

SOS closed meeting 30th December 2019 – Minutes

Attendees:

Sue Clarke (Chair), Dene Clarke, Alicia Clarke, Anthony Knight, Lisa Knight, Hollie Knight, Fred Langley, Samantha Townsend, Colin White, Michelle Armstrong (taking Minutes)

Apologies:

Dave Reynolds, Kelly Ambrosini, Sheila Carrick.

Welcome to Alicia and Hollie – the 'Youth Section' of SOS.

Minutes from previous meeting approved.

Financial/ legal:

Balance of account at 30/12/19 = £4506.99. £1500.00 owed to Dave & Kelly ref Beer Festival.

Christmas Fair raised approx £300-400.

Christmas Quiz (proceeds to Quinn's Retreat) raised £125.

Share The Darkness – no details available.

Online banking is set up and ready to use.

Action – Fred to provide a quick financial update to the group after each event.

Meeting with Nick Malyan (Redhills) – his advice

Use money we have raised towards seed funding for all the surveys required to increase our chances of obtaining the remainder of funding from 3rd parties.

Start making contact now with potential funders.

Nick spoke about sustainability as a campaign group – we can't guarantee that the Stute will still be an operating business in 5 years – small steps are required.

Start making contact with successful clubs with a similar set up/ challenges to Stute to learn on how they turned their fortunes around.

Action – Sue to speak to Dave re approaching Shildon Masonic – either Rob or other member. Discussion around feasibility of approaching Masonic more than once for funding. We know that Masonic are keen to support a Shildon project. Fred to make contact/ update us on BASH? BASH won't look at us until the trustee situation is settled.

Trustees – Shaun has confirmed that there are 13 former BR employees available to form interim committee, with several in reserve. Fred has asked our solicitor re next steps.

Christmas especially Boxing Day was a lot quieter in the bar – discussion around reasons why – mild weather/ Thursday normally closed? Group resolution to formulate an SOS plan for Christmas 2020.

Committee are still not being proactive – discussion re SOS working on this from the inside. Sheila had to step down after a short spell on the committee due to ill health. SOS recognise that her mental health would also have been affected by Shaun's poor treatment of her (as witnessed by other SOS members).

Committee meeting has been moved to a Sunday morning on a trial basis to accommodate one of the members – next one Sun 5th Jan.

Discussion around when the rules are re-written they include a commitment from each member to attend a minimum amount of meetings.

Spruce up – inside

Paint colours have been decided – grey palette. Stute now need to approach PPG and SOS requested date to lend a hand.

Spruce up – outside

Compliments received from general public about the car park and cut having been tidied up. **Action** – to decide when to burn the timber and next steps.

After Action Review

Wreath making workshop was resounding success with great feedback. **Action** – Michelle to contact Kathryn Hume re a Spring Workshop (March/ April) in the main hall to allow scope for more attendees/ profit margin. Update – Kathryn keen to do a Saturday and will confirm availability asap.

Kids Disco was challenging for SOS volunteers on the night due to a minority of irresponsible parents however Fred keen to book another. Fred and Dene to manage the next one. Discussion around not being scared of ejecting those families who don't heed warnings on bad behaviour especially when it could be a H&S risk. **Action** – SOS to contact KDO to arrange a date.

Christmas Fair was a great success and good feedback. Lessons learnt – to have more than one Santa so to have him available for a longer period. The food offering to be extended, have a SOS 'café' area and not to have any vendors selling food that clashes with what we offer. We had 2/3 no shows who hadn't paid so next year not to confirm a booking until payment received.

Share The Darkness was a huge success. We should look to book more bands with a likewise large following. Spoke about booking them for 2020 with discussion around having them at the Beer Festival. Discussion around timing of the next beer fest – possibly early

summer (weekend before schools break up) with a reduced selection of beers. Agreement to allow 12+ weeks to arrange. **Action** – Michelle to contact Share The Darkness re Friday night availability over the summer.

Square card machine – discussion on placing an order for 1 machine with the expectation that the committee will order a second one. Fred raised a strong objection to SOS group paying for this (at approx cost of £200) stating a concern that in doing so we encourage an over reliance on SOS when they could afford to buy it themselves.

The group took a vote with Fred the only one against. **Action** – Fred to order 1 unit for the Stute and 1 for SHA.

Events to Promote

17th Jan - Family Quiz in the lounge. **Action** – to ask Kelly whether there are any more quizzes written & whether she and Dave are available for Jan and Feb quiz. Anth & Lisa to host the night if Dave and Kelly are unavailable. Agreement to make Feb quiz a Valentines one on Fri 14th which Sue and Dene will host.

1st Feb – Melting Pot. No raffle, football cards instead. Stephen Wales to DJ before and after the band with a 90s indie/ Britpop theme. **Action** – Colin to approach Tim at Brothertons to sell tickets and Bishop FM to promote.

Discussion around the effectiveness of leaflet drops – Dene quoted that a 10% return is expected on average so it is worth doing. **Action** – Colin to ask Dave re leaflets asap.

Future Event Ideas

'Danielle The Happy Medium' - group agreed with advance payment of £400 fee. Ticket price £12 to include light buffet c/o SOS, max 80 capacity (excl SOS). **Action** – Michelle to confirm date with Danielle and Fred to make payment. Update – booked for Fri 28th Feb, payment made by BACS 31st Dec. **Action** – Michelle to email SOS members to confirm interest in attending.

Joint Stock Ceilidh Band - Action – Michelle to contact Update – band booked for Sat 18 April (Easter) fee £350 payable in cash on the night.

Race Night - Fri 13th March in place of the monthly quiz. Discussion around selling tickets in advance and a food offering. Details to be finalised further at later meetings.

VE Day celebration - Idea - an indoor street party theme. Details to be discussed further at a later meeting. **Action** – Anth to approach classic car contacts.

Update – Hazel has marked following events - Danielle, Race Night and Ceilidh - in the calendar.

Other Meetings attended

S&DR – Sue attended on 05/12. An important US contingent is arriving in Darlington in May. **Action** – Sue to approach Trish Pemberton to ask if Stute could host one of the meetings. Next S&DR meeting is 1st Feb.

SHA Director Update

Dene has agreed to step up in addition to Lisa volunteering at an earlier meeting. Discussion around taking care that 2 of our Directors are married. Sam pointed out some funding bodies do not allow Directors to be related. SOS group took a vote and all agreed with appointment of Dene with Lisa.

PR matters

Colin brought up the Mike Amos article in The NE. His view that the article was disappointing because it included a negative element was backed up by most of the group. Discussion around quotes that Mike chose to use and why. All agreed with importance of projecting positively at all times despite what may be spoken about in private. Sam suggested a 'press@' email address to be set up to deal with any press queries. Recognition from the whole group that this is an issue we will be dealing with more often in the future so further thought/ discussion will be necessary.

SOS Youth Section

Ideas for 11-17 age range – Hollie suggested a lounge social night with music – Bluetooth/ Spotify?

Silent Disco - **Action** – Alicia to look into Providers/ costs etc.

Action – to look into WI-FI availability – SOS to ask committee.

Sam suggested approaching Shildon Alive to conduct further research at the youth club.

Action – Lisa to talk to Paula Nelson. Maybe an opportunity to host some SA youth club events at the Stute and/ or elicit help of local youth worker(s).

AOB

Fred – urgent need for a formal agreement between SOS/ SHA and committee for mutual protection around funding etc. **Action** – SOS directors to speak at the Sun morning meeting 5th Jan (to get together before then to establish approach).

SHA to start formalising relationship by setting our own rules. Discussion around legalities of SHA/ SOS.

Lisa suggested the new year brings an opportunity to expand SOS group and recruit more members – people willing to muck in and volunteer at events etc. **Action** – Michelle to call out on Facebook on the next SOS meeting event (15th Jan).

Colin raised a concern about reserving seating at events in that it may not be viewed favourably by paying guests but conceded that we need to do look after each other as volunteers and ensure we are able to sit down.

Fred agreed to chair the next meeting on Wed 15th Jan with Lisa taking minutes.

Fred confirmed early in the meeting that he had sent a card to the old lady who was made to stand in the cold for a late taxi by a Stute staff member after Share The Darkness. He was thanked by the group.