

Group Scout Leader Meeting (GSL)
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 15th July 2020
7.30pm held by Zoom (online) Meeting.

Present: Julie Lovett (District Commissioner)
Andy Carr (1st Framlingham)
Keith Gleen (1st Martlesham)
Barrie Hayter (5th Woodbridge)
Martin Osbourne (1st Otley)
Peter Runnicles (1st Westerfield)
Steve Burch (1st Leiston)
Carol Mincher (District Secretary)
Richard Walling (1st Martlesham)
Gareth Cox (1st Kesgrave)
Adam Thorpe (1st Woodbridge)
Clare Calton (Deben Valley)
Joan Gibbs (Westerfield Cubs)
Malcolm Bell (District Scout Network Commissioner)

Welcome and apologies

Apologies: Stuart Ross (1st Grundisburgh), David Mincher (District Treasurer), Stuart Bayford (Saxmundham)

Minutes of the last GSL meeting

The Minutes of the last GSL were not discussed.

Matters Arising. None

Development activities and needs.

The format for discussion was slightly different to normal and each GSL discussed briefly how their Groups were doing. The following is a summary of the information given:

Gareth reported that 2-4 colonies have been having online 2 weekly meetings and have had many badges distributed to beavers and cubs (about 50% attendance on virtual meetings). Scouts have had about 50% attendance on virtual meetings. There has not been any feedback from Leaders regards Scouting indoors and have suspended moving up Group members and this will be reviewed in September. The Group AGM was held on zoom with about 47 people where polls had been set up for voting and this worked very well. Gareth reported he would share the powerpoint with a template to use. They also held an online promise renewal and had a very good attendance.

Adam reported that there had been a decision early on not to give any form of Scouting online and they are planning to return in September. There have been leaders meetings to start risk assessment. They have been working on the Scout hut and have started a recruitment campaign with parents. There is 60 people on the waiting list and 4 people coming back possibly undertaking a webinar and there has been no loss of leaders. He also reports that they received the Council Grant.

Keith spoke about the Rendlesham Group and reported that they have had over 50% of Cub numbers on Online Group meetings. They have had no loss of leaders due to Covid-19 pandemic. Some have not joined in online Group meetings. Beavers and older Scouts find zoom meetings difficult. They do not intend to have an indoors meeting at Rendlesham currently and are thinking that the earliest start will be October 1/2 term as they meet at a School.

Richard discussed about the Martlesham Group. He reported that all 3 sections are using zoom meetings but the Beavers do have less of an attention span so is not so easy to undertake Zoom Group meetings, but Cubs participation has been good with nearly 100% participation each week. There is a lot of participation in badge work and parents have also been joining in with this - There will be a follow-up to see if can get volunteers for future Group meetings and Scouts have had about 50% attendance.

Steve reported about the Leiston Group. He said that there was a limited response from emails distributed with information about Scouting during Covid-19 pandemic and Marcus has held zoom meetings for Scouts every 2 weeks. He reported the Leiston Group also received the Council Grant and they have been working on Scout hut improvements. He reported that the hut is empty 3 nights a week and offered the hut for other groups when they can return to inside meetings.

Andy spoke about the Framlingham Group. He said that there had been very little Scouting Activity with having many Leaders that were Key workers or many did not have the technology skills to undertake virtual group meetings and a couple of Leaders have stepped down. He reported that the Group did get the Council Grant. He reported that a nursery/Play group have been using their hut with a very small rent and they have created risk assessments when having a 3rd party organisation in the hut.

Clare discussed about the Deben Valley group - 1 out of 21 Parents of Beavers replied to the provided information regards Scouting Association through lockdown. She reported that they have lost a couple of parent helpers and that they use a village hall and is a rural colony so they do not know when they will be able to return to indoor meetings especially as there are about 8 primary schools in their area and so it is unachievable to have meetings for various Social bubbles. They have had an Exec meeting and they have booked their AGM meeting.

Julie spoke about the Saxmundham Group. She reported there has been no activity online and that they will need support to come out of lockdown. They received the Council grant.

Joan reported that they have had a virtual camp with 6 out of the full pack attending. It was a lot of work to put together and some parents did not understand that they had to supervise and camp with their children. They have not had any virtual meetings due to a Technology gap and parents not engaging with emails. There will be an Exec meeting and have an AGM meeting.

Malcolm attended the GSL meeting representing Network. He reported that there has been no activity from the 18-25 years old with main work being undertaken by the County.

Peter reported about the Westerfield Group. There has been a virtual camp at home which a few people took part in. They meet in a village Hall therefore they do not know when they will be able to start having indoor meetings.

Barrie discussed about the 5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts. There was 25-50% attendance on zoom meetings which started as weekly meetings but are now held every 2 weeks. They have had Scouts Adventurous activities with parents supervision. They had a St. Georges day promise renewal and 50 families joined in. They will be having a leader meeting soon to plan for future indoor Scouting meetings. They have moved Scouting Association members up into through the Groups.

Martin spoke about the Otley group. He reported that it has been quiet with beavers and cubs not participating much but the Scouts have regular zoom meetings over the last 5 weeks. Some scouts are running the meeting themselves towards their awards. There is not much parent take-up for Scouting at home. The Great Indoors was a very popular activity. He reported that the group is finding that they will have financial difficulties for as the Group were not eligible for Council Grant. He reported that there has been no money coming in nor going out over the Lockdown period and that there is going to be a Leader meeting at the end of August to plan a Programme for virtual meetings and charge subs for Autumn term.

District Commissioner's Report:

Julie reported that the County has been supportive with having a working party to look at risk assessments and looking at advice to be provided to the District and groups. She reported that she needs to approve all of the risk assessments and this cannot be delegated to GSLs. She reported that the County view is not to rush back to Indoor meetings but to have a 'blended' approach with a mixture of online meetings and a few outdoor face-to-face activities - possibly at District level. She reported that they need to be confident on processes and the situation first so the Scouting Association can start well - taking it easy and ensure quality over quantity.

Risk Assessments - Julie reports there had been a Q & A discussion and cleaning should be part of the risk assessment. She reported that there needed to be a lot of talking to parents and leaders first. She reports that risk assessments that are not Covid-19 relate can be delegated to GSLs but Covid-19 related risk assessments cannot be delegated to GSLs.

The Covid-19 State for Scouting Association is currently Amber therefore some Groups have started to write generic risk assessments for indoors and outdoors meetings/activities.

Julie reported that she would be happy for information to be shared amongst the Groups but groups must ensure the risk assessment is individual to them. She reported that a single template would be sensible to share between the groups. The process was for GSLs to help Leaders undertake the risk assessments, submit it to Julie, Julie discuss the risk assessments with the Groups, Julie distribute the risk assessments to the District Exec for their comments and Julie to authorise it. She reported that County does not need to authorise/check it but they keep it on file to ensure it has been checked.

Julie reported that she has been invited to the County working party but would be happy if someone else would like to take part. She reported that there is an approvers checklist on the National website and the date for expecting risk assessments is next week.

Julie discussed that Census is probably going to be 15th October 2020. Payments will not be in until January/February 2021 which gives a bit of time to work out a plan for the future.

Julie reported that District is not in a position to fund Groups that cannot pay. Pre Covid-19, the movement was already worried about costs. The Scout association has recognised this a little while ago and has met Groups to see how the groups could continue. Eric sent out a questionnaire to each group asking where each group stood financially. There is an additional cost this year and it was proposed that there should be a meeting with GSLs and Group Treasurers to see if any Groups may need a loan and to discuss a plan. It was deemed that some groups are fine financially and some are not.

Any Other Business

Adam asked about subsidies or loan/grants and suggested that a subsidy would be better as it was not the Groups fault regard finances. It was discussed that some GSLs were looking at sustainability costs with their Group Execs.

It was stated that there is a free zoompro account for each group - on the website in the Covid section. Some groups that are using zoom a lot for their meetings might be happy to share their programmes with the groups that have not done much online.

Action: Julie to put a selection of programmes that can be used on zoom on website.

OSM - Scout Association partnership - There is a data sharing webinar for an opt in for County to access group OSM fro safeguarding and census information with certain users and the Exec teams to agree to it.

Keith asked about the 50p capitation refund for this year. Julie reported that County passed it on last month - To be discussed at next meeting.

Julie informed the meeting participants that there will be mandatory training emails from HQ and to ensure that everyone does the training.

Eric reported that in West Suffolk Exec groups have amalgamated.

Proposed Group AGM dates

Clare - 1st September 2020

Richard - 16th September 2020

Peter - Not booked yet.

Eric proposed that the District AGM should be by zoom and that there will be a new District Exec Treasurer proposed. Agreed to have a District AGM on 9th September 2020 19:30.

Julie reported that an optional drop-in possibly zoom meeting planned for 26th August 2020.

Action: Eric to send emails regards groups and finance and can talk as a group in August.

Date of Next Meeting: 11th November 2020 19:30 Zoom meeting.