

Thu 15/12/2022 13:53

Dear Colleagues,

Last week our Chair, Professor Pete Higgins, announced the decision by the Board of Trustees to repay the outstanding amount of just over £1.9M on the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS), this was completed today. He also gave details of our annual pay award for next year. Both of these are significant milestones.

As we emerge from the pandemic, being able to shake off the last vestiges of it in the form of the CBILS loan marks a significant achievement, not only does it show that we are no longer reliant upon the loan, but it also gives a sense of our confidence in the future. The same can be said about the pay award. In 2018, we began a significant cost savings exercise which led, effectively, to a pay freeze for some years.

We now believe that we are in a position to not only comply with our 2017 pay policy, but also to revise it upwards to reflect where we believe we should sit in relation to our competitors and where we should invest regarding you, our staff team. We are here because of the loyalty of our customers to our products and to you. Consistently, in customer feedback, the quality of our staff is cited as a reason for returning and choosing the Field Studies Council. I know that it has been challenging but your commitment, support and passion for what the Field Studies Council stands for is what has got us to this point. Thank you for all that you have done.

#### **Thank You Voucher**

As a reminder from last week in case you missed it, any permanent or fixed term contract employee who is on the November 2022 payroll and is still expected to be an FSC employee on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2022 will have received a £50 voucher code. The 14 or 15 character long code will have been emailed to your work email address. The code is unique but not linked to a particular email account or individual. Therefore you can forward it to a personal email.

If you don't have an Amazon account you also have the option to forward the code to a trusted friend or family member who does, to purchase something on your behalf. The email will be entitled Your £50 Thank You Voucher and will come from [amazonvouchers@field-studies-council.org](mailto:amazonvouchers@field-studies-council.org) Please don't mistake it for a scam and delete it by mistake. Please don't forget that when shopping, you can select Field Studies Council as your preferred 'Amazon Smile' charity through: <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/313364-0>

#### **Staff Conference 2023**

I have just seen the draft programme for our 2023 staff conference which will be held at Castlehead from 30 January to 1 February. It looks like a great mix of work and fun activities and will be a fantastic opportunity to come together and celebrate 80 years of the Field Studies Council, and to look forward to how we can increase our impact going forward. I shall look forward to seeing many of you there.

#### **Thank you**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sian and her team at Margam for hosting me last week and asking some great questions about the 10 year plan. It was great to see you all and I shall look forward to visiting again soon

## **Catch Ups**

The next Catch Up will be on Thursday 5 January, if you have anything that you would like to be included, please email [j.blizzard@field-studies-council.org](mailto:j.blizzard@field-studies-council.org)

On that note I will sign off and wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year for 2023

Mark