

Objectives and Activities

The Purpose of Scouting

Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

The Values of Scouting

As Scouts we are guided by these values:

Integrity – We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.

Respect – We have self-respect and respect for others.

Care – We support others and take care of the world in which we live.

Belief – We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.

Co-operation – We make a positive difference; we co-operate with others and make friends.

The Scout Method

Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of Scouting and:

- enjoy what they are doing and have fun
- take part in activities indoors and outdoors
- learn by doing
- share in spiritual reflection
- take responsibility and make choices
- undertake new and challenging activities
- make and live by their Promise

Financial Review

The Group's policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the group should income and fundraising activities fall short. The Group Executive Committee considers that the group should hold a sum equivalent to 12 months running costs, designating £2400 to this purpose. This was reviewed in full in October 2022 and annually thereafter. The 2021 accounting period set the designated reserves fund at £4000. This was to include the reserves fund as set above with an additional 2 months' worth of loan repayment cover in addition to a sum for unexpected repair of the Group minibuses.

“At the end of the 2022 financial year, the Group held £11,692 cash with unallocated reserves of £5022 held in the Group’s current account against this at year end.”

This is above the level required for operating expenses. However this can be explained by:

- cash held for operating costs due early in the next financial year
- the Committee’s continued rolling programme of maintenance of the Shepway Close Centre
- to fully fund the Group’s ambitious 2018-2023 growth and development plan.

Investment Policy

The Group’s Income and Expenditure is relatively small and as a consequence does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer-term investments such as stocks and shares. The Group has therefore adopted a low risk strategy to the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks or building societies or The Scout Association’s Short Term Investment Service.

The Group Executive regularly monitors the levels of bank balances and the interest rates received to ensure the group obtains maximum value and income from its banking arrangements. Occasionally this may involve using an account that requires a period of notice before funds may be withdrawn, before doing so the Group Executive considers the cash flow requirements. The annual budget setting process takes this into consideration.

Public benefit statement

The Group meets the Charity Commission’s public benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings.

Group Chair’s Statement

The Trustee Board have been fully committed in supporting the Group leadership team develop the Skills for Life growth and development plan laying out the roadmap for the future of our Group and Scouting locally and supporting the volunteer section teams in trying to bring down our waiting lists. The problem seems to be a difficult one to solve – the more we improve our programmes, resources and centre, the more people want to join us! We’ve supported the attempt to open a new section for Beavers, however this was not successful due to no adult being willing to volunteer to help run it. We will try again, but this year’s attempt has sadly not led to the positive outcome we were aiming for.

The Trustees have also considered the budget moving forward and with the continues cost of living crisis, we can no longer keep subs at the current level. Craig and I have set this out in the letter send to all parents last month and we hope you will understand and agree with us. We will not compromise the quality of our programme, having worked so hard to get it to where it us. In our cost cutting efforts, we have removed some of the external services we were buying into, such as cleaning, and are now doing this in house using our existing volunteers who once again have stepped up to the plate to take this on. Thank you to them and of course, any one wishing to volunteer is very welcome. Without action, our predictions were a deficit of £10,000 in our finances by 2025 and obviously, we cannot manage this or put the group at risk. As written in the letter, we do not want finances to be a barrier to Scouting, so encourage anyone with financial difficulties caused by this increase to speak to us so we can help – we have the Penticost fund to call upon!

As always, I'd like to thank my fellow trustees for their continued support and enthusiasm in the stewardship of the Group and of course, our thanks to Craig, Alistair and the leadership team for their hard work and dedication in giving our young people the opportunity to learn skills for life.