

Thu 13/10/2022 09:21

Dear Colleagues,

This week's catch up is earlier than usual as we have a Board of Trustees Meeting this morning. No doubt in the margins we will be discussing the latest economic dramas. Apart from April 1st, the worst possible date on which to make an "fiscal announcement" has surely got to be 31st October. Headline writers are already doing the Halloween jokes.

Staff Reps

A couple of weeks ago I appealed for staff reps for three of our committees. We've asked those who currently do the job about their many reasons for doing so. These may encourage you to give it a go.

- Di Warren became a rep *"because I wanted to understand more about what was happening 'behind the scenes' – call me nosey or naturally curious. I also felt it was important due to my role that I understood what was happening with the Finance & Admin"* Getting to meet others, including working with trustees was also highlighted by reps as a good reason to do the role.
- Being involved beyond your usual job is a key plus. Jennie Comerford said that for her *"taking part in some of the governance of FSC helps me to see the bigger picture. Often our day to day work just shows one corner within the whole jigsaw of FSC. Committee works shows a much wider view point of the organisation and helps to explain why certain information is needed, why some decisions are made."* Chloe Toorneini agreed. *"Being a staff rep means I am involved not just at centre, or education team level, but at SLT and Trustee level."*
- The role involves reading the committee papers, attending the meeting and sharing any staff concerns or opinions that have been brought to your attention, being a point of contact if any member of staff has questions arising from minutes. Chloe added that *"you are playing a really important role. Connection between strategic level planning and what is going on day-to-day in centres is vital...having engaged staff representatives on the various committees is a crucial part of this."* If you are at all interested please do contact Mark Baker m.baker@field-studies-council.org. As Jennie puts it *"If you intend spending some time with FSC then a few years as a staff rep will really help you understand it better."*

Kit Malthouse – Give Us a Clue

Little has been forthcoming about education from Liz Truss' government. I had hoped that this episode of [Political Thinking](#) with England's new Secretary of State might shed some light, but education policy doesn't get discussed until 23 minutes in. What little is said didn't exactly fill me with confidence but as one of my kinder school reports said "there remains room for improvement". The most useful part of the radio programme I thought was Nick Robinson's analysis at the very end.

Grants for Schools

Even before the most recent economic turmoil, our marketing focus this autumn was planned to cover the help and support we can provide for schools, parents and learners. Our [Grants for Schools](#) programme makes applying for help both easy and, as part of a long term, plan rather than a one off event. We have secured a free feature article due out in Education Business and mainstream education websites such as [Education Today](#) and [School Travel Organiser](#) have also picked up on the news. Philip also gave a typically upbeat Radio Interview which you can hear [via this link](#).

Applications close on 24th October and lots have come in already which shows not only the need for the scheme, but that schools continue to value what outdoor learning can offer.

Geographical Kerfuffle

Our charity is full of staff who understand the importance of maps and sense of place. Constituency boundaries in England have been under review for years, trying to ensure that the number of electors in each one are roughly equal. The people in charge are canny enough to know that sense of place and local loyalties must not be downplayed. Early ideas to have a constituency on both sides of the River Tamar for example were never going to be popular bearing in mind that those who live on either bank can't agree about whether it's cream or jam first on a scone. Whatever happens, not everyone will be happy when the latest ideas get revealed next month. We will know then about any plans for our own centre constituencies but some prominent MPs are likely to end up in less secure seats, or find that when the music stops they have no seat at all. Turkeys and Christmas come to mind.

Welcome to Field Studies Council:

Rachael Kennedy who is starting at Millport as a Seasonal Tutor
Hospitality and Catering Assistants Emily Farrell who is returning to Rhyd-y-creuau, and Linda Moores who is joining Castle Head.

Stay safe and keep well

Mark