



MEETING MINUTES – GROUP LEADER’S MEETING

MEETING INFORMATION

Objective:

Date: 24/04/2017
Time: 20:45 PM Start
Called By: Christopher Holliss - GSL

Location: The Scout Hut
Meeting Type: Spring Term 2017
Note Taker: Chris Holliss
Confirmation: David Kelly

Attendees: Christopher Holliss, Mark Skelton, David Kelly, Paul Drussel, Claire Clegg, Sally Mitchell, Annelize Fagan, Ajanta Hilton, Victoria Sweeney, Lorraine Bullock, Grant Tomkins, Isolde Walker

Apologies: Davryn Fagan, Catherine Stacey, Jon Stacey

1. Welcome & Apologies

Chris welcomes and thanks everyone attending.

2. Leader and Executive – Arrivals, Moving & Departures

Arrivals - No new arrivals

Leaders - Departures: Rakesh Odedra - Assistant Cub Scout leader (Wolf) - work, Graham Brown - Cub Scout leader (Wolf) - relocation, John Drake - Scout leader (Ver) - relocation, Karen Drake - Assistant Scout leader (Ver) - relocation

Executive – Departures: Ben McLeod – Fundraiser – removed from executive – lack of fundraising.

Posts that the group requires to fill in the coming months;

Executive posts: Chair, Group Secretary / Waiting list coordinator

Thumpers - 2 leader, 1 Section Assistant

Conkers – 2-3 leaders, 1 Section Assistant (Sally will be moving up to Wolf half term)

Birchwood – 2-3 leaders, 1 Section Assistant

Wolf – 2 leaders

Colne - 1 leader, 1 Section Assistant

Ver – Troop was closed 31st March 2017 due to no available volunteers - 2-3 leaders, 1 Section Assistant (to reopen)

Section numbers come 23th April 2017;

Thumpers	24
Conkers	22
Birchwood	24
Wolf	21
Colne	25

Waiting list numbers come 23rd April 2017;

Beaver 52 children aged between 1yrs5mths to 7yrs7mths.

Cubs 0

Scouts – 3 and any Ver Scout who wish to transfer from London Colony if places arise.



3. Review of previous Leader & Executive minutes

The minutes from the meetings were verbally read out by the GSL and what actions have been taken.

4. Refurbishment of the scout hut

Following many months of the GSL conversing with a charity and some major retailers he can confirm that an agreement for the refurbishment of the hut had been made following an onsite meeting by all parties. The agreement is that all supplies for the whole refurbishment will be given freely and that these companies will speak to their customers, staff and sub-contractors to try and have the work done by them. If this is not an option the group shall have to either find these from within group or hire our own.

The project would see a new fully fitted kitchen, toilet block porched area.

This project is subject to the removal of all asbestos from the existing building to which the group has already sort quotations from specialists which range from £7000 to £10000 and will take up to 1 week. If the group has everything in place along with required finances it would look to start work at the start of the summer school holidays if not before which could mean sections amending their last meetings.

A1 plans and elevations that were stuck to the windows within the hall of the planned refurbishment.

5. Leader training and team building

Many of the group's leaders have done a great deal of the required leaders training but are unaware that they have and so have yet to have these modules signed off. Please spend some time to go through your PLP and see what modules you feel that you can have signed off.

- Chris has completed the training advisor course, but needs to have this signed off by going through someone's PLP with Andy Petch in attendance.
- 1st response is a must and everyone within the group has this now. Thank you!
- What training do people want to do?
- Team building weekend – Chris has made a proposal for a team building weekend at Great Towers in the Lake District staying in a nearby Spa hotel. The cost of accommodation, travel and food would be for the leaders to pay but the executive have agreed to pay for the cost of the permit training (Permits must be for the benefit of the group be it that leader's section or another's)
- Would leader like to go down the hut on a Saturday Sunday to learn some of the skills they will need to help them with camps etc. Things like how to put up and pack away the groups different styles of tents, some bush crafts and much more while having a BBQ afterwards?

Actions – Chris is to send out email polls to leaders to find weekends suitable for the majority of leaders to attend, following the agreement of all present that these would be good to do.

6. Key dates within the scouting and the group's calendar

St Albans District events can be found upon their website where there is a calendar on the front page: <http://www.stalbansscouts.org/>

Beavers:

Activity Evening for Beavers & Cubs 29th June @ Tolmers

Beavers in Tents 1st July @ Well End – Both colonies attending

Paradise Wildlife 1st October

Remembrance Parade Sunday 12th November

Cubs:

Dragon Boat Regatta 17th June all day @ ESSA Water Activities Centre

Activity Evening for Beavers & Cubs 29th June @ Tolmers

County night hike 23rd/24th Sept. Hemel Hempstead

JoTi Oct.

County Cyclocross Sun 8th Oct. Well End

6-a-side football Sat. 15th Oct.

Remembrance Parade Sunday 12th November



Scouts:

PAW 28th April @ Tolmers
Take Away (Adventure Weekend) 23rd June @ Hamergreen
Born 2B challenged 29th Sept. @ Hamergreen
Remembrance Parade Sunday 12th November
Green Beret 17th Nov. @ Phasels Wood

7. Leadership & Group socials

David having taken over the job from Chris to arrange our socials has sent out a Doodle poll for the next leaders social.

This will take place on the 19th May 2017 location T.B.C.

8. The closure of Ver Scout troop and the consequences

Chris went over what has happened since being informed of the planned relocation to Cornwall by John and Karen Drake. Chris as GSL informed the district, (Annette Payne - DC, Anne Barns - Deputy DC and in charge of Development, Annie Hitch – Waiting list coordinator, Andy & LizAnn Petch – TA manager & appointments secretary) while promptly making an announcement at a special troop parents meeting in October 2016. Parents were informed of the move and that without further adult volunteers making their selves available with the mind of becoming uniformed leaders that Ver would face closure on the 16th December 2016. There seemed to be a great deal of positive feedback and active discussion within the meeting but this sadly resulted in only one parent formerly stepping forward as a fortnightly section assistant. Due to the Drake's house purchasing problems the closure was temporarily put on hold to which replacement leaders were being actively sort by the GSL but to no avail hence the closure on the 31st March 2017

The closure of Ver not only affects those within the troop (30 scouts at the time of announcement) but will seriously affect the progression of many of our current members within beavers and cubs to scouts within our group.

Our remaining troop will be going to 28 scouts to which it has already taken 5 displaced Ver scouts bringing their current number to 25. This number may change in the coming days as the group still awaits replies to placement offers.

The placement of these scouts will not affect any movement of any future leader or executive children between now and December 2018.

However there have been some unexpected revelations and unpleasant consequences to myself as GSL.

It was revealed by Anne Barns within an email that our group could not receive the same amount of help as other group's as they do not deal with our waiting list. The group formerly requested that this be taken over with immediate effect to receive the same level of help as others within the district which was declined. The district feels that their coordinator "Annie Hitch" is unable to take this on.

There has been some unpleasantness by a small handful of disgruntled parents along with 2 leaders over recent months to which continues to date. Attempts by these parents to manipulate/pressure a leader via texts stating that Annette Payne (DC) had agreed for them to move to scouts which is something the leader did not wish to do. Chris tried to contact the DC to verify what had been said to which he has received no reply. Following a meeting with Andy Petch a clear folder containing email correspondents between Annette Payne – DC, other district members and Kirsten Knight – Parent/SA of Ver were mistakenly left behind. Within these correspondents is a formal complaint by Mrs. Knight against Chris to which the other documents show that the district have been before this and since actively looking for evidence to remove Chris from the roll of GSL and scouting.

Chris stated that he feels that a clear disregard for his and families feelings has been shown. The worse being the open discussion between Annette Payne - DC, Anne Barns - Deputy DC, John & Karen Drake – Ver Scout leaders, Andrew Smart – Ex Thumpers Beaver leader, Mr & Mrs Knight and others of the situation at the last Ver scout meeting. This was done while the meeting was taking place and so in the presence of the scouts to which the discussion was overheard by Chris's eldest daughter "Elle" who was greatly upset wanting to go over to ask them to stop as most that was said was derogator about her father.



Chris stated that he had sat down with David, Lorraine and Grant last week to go over his views on the matter. He feels the need to think of his position within the group and scouting as he does not wish to belong to any organization that clearly breeds strong cliques as there are in St Albans but does not wish his presence to cause the group further problems. He admitted that this has put unacceptable stress upon him as has started to effect his health.

Comments from Leaders after this:

Cannot understand the districts stance on this and feel that Annette Payne (DC) and others in their actions is unfair and is a form of bullying.

What are the parents and districts goal and what do these people hope to achieve? To remove Chris? Get their children in Colne in front of others?

Do they not know how much you do for the group and its leaders?

If they remove you from the GSL role who would they want to do it as we don't?

If they continue to upset Chris and he leaves what is to happen to Birchwood cubs as Ajanta leaves at the end of summer and that would only leave Paul?

Does the group have to be in the district?

Can we move district?

Can we limit our group's involvement with the district as much as possible as they have never been that helpful?

Leaders stated their poor treatment at District events such as Cub 100 camp, swimming gala etc.

A leader stated that Annette Payne-DC had contacted them asking some weeks before questions about Chris and his running of the group as leaders seem to be leaving and speak of Andrew Smart.

It was questioned that if the District does not do our waiting list nor does it wish to take it over why does Annie Hitch require access to the group's sections via OSM and not just the waiting list if even that is required?

As this is clearly bullying Chris should take it to Liz Walker - County Commissioner.

Leaders wish to email Annette Payne - DC to show their support for Chris.

David stated that if Chris really feel like not carrying on as GSL or cub leader that he should think of himself first and not worry about either the leaders, cubs or the group.

A few leaders stated that if Chris does go due to this treatment by the district that they wouldn't be too far away from leaving themselves.

Overall view was that the District has not helped the group as well as it could or that it believes it has and has been very poor in its involvement in many things such as the closure of Ver.

9. Any other business

10. Set date for summer term leaders meeting.

September - Venue T.B.C.