

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE 14-25 FINANCE AND SUPPORT GROUP
held on Tuesday 9 November 2016 at 7.30 pm at District Headquarters

PRESENT: David Bateman (Chairman) Tony Andrews (District Chairman, Chairman Finance sub-Committee and Acting Secretary), Harriet Butterfield (District Network Commissioner), Craig Dewar (District Commissioner) and Tracy Seton (District Explorer Scout Administrator)

APOLOGIES: Scott Cameron (District Explorer Scout Commissioner)

	Action
<p>1. Minutes of a Previous Meeting / Matters Arising: The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2016 were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>2. Matters Arising:</p>	
<p>a. Committee Membership: Members provided an update in relation to the discussions at the last meeting (Minute 3):</p>	
<p>(1) Secretary: The DC had contacted a potential volunteer and was awaiting a further response (following some initial discussions).</p>	CD
<p>(2) Two Explorer Scouts: No progress had been made but there may be potential volunteers (in conjunction with an Explorer Scout Leader - see (5) below).</p>	SC
<p>(3) Two Network Members: No progress to date.</p>	CD/HB
<p>(4) Parent of an Explorer Scout / Young Leader: The District Explorer Scout Administrator had attempted to contact identified the parent, without success; it was not certain if the son was still an Explorer Scout.</p>	TS
<p>(5) Explorer Scout Leader: The Explorer Scout Leader identified at the last meeting had been approached and had agreed to join the Group.</p>	HB
<p>b. Review of Terms of Reference: The following updates to Minute 4 was noted:</p>	
<p>(1) Financial Management of Unit Funds: It was considered that if Online Scout Management (OSM) is to be adopted for use (see Item 3) then this should enable significant progress to be made. New guideless to assist Units may be needed; it had not been possible to locate a copy of the existing notes (prepared some years ago).</p>	TS
<p>(2) Equipment: It had been identified that OSM could be used to track equipment.</p>	TS
<p>(3) Financial Support for Leader Training: Provision had been made in the bid for funds to be included in the District Budget.</p>	
<p>(4) Financial Support for Leader Activity Training: Provision had been made in the bid for funds to be included in the District Budget.</p>	
<p>c. Gift Aid Registration: The District Explorer Scout Administrator reported that she continues to progress matters in relation to claiming Gift Aid (see Minute 6). The registration had been completed; she was currently working to gain the necessary access to the Government Portal (to make claims). She was considering making applications at regular intervals, as the necessary information becomes available from Units (rather than simply making one claim in each Tax Year).</p>	

3. Online Scout Manager

The District Explorer Scout Administrator had been using a trial version of OSM and stated that she was impressed with what she had seen and the functionality available. The opportunity was taken to show members [of the Group] some of the features [available within the trial version].

There are four options available (at various costs). Members considered the features contained within each option and believed that **Gold+** provided all the necessary functionality which could be used to resolve some of the problems/difficulties experienced (including communication with parents - who could be given a log-on to view specific pages (without any data protection issues)). It had been identified that it is possible to collect subscriptions by Direct Debit using an external agent, known to be reliable (at a fee of just over 3%). Both the District Explorer Scout Commissioner and the District Explorer Scout Administrator could be set-up to be able to log-on and view all records for each Unit. The DC reported on his recent discussions with approximately one thirds of the GSLs within the District and that all these Groups were successfully using a version of OSM.

It was agreed that the use of OSM would be beneficial to all Explorer Scout Units and that the support to purchase these should be from District Funds. It was agreed to recommend to the Finance sub-Committee that provision be made in this year's budget to purchase 10 licences of the **Gold+** version (at a cost of £43 each and thus a total of £430). This number proposed takes into account existing units, those to be opened in the near future plus one for Young Leaders. In addition, there would be an annual on-going cost of (currently) £430 - to be included in next year's and subsequent budgets. Members supported the early purchase of the licences, so that the systems could be set-up prior to the start of 2017 (and the start of the new Financial Year).

4. Financial Matters:

The District Explorer Scout Administrator provided an update on the work-in-hand since the previous meeting (see Minute 5). There was little to add to the previous reports except to note that difficulties were being encountered in changing the signatory for one bank account and recovering the funds from a closed account

To take matters forward:

a. Illustrious Explorer Scout Unit: It was agreed that the name of Paul Croker be removed as an authorised signatory for the account with NatWest Bank in the name of Illustrious Explorer Scout Unit and that Craig Dewar be substituted and that the two authorised signatories (Craig Dewar and Tracy Seton) both be required to sign all cheques.

TA

b. On-Line Banking for Explorer Scout Units: It was agreed to move towards on-line banking for all Explorer Scout Units and that these accounts be opened with Barclays Bank. The District Explorer Scout Administrator is authorised to open these accounts and that two persons be required to authorise all on-line transactions or sign cheques (in accordance with the requirements contained within POR of The Scout Association).

TA

5. Review of Priorities:

The following updates to Minute 8 [of the previous meeting] were noted:

a. Process Diagram for Funding for Training: Work is in hand to prepare this (but some information is awaited).

CD

b. Standardised Accounting for Explorer Scout Units: This would be taken forward following the recommendation to use OSM.

TS

c. Standardised Record Keeping for Explorer Scout Units: This would be taken forward following the recommendation to use OSM.

TS

d. Process Diagram for Expenditure form (Restricted) Explorer Scout Fund: The District Chairman volunteered to prepare a financial management document; members of the Group briefed him on various matters to enable him to take this matter forward.

TA

6. Any Other Business:

Two items of any other business were identified:

a. Silverhelme Explorer Scout Unit: It was noted that there had been debate in relation to the level of the contribution to be made by Silverhelme Explorer Scout Unit for the use of the indoor accommodation at Silverhelme Activity Centre. A suggested sum of £500 (made by the Activity Centres Management Board) had been rejected on behalf of the Unit. Members of the Group acknowledged that that as Explorer Scout Units were a District responsibility then any further discussions are to be with the 14-25 Finance and Support Group (and not with the Unit direct). It was agreed, by the Group, that £150 per annum would be a fair and reasonable contribution (which would be in line with the sums paid by other Units within the District). If this sum was not acceptable to the Activity Centres Management Board then the matters was to be referred to the District Executive for a definitive decision.

b. Finance (District Funds): The following were noted or agreed as recommendations:

(1) Financial Year 2016:

(a) Noted that the DC and District Chairman had agreed Start-Up Grants of £100 each for:

i. Eric's Explorer Scout Unit (essentially a new Unit, after the previous one, of the same name, closed).

ii. Bolton-le-Sands Explorer Scout Unit (due to open 11 November 2016).

(b) OSM for Explorer Scout Units: To request £430 to enable the purchase of 10 Gold+ licences for OSM this year (to set-up for 1 January 2017).

(2) Financial Year 2017 Budget:

(a) Explorer Scout Leader Training (including that for adventurous activities): £500.

(b) OSM for Explorer Scout Units (annual licence fee): £430.

(c) Network Neckers and Name Tapes: £100.

(d) Network Recruitment Materials; £100.

7. Date of Next Meeting: The date of the next meeting of the Group had previously been agreed as Wednesday 8 February 2017 (at District Headquarters, commencing at 7.30 pm).

All