

**Armidale Youth Futures: Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
Wednesday 8 November 2023, 7.30 pm at St Peter's Cathedral Parish Centre, Armidale**

1. The meeting began at 7.30 pm with a welcome from the president, Graham Truscott, who chaired the meeting. A special welcome was extended to Tom Magill (Field Development Officer, Scripture Union (SU)/Generate). This was followed by prayer led by the Armidale Ministers' Fellowship (AMF) representative, Rev Tom Melbourne and a song led by Kevin Tadman.

**Attendance:** Management Committee (MC): Graham Truscott (President), David Freeman (Vice-president), Philip Ward (Secretary), Tom Melbourne (AMF rep), Julie Cook (MC/Minutes Secretary), Matt Mulready (SRE teacher), Peter Clark (Primary SRE Co-ordinator).

Chris Brennan, Jim Cook, Lynda Wysel, Keith & Jean Dawson, Wes Davis, Derek Repp, Nigel Flett, Melinda Millican, Margaret Teitzel, Richard Lee, Tom Magill, Owen McDonald, Hugh Pearson, Andrew Patrick, Ben Boland, Richard Winiata, Zachary Winiata, Kevin Tadman.

**Apologies:** Julie Tadman, Rob & Cory Dewhurst, David Wysel, Karl & Sharyn Holmes, Rob McClenaghan (Treasurer).

**2. Confirmation of Minutes of AGM, 26 October 2022:** Minutes of the 2022 AGM were approved by the members of the association.

Moved: Jim Cook; Seconded: Julie Cook.

**3. Business Arising from Minutes:** None.

**4. Reports for 2022–3:**

**4.1 Graham Truscott (President)**

A copy of the report having previously been circulated and then tabled at the meeting, Graham Truscott briefly highlighted the following points.

- This is the second year AYP has co-ordinated Primary SRE, led by Peter Clark. Lynda Wysel and Peta Bale have worked with Peter Clark to transfer their organisational knowledge. Graham T thanked Peter Clark for his work to date and Lynda and Peta for their assistance.
- NSW Dept of Education has modified the on-line enrolment system to include the option to participate in SRE/Ethics. Parents are required to complete their choice. ICCOREIS has also argued that schools should now identify parents who have not previously made a choice concerning SRE/Ethics and ask them to do so. There is a potential to double numbers of students electing to participate in SRE. Pauline Sindel is a support for SRE in the Armidale Secondary College (ASC) office and Peter Clark is following up Primary Schools with on-line enrolment.
- Graham T commended Matt Mulready for his diligence in presenting SRE.
- Graham T noted that Anna Gooley, a leader in the SU Boost students' lunch time group, has been elected Girls' captain at ASC.
- Fundraising. At start of June 2023 it looked like we would have a deficit for the year of \$35,000–40,000. However, following a fund-raising campaign launched by Ben Boland, \$31,000 was donated in June, leaving a small deficit of \$5,600. Graham T thanked Ben Boland for his help.
- Our children are our hope. In a changing world of mental health issues SRE provides hope and is growing year by year.
- Graham T thanked the AYP Board for the past year and noted that David Freeman was leaving his position as Vice-president but would remain on the board, Philip Ward was leaving his position of Secretary but would also remain on the board. It was expected that the new secretary would be Richard Winiata with Rob McClenaghan remaining as Treasurer and Julie Cook as the minutes secretary. Nikki Lomath did a wonderful job co-ordinating the annual dinner and Kathy Ewers was thanked for her willingness to be involved.

#### **4.2 Peter Clark (Primary SRE Co-ordinator)**

A copy of the report having previously been circulated and then tabled at the meeting, Peter Clark briefly highlighted the main points it contained.

Graham T thanked Peter Clark and noted that Tom Magill from SU/Generate provided a professional review of Peter's work. He also noted that Stephen Gadd (Newling Primary School principal) strongly supports SRE. Graham is hopeful of Christmas and Easter services to bless all students at the school.

#### **4.3 Matt Mulready (SRE Teacher)**

A copy of the report having previously been circulated and then tabled at the meeting, Matt Mulready briefly highlighted the main points it contained. He noted that years 11 and 12 were offered SRE seminars. Graham T thanked Matt for his report.

#### **4.4 Rob McClenaghan (Treasurer)**

The annual financial report had been previously circulated and also tabled at the meeting.

The final reports had been compiled with the assistance of Derek Repp, an accountant, auditor and business development specialist. Graham T thanked Derek for his work on the reports and Rob McClenaghan, who was unable to attend the meeting, for his diligent work as Treasurer.

Derek Repp noted that the year had ended in a close to breakeven position and that the available cash was enough to cover one year's operation; a better position than many other charities. AYF was well placed to continue its mission. Graham T noted that AYF now needs to raise \$130,000–150,000 p.a. with the addition of the Primary SRE Co-ordinator's role and AYF financial support for participants of the annual SU Leadership Conference and Young Life camps.

#### **5. Questions/comments relating to the reports or any other relevant matters were then invited from the meeting.**

*Kevin Tadman* asked if the Waldorf School is approachable for SRE. *Peter Clark* replied that the school was similar to Minimbah School as being outside the state school system. It was a possible option although it represented a different ideology/ethos not compatible with Christian teaching. *Chris Brennan* (Dean, St Peter's Cathedral) noted that the school visits the cathedral every two years as part of a study on religious thought and architecture. The school probably would not welcome SRE but might be open to some contact. He would speak with Peter Clark. *Graham Truscott* noted that many home-schooled children were from Christian families and that alternate education was not always anti-Christian. *Chris Brennan* raised the possibility of SRE for home schoolers.

*Derek Repp* asked if there is a need for Christian community involvement in Armidale Secondary College? *Matt Mulready* noted that discussion groups at senior student seminars at Easter and Christmas involve all supporting church youth group leaders. *Graham Truscott* noted that Tom Melbourne has encouraged greater linkage between SRE and local churches. There are 525 students taking SRE. The ideal is a movement from SRE to local church youth groups but many students are not doing so. *Peter Clark* noted that the Super Club was run at Minimbah School by volunteers, similar to Boost (ISCF) in state schools. The principal is looking for the group to help keep students out of trouble. Some Minimbah students take part in the Young Life group, Wildlife. *Tom Magill* gave the meeting some details on Super Clubs. They are run by SU NSW not SU Australia. They cannot be run by chaplains so depend on volunteers. An SRE teacher can run them as Matt Mulready does at ASC.

*Hugh Pearson* asked if the big fund-raising events had raised less money in 2023? *Graham Truscott* replied that the Garage Sale had raised more than 2022 but that the annual dinner was down a little partly due to an inadequate on-line auction system.

*Ben Boland* commented that the NSW Department of Education requirements to teach SRE seemed to be getting tighter. What can we do now so that SRE is sustainable? *Tom Magill* noted it is a big step forward to employ a Primary SRE Co-ordinator. Sixteen Coordinators are now being employed in NSW/Southern Qld. Local churches are increasingly having trouble doing the coordination. Another issue is being ready to replace Matt Mulready when the time comes. Should we look at an intern pathway? Be proactive and watch out for someone wanting a career in SRE. Anecdotal reports are that on-line enrolments have seen an increase in SRE uptake. This gives an idea of where the community stands on SRE and might be an encouraging sign for the long term.

*Derek Repp* asked if the bigger threat to SRE is not having enough teachers rather than the regulatory environment. *Tom Magill* replied that as both major political parties support SRE the regulatory situation is OK. One method being used in Dubbo to encourage new teachers is have volunteers visit SRE classes over a 3–4 week period to allow them to gauge whether they would like to become SRE teachers. This might help ease in new teachers. *Tom Melbourne* noted that SRE teaching is required to keep clear of certain topics, e.g., sexuality. At what point will the regulatory environment stifle our mission? This may be an issue to watch.

*Hugh Pearson* asked how many state schools offer Ethics classes? *Peter Clark* replied that in Armidale Ethics classes are run at Armidale City public, Drummond and Ben Venue but they struggle to get teachers. They do have a curriculum. There is also Catholic SRE in most schools. *Richard Lee* asked about other religions being taught? *Peter C* commented that Drummond School may be offering Ezidi SRE. No other religions are being taught.

*Matt Mulready* asked about SRE provision in Guyra and Uralla. *Graham Truscott* replied that following his meeting with the Guyra Central School principal, and the Anglican vicar of Guyra, Tim Stevens, it had been hoped to begin teaching SRE in mid year. Josiah Stace will be the teacher but the start now moved to the start of 2024. In Uralla, Graham has had a meeting with the Anglican vicar, Matthew Borg. SRE is currently taught in the Primary school. There is a possibility of seminars in high school. Has been thinking about Walcha where SRE is already being offered in Primary school, under a team led by Neil Hunt.

## **7. Elections of Management Committee members**

Graham Truscott vacated the chair and was happy to welcome Tom Melbourne as the AMF representative on the board to conduct the elections for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and up to four ordinary committee members. Graham informed the meeting that he had intended to be president for only five years and he had worked hard to find a replacement. He welcomed Nigel Flett who would stand as Vice-president with the intention of taking over as President in 2024. He has previously been employed as the Chief Operating Officer for MS Qld and has great skills to offer AYF. Graham was willing to remain as President for another year until 2024. Graham also introduced Melinda Millican, already an SRE teacher (married to Ian Millican Armidale Anglican Assistant to the Bishop) as a committee member and Richard Winiata (married to Kelly, area manger of Young Life) as the proposed new secretary. Philip Ward, Julie Cook and David Freeman will remain as committee members.

Valid written nominations for all eight positions had been received prior to the AGM. All those people nominated had accepted nomination. These were:

- President       Graham Truscott, nominated by Philip Ward, seconded by David Freeman
- Vice President   Nigel Flett, nominated by Graham Truscott, seconded by Philip Ward
- Secretary       Richard Winiata, nominated by Graham Truscott, seconded by Philip Ward
- Treasurer       Robert McClenaghan, nominated by Graham Truscott, seconded by David Freeman
- Ord. Member     Julie Cook, nominated by Graham Truscott, seconded by David Freeman
- Ord. Member     Melinda Millican, nominated by Graham Truscott, seconded by Philip Ward
- Ord. Member     David Freeman, nominated by Graham Truscott, seconded by Philip Ward
- Ord. Member     Philip Ward, nominated by Graham Truscott, seconded by Julie Cook

There being no further nominations Tom Melbourne moved that all nominations be accepted. This motion was seconded by Jim Cook and passed unanimously and all those noted above were duly declared elected as the AYF Management Committee for 2024.

#### **8. General Business:**

David Freeman asked when the next AYF Prayer Breakfast would be held. Graham Truscott informed the meeting that it would take place 7.30–9.00 am, Sat 25 November 2023 at the Armidale District Baptist Church hall, to pray for the upcoming Christmas event at ASC.

There being no further general business Graham Truscott thanked all who attended and after a final song he asked David Freeman to close in prayer. The meeting closed at 9.00 pm and was followed by supper.