



Minutes of NPSA meeting  
9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 7.30pm in Blue room

<b>Present:</b>		<b>Apologies:</b>
Ashley Purves	Amy Swinburne-Goode	Rachel Rogers
Tracey Pollard	Becca Whelan	Laura Darcy
Kathy Runacres	Hannah Brownell	Cat Jolley
Neil Clews	Sarah Smith	Aimee Bates
Gill Kennaugh	Carolyn Cooper	Emma Dykes
Jacky Hansard	Matthew Darcy	Tamsin Smith
Tracy Gahagan	Kathy Thornton	Julie Box
Lucinda Brook	Emma Baker	Jan Bishop
Esther Gardiner	Laura Pincock	Amanda West
Fran Derrien	Amy Osborne	Liz Rayner

1. Welcome – AP

2. Review of previous events

- a. All events went well – thank you to those who gave time/donated items etc to ensure this. Profit made from these is in the Treasurers update below.
- b. Books2School – hundreds of books were donated. These are to be sorted through on Monday 14 November.
- c. Christmas pudding sale – 62 sold, which is less than last year but not surprising due to the current economic climate. However, the profit made will be price-matched by a company, so doubles the profit. Sales will be left open for a few more days to allow for any final orders.
- d. Pumpkin Carving – this went online this year, with some amazing entries. Winners have been notified, and pics to follow in newsletter. Thanks to Clare Moon for sourcing the donated prizes.

3. Quiz Night – ran on Friday 11 November

Sold 14 tables out of 18.

It will run in the same way as last time, but with no sports round and the picture round has been tweaked.

Other things that will happen on the night – there will be a reverse raffle. There are 40 numbers at £5 a number. 8 Anglepoise lamps to be won. Loads of people have already bought numbers through the website. There will also be the heads or tails game. And there has been a generous donation from Love Honey – an adult only advent calendar. Rather than a live auction the item can be bid on by sending an email to the NPSA inbox – the winner will be notified by email.

4. Fireworks – Wednesday 16 November

Could not go ahead on the original date due to the weather. The main health and safety concern was the wind speed.

All tickets sold will be carried over to the new date and the event will run as initially planned.

Food wastage:

- The donut flash sale on Thursday 3 November meant the donuts were not wasted, we recouped some of the cost, and has brought in a small profit as an unplanned event.
- The hotdog rolls were donated to Julian House who were very grateful to receive them – so we are passing the goodwill on and not wasting food.
- The hotdogs have been placed in freezers so they can be used at the postponed event.

Issues brought to the meeting:

- Timing: The ticketing system didn't open on time
  - Fix: This was due to an error in the timezone used – this has been rectified and noted for future events
  - *Subsequent events/sales have opened on time*
  - *The current team cannot comment on any previous ticket sales being opened early.*
- IT: The system kept crashing
  - Fix: A queuing system/ waiting room has been built into the platform to filter through a limited number of users at a time. This has been proven to reduce the load on the site with the recent Grotto and fireworks volunteers / resales, enabling ticket purchases to complete successfully and eliminating accidental multiple ticket purchases.

#### *Root Cause Analysis*

- *Lack of caching mechanisms – resolved both onsite and offsite*
- *Minimal hosting contract – hosting contract offers limited site performance – will be reviewed at end of contract, but any increase in hosting cost will reduce funding for NPSA projects*

- IT: offers of help to review the system
  - Response: The ticketing officer is new to the role but is an experienced IT professional. He is working on the system to improve it. At the moment we do not need help to review the system

#### *Fixes/Improvements using no additional cost options:*

- *Hosting company engaged to temporarily improve performance*
- *Litespeed Cache installed – on site cache to reduce database hits to improve performance*
- *Cloudflare – DNS / off site cache to reduce site hits and improve performance*
- *CrowdHandler – Waiting room to hold users off site until site has available capacity.*

- Over-ordering of tickets: People who had bought too many tickets were reselling them to friends after the sale, rather than returning them
  - Response: We will not police or limit ticket sales. Following the issues with the initial fireworks sales, we asked for duplicate tickets to be returned, which some people did. *The improvements in the site should reduce/eliminate accidental duplicate tickets being purchased in the future.*
- System: can we use a different system and increase the costs of the tickets to cover the extra?
  - Response: As a charity, we need to keep our operating costs as low as possible. In relation to the 'extra cost' that could be put on tickets – we try our hardest to keep the ticket cost low to make it more affordable to everyone. Even the addition of £1 per ticket might price some people out.

*One of the challenges with commercial ticket products such as Eventbrite is that they cater for much more expensive tickets. The fee structure disproportionately penalises small value tickets which we mostly sell:*

- *Fireworks Ticket Cost - £5*
- *Card fees on current platform for 4 x £5 tickets – 48p (2.4%, absorbed by NPSA)*
- *EventBrite fees for 4 x £5 tickets (£20) - £3.92 – 19.6%*
- *EventBrite ticket fee for single £20 ticket – £2.15 – 10.75%*

- Query: What is the plan for next year?
  - Response: that will be for the organising team to decide. Options such as a ballot system will be considered.
  - *Improvements in the platform (cache, waiting room etc) have enabled the user demand to be matched to the capacity of the site. The fireworks resale and grotto sales completed successfully, despite a high demand – we had a peak demand of 350% more than the site’s capacity for these events at one stage.*
  
- Issue: User experience was poor
  - Response: We appreciate for the two hours the tickets were on sale before they sold out the experience may not have been great; however, we are a charity, and this is all run by volunteers who have spent many hours putting together every aspect of the event. Please be kind and patient. Feedback from subsequent events has been much more positive.
  
- Issue: Parents may become disengaged from the NPSA due to this experience
  - Response: The ultimate aims of the NPSA are to raise money for the school to make it a better environment for the children, and to bring the community together by connecting families. We would hope that parents would stay engaged due to this.

#### 5. Winter Wonderland

There are 19 windows booked in, but we would still like more to join. Comms will be sent via class reps and posts on social media to garner more interest. Sign up deadline is 19 Nov.

#### 6. Calendars

Going on sale Monday 14 November.  
Reminders will be sent via class reps.

#### 7. Grotto

Tickets have been on sale through the IT system, with a new queue/waiting room in place to stop the system crashing due to volume of numbers. This is going well and there are only 23 slots left.  
If anyone can loan string lights to the event that would be great – contact the NPSA inbox with offers.  
Thanks to Fran Derrien for making the gifts to give to the children at the event.

#### 8. Christmas Fair

Organisation is going well – a document will be drafted to send via class reps to clarify some questions raised. Learning point taken that some messages do not translate well from an email into WhatsApp – especially where Excel tables are used.  
The choir will open the fair.  
There needs to be a Plan B if the weather is bad – organisers talking to Mrs Kennaugh regarding this.  
Volunteers to help Kathy with the money would be great (especially after the fair as there is a lot of counting to do).  
That day will be mufti day for the kids in school – see the document for what to bring in as ‘payment’ for mufti.  
Donations to be bought in on that day.

#### 9. Christmas Cake sale

9th December decided as the date for this, alongside the next 2<sup>nd</sup> hand-uniform sale.  
Need to mix the year groups donating cakes to help it run. A rota will be drawn up.

#### 10. Playground renovations

Making progress in terms of phase 1 – the organising team met to review the three propositions from the providers. Each one has good ideas so looking for a way to take the best bits forward. Resource is being allocated to make sure that both lower and upper school are getting some items at the start.

- Lower school - the entire entryway will be resurfaced with a rubber mulch(spongy) surface. There will be the addition of some loose play equipment pieces.

- Upper school - the area under the trees that has already been pulled up will be left where it is. Instead, the focus will be on the area behind the netball courts – steps will be cut into the wall and an entire trail will be put in for the kids to enjoy.

There is enough money in the account to do one of these and start the other, with the benefit of using some providers ‘deferred payment scheme’ – knowing that we will have enough to pay the bill when it is received. Planned to start in February or March 2023. The upper school should be completed in about a week – there is going to be an ask for volunteers to help clear the grounds (weed and bush clearance) nearer the time.

All the above can be done in term time as areas can be fenced off. All the providers are DBS checked so are safe to be on school grounds with the children.

Any ideas for getting business sponsors would be greatly appreciated – email to NPSA inbox.

#### 11. Update from the treasurer

NB – not completely up to date as the system used for donations through the website only deposits the money into the account on 1st day of the month, at which point Kathy runs through every line to make sure everything is accounted for correctly.

Event	Profit
Scarecrow Trail	283
Mr Newman London Marathon	5,611
Uniform Sales	146
Cake Sales	234
Bags2School	40
Giving Machine	19
Donations	195

#### 12. Message to volunteers

Thank you to all volunteers for their hours from the NPSA chair. This is echo’d by the teachers and Mrs Kennaugh. Volunteers need to be respected for the time and effort they are giving to the events. The ultimate aim of the NPSA is to help the children and bring the community together. It isn’t fair that volunteers should be expected to receive negative comments. We can take constructive advice but when giving this please be aware of how the message is received. People volunteer because they care about the community and the school. The school was built on an ethos of working together and being respectful.

#### 13. Old calendars

There are some old calendars from 2020 and 2022 in the NPSA cupboard. These will be sold at a reduced rate on a stall in the Christmas Fair.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday 31 January 2023 at 7.30pm in the Blue Room**

*\*Please note that the items written in italics have been inserted post meeting to clarify points.*