

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

24 Nov 2021 19:00-21:00

Via a ZOOM online meeting

APPROVED MINUTES

Number of votes: 34 present and 5 proxy votes = 39 votes in total.

The meeting opened at 19:00.

Helen Valentine, President of APEEEL1, welcomed everyone to the APEEEL1 Annual General Meeting, including Mr Wedel, the school director.

Adoption of the agenda

No amendments were proposed to the agenda. The agenda was adopted unanimously.

Approval of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting & Extraordinary General Meeting both held on 25 November 2020

No proposals for amendments. The minutes for both the Annual General Meeting & Extraordinary General Meeting were approved.

Election of Tellers

The tellers count the votes at the Annual General Meeting and are used also in case of an election for the management committee. This ensures transparency for any voting.

Janette Brandon & Annette Mai proposed to become tellers.

This was put to a vote. There were no abstentions, nobody against.

Janette & Annette were elected as tellers.

Presentation and approval of the annual report 2020-21

Highlights from last year from John Coughlan, President of APEEEL1 2020-21. Read by Helen Valentine.

The biggest topic was that it was second academic year of the pandemic. The school community really adapted to the changes to measures and were also able to quickly react to new measures introduced in rapidly changing circumstances.

Other than the priorities arising as a result of the pandemic, the key missions for APEEEL1 were to represent parents' interests; supporting individual parents who needed our support and thirdly to contribute to a positive and healthy school community spirit.

Representing the whole parent body is one of our core responsibilities. Over the course of last year we made a special effort to consult & coordinate our positions with pupil and teachers representatives to ensure that we took into account the whole school community before deciding what our position was.

The pandemic affected so many different areas of school life, from distance learning policy to Health and Safety standards. APEEEL1 created a Covid task force to coordinate our response and to share information.

We worked closely with APEEEL2 (European school Mamer) to create a united front at the European School Luxembourg Steering group. This steering group is where the management and stakeholder representatives of the 2 European schools, together with the Secretary General and the Luxembourg authorities meet. The main issue of this forum was the employment conditions for locally recruited teachers, who have been easier to recruit since the attractiveness package was approved in 2019; but are often all too soon lost to the foreign language programmes in the Luxembourgish schools.

Representation of the parents interests system wide is also critical, and the members of the management committee were very active in the numerous working groups and task forces of the Interparents network. It was also important to monitor the implementation of the new marking system and the conduct of the BAC, following the major concerns of the previous year to the surprising adjustments of the final BAC results.

There was also a surprise approach from Central office informing APEEEL1 that that we would need to take over the management of the school canteen. APEEEL1 challenged this premiss and the proposal was eventually withdrawn following a concerted action across various European Schools.

There was also a second potential security concern relating to an individual pupil. The APEEEL1 management Committee leadership worked directly with the School Management and class reps directly concerned, as well as external experts to provide a voice for the parents concerned on a very sensitive case. This was one way that APEEEL1 fulfilled its second mission to support parents. We can also support parents financially.

One of the growing concern for certain parents is the need to supply IT equipment for pupils (BYOD Bring your Own Device). We relaunched the pilot project to purchase IT devices at advantageous conditions. The pilot was ultimately not successful and we have since discontinued the project. We lobbied the heads of European Institutions Luxembourg to provide financial support for parents who need to purchase IT devices. We have also repurposed our own Social Fund, which traditionally provided financial help towards school trips, but now also helps with purchases for IT equipment.

We also help families by organising Extra-curricular activities. The pandemic restrictions made the organisation of these activities particularly complicated; but our team rose to the challenge and demand for the activities remained strong.

We did our best to keep our parents informed through regular Newsletters, meetings with Class reps (Pri & Sec) and occasional Lunchtime sessions with subjects of particular interest to the parent community.

Sadly it was not possible to run the school fete for the second year running. Our approach to the contribution to the life of the school community was much more practical as a result. We looked to ensure that the school and ourselves contributed to reducing our impact on the environment. One member of APEEEL1 conducted a scope 3 carbon emissions report for APEEEL1, revealing ways that we ourselves can make changes: every little helps.

We also conducted some internal changes within APEEEL1 to make it more efficient: we are a volunteer organisation and need professional support to keep the organisation going. Following on from the amendment of statutes, we decide to appoint a Secretary General from among the current staff with more autonomy to make decisions, incur expenses and represent the Association.

We also revamped the internal rules of procedure embedding good practice for future committees.

The annual report goes into the activities of the individual Working groups.

n.b. Canteen report to be withdrawn from the activity report whilst we clarify the accuracy of the report.

There were no questions. The report was approved.

[Presentation and approval of the audited accounts 2020-21](#)

Audit presented by Tania Kohn, auditor.

Pages 1 & 2 are the summaries procedures that are completed.

The opening balances of 2020-21 agrees with the closing balance of the previous year; there were no discrepancies between bank balances and bank statements. A large sample of income (98.75% covered) and expenses (16.42% -not payroll) were selected and they agree to invoices, bank statements, expense reports etc. They were also checked to ensure that they relate to the correct year, accurately recorded, in the name of the ASBL, and allocated to the appropriate caption in the income statement.

Payroll is a big part of the expenses. The expense costs tie in with the salary slips calculated by payroll providers, monthly tax declarations and yearend tax administration (sample size nearly 73%).

Tania Kohn also confirmed that she reviewed the Board Minutes and Management Committee minutes to see if there are any financial decisions that need to be taken into account in the annual accounts. This ensures that all of the decisions tie in with the figures on the accounting measures.

She also looked at the expenses (sample) and checked that the approval of the payment has been made in accordance to the rules of the Management Committee.

There were no questions.

Accounts presented by Eric Albert, APEEEL1 treasurer.

Budget vs Actuals the annual report has this information.

What we expected to see at the beginning of the year was a situation where we were only just out of the pandemic. We made some assumptions knowing that some parents were concerned about how the pandemic would affect the activities. Some assumptions were correct, others were not.

We expected a small loss and ended up with a small profit: 5K€.

The assumption for membership fees income was that it would reduce by 10%, this actually remained stable for 56K€ to 57k€.

Income for school fete – we expected to be able to run the school fete, this did not happen but profit was at zero as we did not expect any profit.

Periscolaire activities, including summer camp. We made an assumption that group activities would decrease by 15% (as these are most impacted by the pandemic). In the end we had more inscriptions than expected. This was also because we could run the summer camp, which was not taken for granted at the beginning of the year. This year's income of 488K€ is way above the approx. income 450K€ last year, however we have a way to go to get to the pre-pandemic level of approx. 500k€ income.

CAS approved the subsidy which was higher than previous years in order to support the secretariat.

The total income was just less than 600K€.

Salaries is the main component of the expenses. We went from 175K€ to nearly 200K€, partly explained by the new role of the Secretary General.

Periscolaire expenses approx. 345k€. The increases was driven by three factors. Summer camp expenses increased in line with income; hygiene for the activities and 'accompagnement' of the pupils to the activities. This was the second year that parents were not allowed to enter the building and monitors had to take on this activity.

This year we took a measure as we knew that people might be reluctant to commit for a full year due to covid: the inscriptions were done in three periods. This was to reassure parents that they would not be stuck with the activity for the full year if they could not attend and it allowed us to be more flexible for refunds.

Other charges are bank charges for credit card payments on periscolaire activities.

The office administration cost is payroll, audit costs etc.

Eric Albert asked if there were any questions.

Structure of income from periscolaire. Do we have it structured to have zero profit for each activity ?

We do not have a fixed structure per activity. We tend to look at activities globally year by year and go by experience and see what result is generated by the general activity to see if it is still sustainable in the years to come. If not, then we make a collective decision to see if we increase or maintain the prices.

The credit card fees sounds like a lot- is this just credit card fees ?

It's the Visa/Mastercard charges for paying by credit cards for the inscriptions, at the approx. rate of 2.2%.

Have APEEEL1 explored the possibility of Payconniq etc as the fees are lower ?

Yes and we are investigating in other contexts too. This method is very important and clear to us to ensure that we can see who has paid and reserved the activities accurately.

The audited accounts 2020-21 were put to approval.

The accounts were approved.

Presentation and approval of the budget for 2021-22

Presented by Eric Albert, APEEEL1 Treasurer.

The budget has the same format as the previous year. The membership fees are in line with the actual memberships received..

The School fete has taken as a neutral event ie no profit or loss.

Periscolaire activities & summer camp have been factored in, based on what we had in the previous year. Group and private activities are based on actual figures that we have at the moment.

The CAS subsidy remains the same as last year.

This year will be a transition year in terms of expenditure because we wish to make some investment for the future.

Staff salaries to remain the same as last year.

Periscolaire expenses inline with the activities run.

Guard cost is a fixed cost as part of the convention with the school.

Social fund is always 10k€, experience shows us that it has not been spent in the previous years and we need to spread the word that this is available. The social fund documents have been reviewed and treated with the highest confidentiality.

Photocopy printing and IT costs are higher as we want to invest in a new website in the future (35k€).

Eric Asked if there were any questions.

For the salaries why don't we assume an indexation increase ?

We took the same salaries as the previous year. Indeed there might be a slight difference but the indexation was not approved when the budget was created.

There was a question on why the salaries are not broken down individually?

Actual employee salaries are not disclosed as we only have 4 employees and we do not want them to be easily identifiable. What we do instead is add the percentage to show the distribution of funds according to tasks ie 42% for the secretariat. Secretariat can work on periscolaire activities for example.

The budget for 2021-22 was put to approval.

The budget for 2021-22 was approved.

Appointment of the auditor for the 2021-22 administrative year

Tania Kohn has been working with us for approx. 4 to 5 years and the proposal is remain with the same auditor.

It was questioned how long APEEEL1 should stay with one auditor.

Eric confirmed that we have no policy on the length of time we can work with the auditor. Large companies usually change every 5 to 6 years but there is no real need to do this for our Association. The auditor is completely independent and there are no conflicts of interest.

The appointment of Tania Kohn as auditor for the 2021-22 administrative year was put to the vote.

It was agreed that Tania Kohn would continue to be the APEEEL1 auditor.

Approval of the annual membership fee

The proposal is remain at the level of 50€, until we can make it easier for our members to be able to change the fee amounts. This is because members mostly pay by standing order and it is very laborious for parents and APEEEL1 to change the fee amounts. The last change was 2012 so it will be envisaged to change soon.

The proposal to remain at 50€ for the annual Membership fee was put to a vote. This was approved.

Motions for debate.

Motion 1: Safety around school premises.

Raised by Christophe Grosnickel.

I see in the last Q&A that I received, the last point (39) relates to that topic, and is answered quite laconically, saying that the school has no staff to allocate to the safety on the street. I find this quite irresponsible, as we are speaking of the safety of our kids, so literally life and death question. When I see cars rushing at the traffic light located at the end of the "kiss and go" lane, because that traffic light is desperately short, I think that the worst could happen, and we are lucky that nothing serious happened so far.

I keep saying that, even in small villages in France, there is at least one person with a flashy yellow jacket, helping kids cross the streets. I don't care if this person is a volunteer, paid by a private parents association or by the municipality. The point is to have a safe path for our kids. I cannot understand why, for so many years, the school did not come to an agreement with local authorities or with parents to find a solution. I am convinced that this lack of safety sometimes discourages parents from letting their children walk to school on their own.

Christophe Grosnickel confirmed that he is concerned for the safety of our pupils around the school. He knows that APEEEL1 have been working on several initiatives and have been in

touch with the authorities. His concerns are that this will take too long and he wants to find quick solutions.

Helen confirmed that the question on what happens on the perimeter of the school is complicated and difficult, with many different parties involved. The Transport working group works tirelessly on raising the issue time and time again. We have found out how ISL manages their drop off area and we will present this to the school management of our school.

Daniel Latev, head of the Transport Working group, confirmed that because our school is a quasi-international school, there are a lot of organisations involved but nobody is claiming responsibility for the surrounds of the school. We have taken a lot of steps to engage with Fonds Kirchberg, Ville de Luxembourg, The Ministry for Education, The Ministry for Transport and the police. Only the Fonds Kirchberg responded and they are open to have a conversation with us. We have chased up Ville de Luxembourg again.

One parent suggested hiring a private company and finding a way to finance it by ourselves.

The school director, Mr Wedel, confirmed that it is our common interest to have a safe environment around the school. The school's responsibility is on the premises and not beyond and it makes it complicated for the school to intervene. The school is in regular contact with the police and competent authorities to improve the situation. Some authorities react well, such as Fond Kirchberg. We have made improvements around the bus gate and the cycle lanes. The situation is not ideal and we agree that the proposal to have volunteers or private companies would be very much welcomed by the school. This should be an initiative of the Parents' Association to improve. The school has no staff to use nor has the right to regulate the traffic around the school.

The school has pointed out several times to the authorities that the lights are too short on the Kiss & Go.

APEEEL1 are investigating how the CPE works as they use guards to help pupils cross the roads. APEEEL1 are also looking at other points such as the fact that there is only 15 mins to drop off at the school, causing a bottle neck.

Christophe accepted to join the Transport Working Group as we are all volunteers and doing a lot of work. The group continues to research and find solutions for the vast subject.

Motion 2: Limit the unhealthy food choices inside the school. Stop selling sugar-sweetened drinks and chocolate bars.

Raised by Raquel FERNANDEZ PEREZ

See relevant links below:

WHO calls on countries to reduce sugars intake among adults and children

[WHO calls on countries to reduce sugars intake among adults and children](#)

Reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages to reduce the risk of childhood overweight and obesity:

[WHO | Reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages to reduce the risk of childhood overweight and obesity](#)

Healthy kids 'sweet enough' without added sugars

[Healthy kids 'sweet enough' without added sugars | The Nutrition Source | Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health](#)

Raquel proposed to limit the unhealthy food choices that our pupils have in the school ie that pupils in S1 cannot buy 4 chocolate bars in one go. In particular stopping selling sugary drinks and chocolate bars as this is not good for their dental health and wellbeing, in particular in Secondary.

Francesca Flego, head of the canteen Working Group, introduced the background to the canteen. Every decision regarding the canteen is taken at the Canteen Committee, formed of parents, pupils & teachers of all cycles and the school administration. The Canteen call for Tender in 2018 was revolutionary & quite different from previous years: ie. one fully organic meal first Monday of the month, more organic items in the meals, reduced fat, limited oils, reduced cake offerings and only homemade ones (less sugar and fat), removed Coke and sugary drinks from the vending machines. It took time for everyone to get used to the new measures. Today, cake, for Primary pupils, is served every 4 weeks. Dessert is normally fruit or yogurt. For Secondary pupils, they introduced homemade cakes and removed cream from desserts, replacing it with yogurt.

During covid, the canteen had to serve individually wrapped cakes, so reverted back temporarily to buying industrial cakes (Following National rules).

In general we are trying to reduce sugar, and for any complaints we are asking parents to provide concrete examples ie date, school year of the pupils and the issue that they had. Sodexo is willing to change, they are having to adapt and be flexible due to the different feedback from parents (varying opinions). Parents are welcome to join the canteen committee or even visit the canteen.

Raquel's main issue is branded chocolate bars and how much sugar they have. Younger Secondary pupils can buy these at school and then parents need to explain to pupils not to buy 3 or 4 of these. If pupils can't buy them at school we are sending them the right message.

Francesca confirmed that as part of the call for tender we removed sugary drinks, this then created a situation where pupils jumped the wall and bought drinks to sell at the school themselves. Today most of the vending machines that sell these products are in the teachers rooms. There are 2 only vending machines in the canteen. The pupils' committee is part of the canteen committee and they have to have their say. We are trying to gradually reduce the amount of sugar available. 3 years ago we held a survey for secondary pupils. As a result, we changed one of the vending machines to only sell sandwiches, fruit, rice cakes and dried fruit. It did not sell. We will try again and are asking for pupil feedback on what healthy products we can sell that will interest them. Unfortunately healthy snacks are a little

more expensive than unhealthy snacks. We do have a Luxlait vending machine at the school. No energy drinks are being officially sold on school premises.

It was questioned how many snacks are sold from the vending machines ? ie is this a big issue ?

Francesca confirmed that we do not have the exact statistics as it would include the teacher purchases. Chocolate can also be purchased at the tills in the canteen. We will try and get the statistics from Sodexo.

It was questioned whether free milk and fruit are still being distributed in Primary and Secondary.

Francesca replied that in the last canteen committee, Secondary have confirmed that they are distributing these items and Primary will start distributing again.

We are always looking for help and ideas from our parents in order to improve the canteen services.

Helen thanked everyone for their participation.

Helen also reminded parents that we are always looking for help for all of the Working groups.

[Any other relevant business](#)

Mr Wedel thanked the Parents' Association for their commitment to all of the Working Groups and the appreciate the constructive dialogue in the best interest of the pupils.

The ongoing issue of Covid was raised by one parent. The numbers are rising and we are concerned about the Christmas holidays. Can the school consider home-schooling the week before the holidays and the week afterwards and consistent mask wearing?

Helen confirmed that APEEEL1 also has feedback from parents that the permissions forms for secondary testing are too complex and if the process was simplified it would result in more pupils testing. Not all parents would support home-schooling around the Christmas holidays. There is a need to prioritise the pupils studying for their PreBACs.

Mr Wedel confirmed that the school is monitoring the situation on a permanent basis. The school are transparent and publish the figures on the website. There was a significant increase in primary after the half term. The school reacts quickly to the numbers and introduce the relevant measures accordingly.

Regarding home-schooling, it would not be unanimously supported by parents, but Mr Wedel confirmed that the school would analyse the situation. Mask wearing is a measure that could be applied but would need to be discussed.

For testing the school really tried to encourage parents, through communication, to sign the consent form. But as its voluntary the school are aware that the numbers are not high

enough. The school have simplified the procedure and the form will now be valid for the full year. This is of great focus to the school.

Irina Lilyanova, head of the Health & Safety Working group, thanked Mr Wedel for changing the consent form and hopes that it makes a difference. She confirmed that one motivator for testing would be the possibility to have a Covid Certificate to be able to use for extra-curricular activities for secondary pupils, as they can get in the Luxembourg schools.

Helen closed the meeting by thanking the Management Committee team, who have more work that they can deal with but who have been collaborating and working together to share information and working tirelessly to make a difference.

Helen also thanked Mr Wedel and the school management team for their cooperation. APEEEL1 are able to bring key issues to their attention and always try to progress issues that improve the lives of our school community.

Meeting closed 21:05