

DRAFT to be approved at AGM June2011

ECOC AGM 2010 Minutes

The Annual General Meeting of ECOC took place on 23rd June 2010 at 19h00 at Expatica Café, Rue Francois Gay 152, Woluwe-Saint-Pierre, 1150 Brussels.

Present:

Pauline Browning

Richard Chalks Corriette

Carol Humphrey

Matt Schlarb

Patricia Thomson

Julie Anne Verbeelen

Pieter Verbeelen

The President opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present.

The 2009 Minutes were presented and approved.

The President presented an overview of the past activities. The highlights of these were:

Overview of Activities

Workshops

Veerle Waelkens – Meta- linguistics. The development of meta-linguistic skills and importance of these for general development

Dr.Laurent Viktoor – How to treat ADHD with and without medication – the various approaches to dealing with patients, including some that do not uniquely concern ADHD patients but also associated disorders.

Eimaer O’Loughlin – Sensory integration and the child

Prof.Dr. Karen Spruyt – Understand the importance of sleep and how it impacts performance, behavior and well being in a developing child.

Dr. David Willows – Fragments, modern life and its complications.

The quality of the workshops offered to our Members last year were well received and of a very high standard. However, we would like to be able to offer more such events. To do this, we will need further resources to source and evaluate appropriate topics and speakers for our community.

Financials

The Treasurer presented the Financial Report. Although the current financial report shows a deficit, this is not the actual situation in the bank account. Given the reporting period, not all income can be reported. However, it is a concern that income generated by Membership contributions is down as are financial contributions from schools. Whilst part of this can be explained by changes in school policies and people moving from Belgium, we do need to ensure that we raise the visibility of ECOC to generate interest and show value in becoming a Member of ECOC. In the spirit of our values and to ensure total transparency, these Accounts will be posted on our website.

Activity Report

ECOC transitioned over the past year to our new home at rue Francois Gay which has allowed for on-site hosting of events.

The new mission statement for ECOC has continued to guide us in all our endeavors

ECOC Crisis Line transferred to CHS – The relationship with CHS is now much stronger and regular meetings are held to ensure information and knowledge is shared. We need to continue to work with such partners to facilitate the access and provision of information to people in need.

ECOC – Core Team.

Both Patricia Vandenplas and Sarah Venter have stepped down this year. Patricia has kindly offered to “consult” for us as and when her expertise can add value. Sarah is relocating to Australia.

It was with great sadness that we lost Laura Steenson this year. Laura died in April 2010, at the tender age of 29.

Rather than recruiting volunteers to fill the roles left by those core team members leaving, ECOC need to evaluate the current and future needs of our community and how best ECOC can meet these needs. More expertise will be needed in terms of generating visibility, ensuring awareness and marketing of ECOC.

Future Activities

Collaboration with CHS and Brussels-Europe Liaison Office – We are in ongoing discussions with these organizations with a view to consolidating access of information for our community. This information is, for example, practitioners, specialists by type and language. In the initial stages our information will be

converted into Excel spreadsheets until an appropriate database and hosting can be sourced. This will store therapists by type and language.

Statutes – These need to be updated, given the various changes ECOC has undergone, to ensure they reflect the actual status of ECOC. These will be circulated for review.

Children Who Learn Differently Appeal – ECOC has sought the advice of BBC's Children In Need in terms of generating awareness and fund raising. The BBC have positively responded to our proposed event, planned for November 2010 and have committed to sharing ideas for running such an event. Much discussion ensued as to the organization of such a large event. Progress will be communicated on a regular basis to keep our community enthusiastic and committed to making this event a success. Those organizations with whom we have tentatively approached have been extremely positive and creative with their ideas to promote such an event.

The major issue to be addressed is the administration of generated funds. In line with our values, we need to ensure transparency both in terms of establishing a fund and how monies will be allocated. As this is not our core competency, we are in discussion with the King Baudouin Foundation.

Web Presence – Given the importance of this to our community we need to invest in this vital communications tool, ensuring timely, accurate and useful information is provided. Management of this will need to be done by a trained professional and will thus incur cost.

Workshops - The feedback has been very positive from our Members on the workshops we have provided in the past. Hosting these workshops provide ECOC with an opportunity to show tangible value to our community. The identification of appropriate subject matter and then sourcing of an expert speaker is time consuming and will require volunteer resource to manage.

ECOC Marketing – We recognize that currently our core team is unable to manage the identification of current hot topics and issues impacting our community on a proactive basis. We need a volunteer resource to proactively track these issues and ensure that this information is provided to our community on a timely basis.

Strategic Partnerships – We have great respect for the many specialist organizations already existing who are dealing with specific issues related to children who learn differently. We need to better support them as the experts, promoting them to our community, by using the network available to ECOC.

Organizational Development

Long term, ECOC will need to re-align our organization to meet the changing needs of our community. We have an excellent reputation but need further resources in terms of money and headcount to realize our vision. Many administrative changes must take place, i.e. application of VAT number, staffing to ensure ECOC is sustainable in the long term.

Charity to Foundation?

As a future vision The Chairman proposed that our role is changing, and that we should think about adopting a new mid-set to cope with this demand. The situation in schools is changing and as a consequence the support we need to provide is different now from the past. We have a different set of skills available to us now in ECOC and these should be exploited. It may be that our role is naturally evolving into more of a foundation type organization, generating funds to be allocated to the existing experts, rather than being an organization of educational experts ourselves.

Patronage – Given that the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Mathilde comes to an end at the end of 2010, we need to research and identify potential new patrons for the organization.

Meeting closed 9 pm.