

Thu 16/07/2020 17:33

Dear Colleagues,

Staff meeting and ongoing work

During my Zoom meeting with staff on Tuesday afternoon, I talked through our plan to secure a strong future for the FSC. I explained that in the absence of customers, we must borrow to survive and convince potential funders that we can pay them back. This is the proposal approved by the Board of Trustees in early July. If you would like to see the recording of this Zoom call, please [click here](#) where you can also catch up on previous meetings.

I also talked about the next steps for consulting on this proposal, for which many of us would like to commence steps as soon as possible. Since early July, work has progressed rapidly - as it must if we are to survive. I am now leading a broad based team who are making excellent progress on the underpinning work for the proposals which will enable us all to make decisions about our future. These preparatory proposal documents will be ready for us to discuss during August. I assure you that all relevant questions will be answered and ideas discussed.

Each evening, when I reflect on how far we have come in the last year – and in the last three months – I have great confidence in what else we will achieve. I believe FSC's mission is more relevant than ever as environmental education takes centre stage, and how we respond this year will payback for years to come as we deliver products and services that matter to people and planet. We are the guardians of FSC for the future generations.

Thank you for your understanding and patience. I'll update on progress next week. We will of course let you know the times of dates of future meetings, including by SMS text reminder.

Welcome Back Monday Meetings

These zoom meetings are to help staff coming back from furlough to find their feet. A lot has changed and these friendly gatherings are to help you navigate the issues and update you on some of the vital health and safety information that you need to know. You will hear from members of the Operational Planning Team about what's been going on and from staff who have recently themselves returned from furlough and are happy to admit that they found it all a bit strange. You are not alone. If it's your first week back, whether you have recently returned or even if you would just like to understand more about bubbles and parcels please join in. The dates and [joining details](#) are uploaded onto the Intranet and the next meeting is at 11.00 on Monday 20th. For more information do visit the [Staff Wellbeing, Returning to Work, and Working from Home page](#). It has a wealth of information and is regularly updated with new material

Working reduced and flexible furlough hours

With more staff returning, many of you are back on reduced hours or as and when needed. The flexibility of the furlough scheme has helped to get vital work done including being able to welcome Stay with Us customers, but still protect our cash flow. For staff, I do realise that it can bring stresses of its own. I know that many of you are seeing things that need doing or have piled up or grown in your absence and you desperately want to sort them, but you just have not got the hours to do so. The admin teams have felt much the same about not being able to get back to customers as quickly as usual. I will just reiterate what I said to them: do not beat yourselves up. I know you are all doing

your best under difficult circumstances and that we should remember that most of the people and organisations that we deal with face the same issues. We still receive some really kind and understanding feedback from our customers.

Publications News

Sales continue to go really well and with the support of Mary in marketing, FSC doubled web sales in June when we sold over £40k worth of publications. Suzanne and Juliet have been very busy processing over 1,350 orders - over 10,000 items - sent out to help people find out more about their local wildlife. Look out for us on twitter and share your wildlife photos on #fscfinds.

New letterheads to reflect our new chair

Please use these new letterheads. I know it's easy to get into the habit of cutting and pasting from previous correspondence but here is the general [Head Office letterhead](#) and [updated letterheads for all of the centres, Biolinks and publications](#). If you click on the link, you see a blank document. It needs to be downloaded onto the desktop app to show the header and footer by clicking the 'Open in Desktop App' blue box in the top right hand corner.

Next week I hope to report on the number of Stay with Us bookings – boosted by the recent coverage in the Guardian – but please do keep sharing links, liking pages and getting the news out via your own networks.

Best wishes and stay safe

Mark