Handelbards – (Shakespeare players) - **Andrea will ask Mr Smith (English) to make enquiries and the committee agreed to reconsider in the next year.**

Funding requests could be flagged in the next Ashlyns staff update. **Suzanne/Rob will create a list of the departments who have received funding** to ensure that money is allocated fairly across departments and to help prioritise if there are competing demands in future.

9. School update

There was a discussion about how to continue to raise the ASA profile – via the weekly staff update or the ASA noticeboard. **Dhrooti to liaise with Andrea.**

10. Future events

- a. Festival 2021 – Initial planning meeting held, tentative dates in place. Next step is site plan (Adam). Rachel M will run the bar.
- b. Christmas Hampers – Posters are being printed and flyers will go out on Friday. Addresses for drop off of donations have been notified and each year group has a theme. The logistics of payment for raffle tickets is still being worked through.
- c. Halloween Family Fun – so far, insufficient people have signed up to make it viable. There will be a final push before deciding whether to run this or not.
- d. Virtual Craft Fair – this would not go ahead due to other competing fairs and insufficient ASA members to organise it. It may be reprised in the spring and by then there may be some ‘virtual event’ expertise to draw on.
- e. Online Christmas craft workshops – two local parents who run craft events have led a few workshops and Dhrooti is researching the possibility of them running Christmas craft workshops for Ashlyns parents, with a fixed amount per attendee going to the ASA.
- f. An ex-student who runs floristry workshops is looking at providing the items for her online wreath making tutorial. She will revert with details and benefits for the ASA.
- g. Santa’s sleigh – The Round Table is looking for volunteers to help organise the event. Gary will find out more about the event, in particular whether it is going ahead in the current climate.

11. AOB

- a. LRC garden

Some structural work to the surrounding walls and steps was needed and the school was considering the likely costs of this work. Helen and Alison would research the cost of additional benches.

b. Asda foundation

Asda (Watford) has a community champion and Gary has met with her and obtained details of some funding available, with the long jump pit in mind. The bid criteria are very strict, but Asda has also provided a prize for the Halloween event and has offered items for the hampers.

Dhrooti is looking at doing a virtual wine tasting in the spring with Tring winery.

The meeting ended at 21.18

Date of next meeting – Monday 23 November at 7.30