

School for Peace Support Group

Minutes of meeting held

Tuesday 1st July 2020

Present: Michael, Mary, Alan, Rona, Alison, Jane

Apologies: Sydna, Colin

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed by Michael

Sponsorship/ Donations news

We hope that two new potential sponsors who said they would start in January are still interested.

Mary told the meeting that we need to do some Marketing/PR to attract new sponsors as at the moment we are sending money to the Congo for 100 children but only have sponsors for 70.

We are very grateful to have received a donation of £2,500 from Howard Trust and two other donations of £200 and £250. Some of this money could go towards general running costs and Mary is to ask the Sisters for details.

News from the Congo

At the moment the School is closed because of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Sisters have said that they have too many children for the number of classrooms and before the lock-down were running the primary school in the morning and the secondary school in the afternoon which was causing problems. The meeting felt that our remit is to support the existing school and not fundraise for more classrooms – Alan suggested that we contact the Ambassador in London to see if they could help with additional funding.

Mary has been able to “WhatsApp” the latest newsletter to the Sisters and received a big ‘thank you’ from them. They have ordered library shelves and chairs and the books are to be printed when the school re-starts.

Mary is to get in touch with a contact at the Belgium University regarding any laptops they might be able to contribute to the School.

Mary also to asked the Sisters if the teachers have been paid during lock-down and if they have been able to make any savings. We might try and have a WhatsApp call at the next meeting.

The Sisters main concern at the moment is not having enough toilets – there is a piece of state owned land that they could buy for \$10,000 – Mary is to find out how many toilets they need and how much the build would cost.

Treasurer’s report

Alan reported that we have a balance of £32,688.83 made up of £20,834.34 in the Co-op 14 day deposit account, £6,802.35 in the Co-op current account, £410.86 in Santander current account and £4,641.28 in the Santander deposit account.

The Charity Commission Return for 2018/19 has been submitted, although slightly late and the 2019/20 return will be submitted once the accounts have been audited.

The end of year situation is £16,786.91 total income and £27,968.19 total expenditure making £11,181.28 expenditure over income.

Application for refunds of Gift Aid for the last two financial years have been submitted and based on eligible donations of £13,972.37, if approved, we should get £3,493.09 from HMRC.

The meeting agreed to send £12,500 for the next Academic Year’s school fees for 100 children.

Alan and Mary to check on status of money sent in March before any more is sent.

Recent events

- Mary and Neil have been updating the website and uploading the Minutes
- Mary is liaising with 2 schools – at Somerleyton the geography teacher is interested in doing a project on a village which is very different from theirs as part of the curriculum and a student from St Benedict's in Bury St Edmunds would like to do an on-line assembly to raise money.
- A local art dealer has sold a donated painting for £100 and has given the charity 50%.
- We will apply for a £50,000 grant through UK Aid Direct to fund an 18-25 year olds literacy project for those who have never been to school.

Forthcoming Events

- Regarding the potential concert at St Benet's Church: the conductor of Suffolk Strings has now made contact with Father Martin, although no date has yet been set.
- Caritas Charities Festival at St George's Church, Sprowston in the Autumn.
- Possible Garden Party at Barsham Rectory in September.
- Addy, our friend in Leicester, has been given a quantity of Lladró porcelain which is being sold on Ebay for the school.

AOB

- AGM to be postponed for the moment

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday 2nd September**
at 7.30pm