

## Annual General Meeting 24th September 2013

8pm to 9pm

**Venue:** The Gilbert Room, Twyford Parish Hall.

**Attendees:**

**Current Committee:** Kath Thornber (chair), Simone Asser (treasurer), Martin MacPherson (secretary), Kat Molesworth, Alex Clayton, Theo Johnson.

**Parent Members:** Nina Capaccio, Lucy Hutchin, Minnie Campbell, Francesca Carr-Roberts, Rebekah Burn, Celine Barker, Robyn Grieg, Bruce Greig, Maria Baker, Edward Ferris and Susie James.

**Staff:** Angela Mansell, Pamela Lawrence, Ellie Marshall and Catherine Hutchinson.

**Other:** Ian Wheeler

**Apologies:** Jade Pritchard

**1. Leaving present for Angela Mansell**

Celine Barker and Alex Clayton presented a leaving gift of some flowers and a tree at Christmas for a number of years to Angela. These gifts were in recognition of her long standing service and the gratitude of parents of playgroup children, past and present.

**2. Manager's Report** from Catherine Hutchinson (Quoted directly from manager's report)

*"A warm welcome to you all and thank you for coming to our AGM. My report will give an overview of the staffing and provision developments in playgroup over the year. It will note our successes but also some of the issues that have come up. Questions are welcome at the end.*

*Before continuing, I would like to thank the outgoing committee for their hard work during the year, especially Kath for stepping in to be Chair and carrying out all her responsibilities so well. In particular Simone our Treasurer who has worked very hard to put in place good management and financial structures for our new company structure.*

**Staff Developments:**

*The past year saw 2 staff leave us and 1 new member join the team. Liz Goulding left in February due to family responsibilities and we are all aware of Angela's decision to retire in July due to ill health. We were glad to have Sarah Chisam join us in May, especially to work at forest school. Overall the group has benefited from a stable team of core staff who work very hard in their roles.*

*It's been a challenging year for the team due to financial difficulties revealed last autumn. All staff agreed to give up hours to help rebalance the budget, including their paid weekly admin hour. This means key people now do their children's great learning journals voluntarily at home or during time in the cupboard when possible.*

*Staff training opportunities have become more limited due to cut backs at the county level and our own budget over the year. However Stef has nearly completed her level 3 qualification and we have updated first aid and child protection training as needed. Last year our group was also invited to join the county Mind Your Language Project which brought welcome funding and a leadership role for Pamela. My work as an LFSP advising and mentoring as part of a county team continued to grow, also bringing in some income, and Ellie joined me in giving a presentation on maths in the woods to Children's Centre Teachers which was well received.*

*In the coming year staff will be restricted to one curriculum training course each due to our budget, and we hope to find outside funding for Ellie and Sarah's forest school level 3 training. More of our staff development will be done in-house drawing on the expertise of senior staff. Our behaviour basics course and Parent Information nights will be part of this programme. Things are tight, but we aim to keep developing our team. Our practitioners are now recognised as modelling high quality practice in the county and other settings are increasingly coming to us to see how it's done.*

**Provision for children:**

*Who are the children attending Twyford Playgroup? How have we met their needs over the year? Children from 51 families attended last year and we have 44 on the books so far this year, almost all from the village. There is a broad demographic with some going on to Twyford Prep, Sherbourne House, St Swithuns and Pilgrims, the majority to Twyford St Marys Primary. Consistently around 20 (nearly half) the children split provision with other forms of childcare. Each year has seen only 3 children use playgroup 5 days per week and only about a quarter (average 12) take up their full 15 hours free provision with us, with an average of 7 families paying for longer hours.*

*So we are clearly only part of the childcare jigsaw Twyford families put together for their young children. Last year financial difficulties saw us re-evaluate what parents most wanted so that we could preserve this as we cut back hours. Responses reflected the attendance pattern already described. Parents valued the core traditional playgroup provision of morning sessions, with lunch clubs the most popular addition and forest school an added draw-card. Quality provision and meeting future classmates continued to be the main reason given for attending. Despite national and Hampshire incentives to increase flexible hours we found ourselves overstretched when offering early starts and afternoons and had to reduce these last year, with some disappointment but no serious childcare difficulties reported from our families.*

*Playgroup as it is structured now does seem meet the desire for good pre-school provision as part of village life. I don't think in reality we can extend our hours much beyond what we offer now unless demand changes dramatically, but hopefully we won't need to reduce hours more. We continue to have constraints on finances, staffing and premises which make this difficult.*

*Offering quality is also clearly important to families. With our forest school, allotment, excellent staff and well-equipped setting we are now seen by Hampshire County Council as a pre-school that really is high quality and does make a difference to children's outcomes. To improve further we need to get this good news out to parents more effectively so everyone understands the value of what is on offer, and to ensure all who attend can access all the good things on offer. So consolidating quality, helping parents understand why it's good and increasing inclusivity within our financial limits.*

*I do want to finish with a comment about finances from the staff point of view. It seems we have reached a kind of a tipping point in what playgroup can give to your children and what it would cost to give more and better. After 5 years of growing numbers attendance has now plateaued and may almost be at maximum based on the pattern of attendance in this village, as I described before. Therefore our income has probably also plateaued for the time being. Last year to balance the budget we reduced our rent and our staff lost hours and pay. They maintained the quality of provision because of their dedication, but that level of unpaid dedication can't go on for ever. Meanwhile, understandably pressure has grown to offer more forest school places, include more children on outings, do more with the allotment, provide for younger children and so on.*

*As a group we face some choices. Whether we actually begin to roll back what is offered to fit the funds available and accept that we must cut our coats according to our cloth. This would mean quality of provision would begin to drop, but perhaps that is just realistic for a village playgroup. Alternatives are that we could draw on more parent volunteer support, which other groups do with some success, or we will need to find more money, either by charging more or drawing in funding from other sources.*

*As the manager of this setting I can put the issues to you as I see them. As parents and committee members the choices are yours, so I now commend my 2013 report to you, and wish you all a happy and interesting year to come in playgroup."*

### **3. Chairperson's Report**

Kath confirmed that the switch of the playgroup to a limited company was now complete.

She thanked the parents for rallying after the cut in hours earlier in the year. She felt it was very positive that parents took up more hours after it was announced that some hours in the week would need to be cut due to lack of uptake.

Looking forward Kath advised that this coming year should see more stable hours with very good staffing ratios.

The staff were thanked for their dedication to the playgroup and for providing a wonderful environment for the children.

Kath thanked the committee for their hard work over the last year. Fundraising produced £3500 in the last year which was excellent. Some of this has already been spent by the Playgroup staff on a new playhouse, benches, globe, with the remaining funds allocated to other new items.

### **4. Treasurer's Report** for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2013 from Simone Asser (Quoted directly from treasurer's report )

“The Treasurer provided copies of statutory accounts to the meeting and highlighted the breakdown of the profit on page 9 and made the following report.

This was the first full year since Playgroup was incorporated. Twyford Playgroup is now a company limited by guarantee and as such is required to file statutory accounts prepared under an accruals rather than receipts and payments basis with the body that regulates companies, Companies House. The accounts provided are in the required format and were approved by the committee who are also the directors of the company earlier today. At this AGM they are presented to the Members.

The accounts have also been reviewed and will later be filed as part of a Trustees Annual Report with the Charities Commission.

In summary the results for the year ended 31 August 2013 were:

	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Revised budget</b>	<b>Variance</b>
Operating income	82,710	77,738	4,972
Expenditure	(80,855)	(78,542)	(2,313)
Operating profit	1,855	(804)	2,659
Non operating income	6,006		
Profit per statutory accounts	7,861		

- a) The Playgroup had an operating income of almost £83,000 and expenditure of around £81,000 giving an operating profit of £1,855 which is more than £2,500 more than budgeted for.
- b) The majority of this extra profit was the result of a much higher than expected total fund raising of £3,419 which is being used to purchase new equipment for Playgroup.
- c) As you will see from the accounts there is a profit per these statutory accounts of £7,861. The difference of £6,006 is the non-cash transfer of the fixtures and fittings (e.g. equipment and larger toys) from the old unincorporated Playgroup business to the new Company.
- d) The cash balance at the start of the financial year was £19,219 and was £22,607 at the end of the year. Following the year end the committee has authorized further purchases of equipment worth around £2,200.
- e) In November 2012 when it was felt the original budget would not be achievable a revised budget was agreed showing an expected loss of around £800 a year.

- f) As mentioned the results for the year exceeded this and cash reserves have been retained at around three months expected expenditure.”

#### **5. Election of members**

Kath and Simone explained the role of a Member of the playgroup. A request was made for new members. 10 parents agreed to become Members/ guarantors of the playgroup and were added to the register (of which four would then seek election to the committee).

#### **6. Election of new committee.**

The following members were elected to the committee:

Kat Molesworth (re-elected)

Jade Pritchard (re-elected)

Alex Clayton (re-elected)

Theo Johnson (re-elected)

Susie James

Celine Barker

Edward Ferris

Georgie Palmer

#### **7. AOB:**

A presentation of flowers was made to the outgoing officers of the committee, Kath, Simone and Martin to thank them for their hard work and dedication.

Date of next meeting: **TBA.**