**623 Club**

**AGM**

**6.15pm, 21st September 2022, Curbar Scout Hut**

**MINUTES**

1. **Officers / staff/ attendees present**

Duncan Marson Chair DM

Natalie Anwyl Treasurer NJA

Vacant Secretary

Sally Christian Club Manager SCh

Selina Carline Club Deputy Manager SCa

Attendees (some attendees did not leave their names)

Jim Taylor Helen Boyle Sam Moodie

Jessica Low Emma Collins Richard Hopkins

Gill Bond Crystal Buchanan Jamie Swann

Lisa Jarvis Rob Scott Kevin Parkes

Sharon Cronin Clare Newbould

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and thanked them for attending – it was acknowledged that turn-out had far exceeded expectations.

1. **Apologies - None**
2. **Chair’s report**

In the absence of any meeting minutes since January 2020, DM/NJA gave an account of the challenges of the past couple of years, the current position and the priorities for the meeting:

The committee currently comprises Chair, Duncan Marson (previously Secretary), Treasurer, Natalie Anwyl and Sally Christian as staff representative. Both DM and NJA have served full 3 year terms. Despite repeated efforts to fill the 3rd committee role this has remained vacant since the last committee meeting, held in January 2020, at which time the Club was still running from School House at Curbar Primary School and was in a steady state with full staff of 4, albeit with a proportionately high level of debt.

Since then the impact of the COVID pandemic forced the Club to remain closed for most of 2020. Initially we were not eligible for any financial support, however the staff were able to be furloughed via the government scheme. It then led to a move in premises to Curbar Scout Hut and a shift in the way the Club has been managed, with Committee business conducted via telephone and email.

In terms of the finances, we eventually managed to secure 2 COVID related grants via the National Lottery Community Fund and Derbyshire Dales Additional Restrictions Grant. We then secured a further grant from Councillor Susan Hobson’s ‘Members Community Leadership Scheme’. This has shored up the Club’s reserves, and alongside a healthy number of bookings for 2022, demonstrates that the Club is viable and has a future.

The urgency in calling this AGM has been prompted by a significant development – Club Manager Sally Christian is leaving the Club before half term to take up a new employment opportunity after 14 years service. Sally, together with Selina and the team have been the heart and soul of the club, creating a warm and friendly family atmosphere for our children to play, learn and develop. Angie is also leaving to return to teaching and while we are extremely sad to see them leave, we understand the circumstances and wish them all the best for the future.

The 623 team have reviewed what this means for the club in the near future and beyond. Due to external commitments of existing staff, coupled with other recent changes, we need to advertise for the Manager and playworker post and go through a subsequent selection process. What makes this option more challenging, is that currently the club is only operating with only two committee members who have reached the end of their 3 year tenures. Whilst this has been sufficient during the Covid pandemic, it has now come to a situation where the club cannot continue without new volunteers / parental support on the committee. In essence, the club is currently not sustainable in its current format. This, coupled with Sally departing has required us to look at a variety of options on the future provision of the club.

There are a number of options that are available to us as to the future direction of 623, and the meeting was called to give all parents an opportunity to have their say on these options. The options for consideration are as follows:

1)  to continue the club in its current form by recruiting a replacement manager and playworker, and a new Committee of at least 5 new members,

2) to attempt to ‘sell’ the club as a going concern/business and continue to run both the wraparound and holiday club from the Scout Hut or elsewhere,

3) to close the Club and make staff redundant.

With this in mind the priority agenda items for the AGM are two-fold – to discuss how we might evolve the club and adopt a more sustainable model, and to invite any interest in taking up the following roles - Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Committee Members x 2.

DM and NJA reiterated that if we could not succeed in appointing a new Committee then we will have no choice but to proceed with option 2 or 3. They also expressed their ongoing support for the Club - offering to remain fully onboard to provide an extended handover/transition period up to Christmas, and beyond that to continue to attend committee meetings to support the new Officers and Manager.

1. **Treasurer’s Report**

Further to the Chair’s report, NJA explained that in terms of the formal club accounts, which would ordinarily be presented at the AGM, these have not been prepared since the 18/19 accounts were finalised in September 2019. The reason for this is cost. The fee for the preparation of the accounts is £700 per year, and in September 2020 when the 19/20 accounts were due the Club did not have the funds to commit to this due to the impact of the pandemic and uncertainty around when restrictions would be lifted. It was agreed that all reserves would be ringfenced in the event that staff redundancies were necessary. The retrospective preparation of the accounts would cost £2100 for 19/20, 20/21 and 21/22. As the accounts do not have to be submitted the decision was taken not to prepare accounts for 19/20 or 20/21 (which was not a typical year due to frequent lockdowns forced by COVID). During this period NJA has continued to prepare all of the accounts inputs (invoices, payments, wages and petty cash journals) and a summary was shared during the meeting. NJA proposed that, if we can appoint a new committee and succeed in keeping the club open the 21/22 accounts will be formally prepared, with previous years available as ‘inhouse’ versions. Going forwards we will get back into the routine of preparing accounts but rather than using the services of an external accountant it was suggested that these could be prepared by the Treasurer and externally examined for a vastly reduced cost.

NJA added that the Club’s invoicing had in April ‘22 been transferred from a manual, spreadsheet based approach to NatWest bank’s free invoicing software ‘Free Agent’, which links to the bank account and provides a raft of additional tools and reports to monitor income and expenditure. This has vastly streamlined both the Treasurer’s role and also the Deputy Manager’s, who is responsible for raising invoices. This has also simplified the monitoring of debt, which although still an ongoing issue, is at a lower level. Both NJA and SCh have been actively addressing the level of debt, some of which relates to 2019 and 2020 and was exacerbated by the financial impact of the pandemic. NJA added that the outstanding debt pre-dating April 2021 that has proved impossible to recoup will be written off in the next external accounts.

1. **Proposed Motions**
2. Following an extensive, active discussion it was agreed unanimously that the Club should continue in its current form with the recruitment of replacement staff and new committee members.
3. It was also agreed that the Club should explore potential new structures, such as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), which is a more sustainable model, with minimised liability for Officers, tax benefits and opening up access to broader funding opportunities including grants. This would be actively pursued once the current challenges have been addressed.
4. In a bid to avoid a gap in provision it was agreed that we would move swiftly to recruit a new manager and a play-worker. NJA, DM and SCh will finalise adverts and job descriptions for circulation. It was also agreed that payscales would be reviewed by the new Committee via email to ensure competitive salaries were being offered.
5. **Election of Committee Members 2022-**

NJA invited interest in the 3 Officer posts and Committee members. The Club is very grateful to the following who came forward to take on these posts:

Helen Boyle – Treasurer

Sam Moodie and Gill Bond – Co-Secretaries

Prospective interest was lodged in the position of Chair, but not formally filled at this time. DM to continue for the time being with a deadline of end of December 2022.

Jessica Low offered much needed support with social media.

New Committee members –

Jim Taylor (also offered support with the website and promotional activity),

Richard Hopkins

Crystal Buchanan

Jamie Swann

Kevin Parkes

Sharon Cronin

Suggestions were also offered for assistance in the independent examination of the accounts, which will be followed up by NJA in the first instance.

The bank mandate will be updated to reflect the changes, removing John Reece and Sally Christian, and adding Helen Boyle. Further changes will be actioned once a new Chair is appointed. Action NJA.

1. **Any Other Business**

A follow up meeting will be diarised for November. All parents will be encouraged to contribute in any capacity, either by attending meetings, offering advice or support in other capacities.

The meeting was brought to a close at 8pm with sincere thanks to all who attended.