

Friends of Rowan AGM Minutes

Date: Monday 22nd June 2026

Location: The Hill Library

Chair: Dr Alex Simonovic

Minutes Prepared By: Yasmeen Sra (Secretary)

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed attendees and thanked everyone for attending.

Introductions were made for the current officers and trustees:

- Mrs Raja – Headmistress
- Dr Alex Simonovic – Chair
- Elizabeth Stephenson – Vice Chair
- Yasmeen Sra – Honorary Secretary
- Jennifer Hudson – Honorary Treasurer
- Ann Cowling – Committee member

Apologies were received from:

- Achana Sanjeev
- Natasha Patel

A warm welcome was extended to parents and teachers attending the AGM.

2. Summary of the prior year (2024-2025)

Jennifer Hudson presented the final financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025.

Key Highlights

- Total income: **£41,460**
- Net funds raised: **£18,237**
- Funds raised for other charities: **£620**
- Projects funded: **£9,601**
- Closing funds: **£43,063** of which:
 - Designated funds for approved projects: **£39,283**
 - General funds: **£3,780**

Projects Funded

- Performing Arts Project (staging): £4,783
- Online Safety Workshops: £1,680
- Bounce Beyond Workshop: £590

- Hatching Eggs Programme: £301
- Little City Workshops: £460
- Wellbeing Refreshment Day: £720 at the Hill, £468 at the Brae
- Table top easels: £599

A £30,000 contribution towards the future redevelopment of the Glen in 2025/2026 had also been approved.

The accounts had been independently reviewed and circulated to parent members in advance of the AGM. No comments were received.

Resolution: The 2024/2025 financial statements were approved unanimously for Charity Commission filing.

3. Summary of Current Year (2025–2026)

a. Financial Overview

Jennifer Hudson presented draft financial results for the current year-to-date.

Opening available general funds: **£3,780** (plus £39,283 already designated for previously approved projects).

Current year net income to date: **£23,248**

This included fundraising at events as well as the additional income from:

- Membership subscriptions £2,230
- Savills rebate: £1,000
- Easyfundraising commissions: £237

Charitable fundraising:

- £3,053 raised for Save the Children

b. Events Review

The Chair reported on a successful year of events and thanked committee members, school staff, volunteers, sponsors, and parent representatives.

Event Outcomes

Based on the draft current year-to-date accounts:

- Uniform sales raised: **£6,140**
- Halloween Movie Night: **£446**
- Christmas Fair: **£2,221**
- Christmas Cards: **£450**

- Costume Swap: **£234**
- Valentine's Discos: **£1,536**
- Rowan's 90th Anniversary Great Gatsby Ball: **£3,755**
- Silent Auction: **£1,960**
- Summer Fair: **£3,004**

FoR team involvement in:

- Information evenings
- New parent coffee morning
- Termly class rep meetings
- Weekly event planning meetings
- Local PTA outreach
- New parent HITT classes
- Mums Netball advertising
- Ad hoc induction uniform sales

Committee members highlighted the significant contribution of volunteers and sponsors throughout the year.

c. Funding Projects

Total projects funded to date: **£25,142**

Major Projects

- Glen Redevelopment (first payment): £13,198
- Performing Arts Staging (final phase): £4,783

Other Projects

- Dash Robots subscription: £400
- Portrait Masterclass: £495
- Esports Controllers: £792
- Replacement House Pins: £495
- Library Books: £840
- Hatching Eggs: £306
- Greenhouse: £272
- Rowan's 90th Anniversary Fun Run Medals: £708
- Wellbeing Day at Chessington (Hill) and Darwin's Kingdom (Brae): £2,540
- Author Visit: £315

Year-to-date Position

- Total funds £38,115 of which:
 - Designated funds for approved projects: £18,512
 - General funds: £19,603

The Committee noted this represented significant growth in the general funds available for future funding projects from the opening balance of £3,780 to £19,603.

d. Uniform

The committee reported that pre-loved uniform sales had become a major fundraising success but created significant storage challenges.

Actions agreed:

- Excess usable stock to be donated to schools in Kenya and other charitable initiatives.
- Alternative channels to be explored for textile recycling.
- Improved stock organisation and storage systems implemented.
- Exploration of future on-site storage or dedicated uniform facilities.

The committee formally thanked Ann for her extensive work managing the uniform operation.

4. Election of Trustees and Committee Members

The following appointments and reappointments were approved unanimously:

Committee Officers

- Jennifer Hudson elected Chair
- Elizabeth Stephenson re-elected Vice Chair
- Yasmeen Sra re-elected Honorary Secretary
- Natalie Guise elected Honorary Treasurer

Committee Members

- Lucy Walsh and Alex Simonovic to be elected as Committee Members
- Natasha Patel re-elected Committee Member

Retiring members:

- Alexandra Simonovic (Chair)
- Achana Sanjeev (Committee role)
- Ann Cowling (Committee role)

The Chair thanked retiring members for their service.

5. Approval of remaining resolutions in AGM notice

The following remaining resolutions were approved:

1. FoR Committee free to appoint an independent examiner for 2025/2026's financial statements.
2. Banking signatory updates approved.
3. Payment platform access updates approved.
4. Registered address updates approved for banking purposes where required.

6. FoR workstream volunteer leads for 2026–2027

The following volunteer lead roles were confirmed:

- Social Media Representative – Nataliya Lloyd
- Christmas Cards Representative – Flo Milford
- New Parent Representatives – Genny Assersohn, Nilufer Karim and Lucy Walsh
- Website Representative – Alex Leighton-Davies (ALD)

Pre-loved Uniform and Local Charities to remain overseen by the committee.

7. Future Funding Projects

Business Manager Vicky Langham (VL) thanked Friends of Rowan for its significant contribution to the school.

Potential future projects were discussed:

- School kiln project
- Year 6 gazebo replacement/redevelopment
- Solar-powered educational clock
- Additional wellbeing and educational experiences
- International breakfast idea to be discussed by SLT

The school and committee agreed to continue balancing educational, wellbeing, and sustainability projects across the Hill and the Brae.

8. Outline of current 2026–2027 plans

Key priorities identified:

- Streamline events and volunteer requirements.
 - Increase communication with parents.
 - Improve awareness of funded projects.
 - Continue development of the pre-loved uniform programme.
 - Recruit new volunteers and future committee leaders.
 - Improve engagement with preschool and new families.
 - Continue fundraising while reducing burden on parents.
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12. Any Other Business

The committee shared letters, drawings, and thank-you messages from pupils who benefited from funded experiences, including:

- Darwin Kingdom Experience
- Chessington Wellbeing Day

The committee noted the positive impact of these activities on pupils and positive feedback from both teachers and parents.

Gifts and thanks were exchanged between committee members and staff in recognition of their contributions throughout the year.

Future Financial Statement Approval Process

JH suggested that future AGMs should focus on reviewing the draft accounts for the current year-to-date only, with trustees approving and signing the final financial statements for the previous financial period earlier in the year, outside of the AGM. The rationale was that this would avoid reviewing the previous year's financial statements a considerable time after the financial year had ended and would allow filing to take place earlier, rather than close to the Charity Commission deadline (30 June).

Trustees and committee members present agreed with this proposal in principle.

However, ALD raised a concern regarding ensuring compliance with the Friends of Rowan's governing rules, legal requirements and the Charity Commission's expectations. ALD noted that approval of the prior period financial statements had historically always been a resolution for parent members to vote on at the AGM - and that FoR's governing rules state that the accounts should be considered at the AGM.

NG, JH and ALD discussed a possible approach whereby trustees could approve and file the prior period financial statements prior to the AGM, while still ensuring compliance and transparency by:

- circulating a copy of the signed prior period financial statements to parent members for information in advance of the AGM; and
- including the prior period's financial statements as an agenda item for consideration at the start of the AGM to ask if parent members had any questions on them, before moving on to the more timely review of the draft accounts for the current year-to-date.

The committee agreed to explore this approach further to ensure it remained consistent with both the Friends of Rowan rules and Charity Commission requirements.

Post-Meeting Note: Following the AGM, ALD noted to JH that it is a legal requirement for the trustees to approve the accounts but that parent members only need to approve the accounts if the charity's governing rules require it. FoR's governing rules say that accounts should be "considered" at the AGM (Clause 7) and that the year-end accounts are to be approved "by the Association" (Clause 8). Charity Commission guidance (CC48) notes that the AGM is an opportunity to "present a charity's annual accounts and trustees' annual report" (i.e. the financial statements) and allow members to ask questions, though it does not impose a general requirement for member approval of the accounts at the AGM – that is subject to the charity's governing rules. If the FoR Committee were to conclude it was acceptable to file the prior period financial statements without a members' vote at the AGM, ALD suggested to JH that it would be good practice to circulate the final draft of the financial statements to members prior to filing it with the Charity Commission in order to give parents the opportunity to ask questions (if they had any).

Meeting Close

The Chair formally closed the AGM and thanked all attendees for their support and contributions during the year.