



Minutes of the OWBA Committee Meeting

Friday 26th April 2013

West Buckland School

Present

Andrew Broggio (President)
Neil Kingdon (Vice President)
David Cummins (Patron)
Adam Crispin
John Vick (Headmaster)
John Light (Chairman of Foundation)

By Invitation

Anna Rutter-Jerome (ARO)

1. Apologies

Guy Avery, Alan Humes and Kirsti Ryall.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the 1st July meeting were approved. NK raised the issue of the bar for Speech Day. AB said that they had overcome the problem of two years ago and there would be a free bar due to licensing. JFV said a licence should be investigated and NK agreed that he would prefer to sell drinks. JFV said that they needed to look at future events and NK asked if there would be a Headmaster's Dinner. AB said that all future events need to be considered.

3. Confirmation of Current Committee Membership

DC proposed to have two extra members on the committee starting in September. AB said that that would be happening. NK said that JL and JFV therefore shouldn't be involved in the current meeting. AC said that this vote should have happened in the March AGM. AB said that there is a current committee and that everyone was invited to discuss this subject now. JFV asked if there is an acting committee for now. AC agreed that it hadn't been decided who they were. DC asked if anyone would be resigning at the AGM. AB said that the current committee comprised everyone at this meeting and Guy Avery. NK said that AC had made the effort to attend this meeting and would like him to be on the committee. AB assumed that Chris Boulden didn't want to be involved in the committee. AB said that AC and KR are now co-opted onto the new committee until September. AB added that Guy Avery is happy to stand as Vice President but will need to be voted in. JFV said that the Governing Body Constitution was changed so there is now only one governor with the OWBA title, there used to be two. He said there should be some communication regarding two members being voted onto the committee at the AGM.

JFV asked if it is a good idea to send out an email to say what is happening. AB said that it could be done in July. JFV said that it may not help to wait. DC said that the current Facebook discussions are not doing anyone any good at the moment. NK suggested Facebook for advertising. AB asked AC if it was worth looking at creating another Facebook page to have more control over comments. AC said that if people post and their comments are deleted then they will leave. JFV said that it was not worth commenting on the current Facebook Group. NK proposed to advertise on it. AC said there had been a number of comments on Facebook because of ill-feeling. Negative comments are not

always a bad thing for companies. AB said it was best to put it in an email. JL said that there could be legal implications and that someone would need to check the new page every day. AB said that it would be fine if everyone behaved properly and that the page could be used just to advertise. AC said that only 10-20% would be seen due to Facebook's control over businesses advertising.

AC said something should be done on Facebook. NK said a factual post would help. JFV said that was fine as long as it wouldn't be too time consuming. DC asked if the people who were involved in the negative conversation could be telephoned to explain the changes factually. NK said that Chris Boulden's requests are simple. He asked if the committee would like him to respond to the misunderstandings. AB said that Chris Boulden would never be totally happy. AC said that the order that things happened, the short period of two weeks' notice for the AGM and the process had upset people. More people could have attended with more notice, more could have been achieved, and less people would have been aggravated.

AB referred to Kirsti's email. He said that a notice should be put up on Facebook for people to get involved. There was more response on Facebook after the AGM than ever. DC said to move forward as that is in the past.

NK read out Chris Boulden's two concerns and two requests. He said that Chris Boulden wants a proper response. JFV said that through the OWBA office, the problems are being addressed. NK said that that can easily be put. AB said that he had seen the recent email from Tony Harding 52-57 B. NK said people are supportive of the Foundation and he would speak to David Pulman about his comments on Facebook. A discussion took place regarding Chris Boulden's open letter.

4. Matters Arising

AB asked when would be suitable for the next meeting. JFV said that his pattern of life was going to change in the next year as he is attending several overseas marketing fairs for the school. He asked if Andrew Moore, Prep School Headmaster and an old boy, could deputise in his absence. AB agreed this would be a sensible solution. NK asked if the Headmaster's substitute would have voting rights. JFV said that he would have thought so. DC said that not everyone can attend all the time anyway. AB said the next meeting should be before the OWBA June Weekend. NK agreed that this was important. AB said that the best date appeared to be Friday 7th June at 4pm in the Downward Room. NK suggested that the full committee should meet three times a year.

5. OWBA Office & Staff

JL explained that the deadline for the Administration & Relationship Officer had been extended until Monday 29th April. The Foundation Manager's application deadline was Friday 3rd May. AB said there would be a different salary for the FM. DC asked for it to be clarified that the FM position was replacing Sue Pollard's role. He asked why the Foundation Manager had not been appointed first so that they could be involved in recruiting the ARO. JL explained that the role involved less fundraising than in Sue's time and that a lower salary would therefore be more appropriate in the current economic cycle. Outsourcing would occur for large-scale fundraising campaigns.

AB asked who the line manager would be for the FM role. JL explained that the Bursar would provide day-to-day line management as it is difficult for a chairman to offer day-to-day remotely, but the Bursar's role would not be instructing. The Trustees would continue to instruct the FM. JFV said that he would have a weekly meeting with the FM as he did with the Development Director. JL said that Sue's replacement can discuss issues with the Bursar. AB asked if there would be enough manpower as the workload has increased significantly for the ARO's role. JFV said that there were

two full-time positions which should cover the work. NK asked if the position could be job-shared. JL said that if they had the interest then they would consider it. The people will need the right skills and gravitas. They are not looking for major campaign experience. NK said he thought that it would be more useful to have one ARO as this will help with continuity. AB asked if they would be starting as soon as possible. JL said that the ARO would hopefully start in June and the FM as soon as possible, depending on their notice period.

6. Achieving Objectives

DC requested that meeting dates were arranged. AB urged that the Foundation invited the OWBA President to their Trustee meetings. JL agreed and NK added that this would be very useful for the OWBA.

ARJ asked if it would be a good idea for AB or NK to be involved in the interviewing process for her replacement, as per her interview a few years ago. AC, the then President interviewed her along with JL and Sue Pollard. AB agreed that NK should take part.

NK raised the subject of communication with the Careers Department. He said it would be very useful to make contact with them and start the ball rolling. JFV said that Matt Brimson is taking over Higher Education Advisory Matters. Careers and HE will come together, whether in one post or with two people running them. JFV said talking to them to develop the roles is in hand.

AB raised the subject of surveying and how many alumni choose that career path. He asked if they should be invited to the Chartered Surveyors dinner. ARJ said that Mark Wightman's article in the Buckland Brief welcomed and encouraged surveying students to the event and offered a reduced price, which is a traditional OWBA offer for students. NK was not sure how many would attend.

7. Events

AB continued the discussion about a paid bar at the Speech Day barbeque. He also mentioned that the Headmaster's Dinners had worked when peer-to-peer calling took place. DC said the dinners worked when they were more informal. They appeared to get more support. JFV disagreed and said that dinner organisation should be done properly in a venue like the Park Hotel or Northcote Manor.

NK said that year groups should be looked at, as well as significant staff leavers as they are a good draw to events. JFV said that Lesley Hartley, Jeremy Huggins and Catherine Beckett are all prominent people leaving the Prep School. NK added that they should still be near the area in September if they are to leave in July. AC said that staff as guests happened quite often and was always successful. AB said that Michael Downward was good at helping with the organisation. JFV suggested Jan Witheridge to help with the organisation and venue. AB said he would speak to her and that they would still have an OWBA barbeque.

NK hoped that Kirsti Ryall and her husband would be happy to be in charge of organising the SD barbeque. AB said that the OWBA could provide the meat and drinks and would be grateful if the school could provide the charcoal and other bits as per last year.

JFV said that he didn't have information about the 1960s reunion in June. There was a discussion on who was owning or running the event. ARJ said that letters had gone out to the classes of 1960 through to 1969 inviting them to be part of the OWBA Weekend and to attend tea, tours and a dinner in the Karslake. JFV and NK requested more information. DC said it was important to invite partners as they can be put off. ARJ said that they had all been invited. NK said it was important to

involve peer-to-peer contact to encourage them to attend as, so far, there had only been three positive replies. DC said there should be a Committee member liaising with the organisers. NK arranged to discuss further with ARJ. AB decided to have a deadline for responses so that if the event needed to be cancelled, those attending would have a good amount of notice.

JFV said there could be logistical issues and that if there were 30 or 40 people, they should use the Club Room. ARJ said that catering had been consulted and that there was 120 maximum to be catered for in the Karslake as the old boys would not know the Club Room and have often mentioned that they would like to dine there again. The cut-off date was agreed as 24th May.

There was then a discussion about the OWBA Weekend sports and who was organising which sports. AC said that he would help Rob Schofield with the cricket. Johnny Goode is organising the cricket for the school, NK said that Dom Ford also helped last year. Tony Hooper and Sue Hartnoll are organising the tennis. ARJ said that all OWBA members will be asked if they would like to play or captain in the E-Buckland Brief, on the website and on Facebook. AB questioned whether there should be a barbeque on the Sunday. AC said it could be with the cricket and tennis captains of the last five years. JL said it would need to be ticketed. JFV said that it would be one event too many if the 60s reunion was going ahead. AB asked why the 60s reunion couldn't be opened up to other years and AC said that the point of a 60s reunion would be lost if that happened.

AB suggested that the next Chartered Surveyors dinner is held at school and said he would speak to Mark Wightman and David Hymer. He asked ARJ to speak to Mark Wightman about the 60s reunion.

JFV asked if there would be a Back to School day again, but it was pointed out that, although this was not a fundraising event, it was a Foundation Event. NK said that it needs to be clear whether it is a Foundation event or an OWBA event. JL said that it needed to be peer-to-peer when organising the Back to School Day.

AB said that the Exmoor was a big draw. JFV said it was one of the best events and that it was good to follow the Back to School Day.

NK said that the London Dinner was great, with excellent speakers and a very good venue. JFV said it should be there again and AB said he would speak to Geoff Bayles to see if he could get a better deal at the RAC Club. DC said that the price is always discussed but Friday nights are always cheaper. AC said that below £50 is better and ARJ agreed that it would be more attractive if it stayed around the £50 mark.

AB said that a decision needed to be made on whether to contribute £1,000 towards room hire, to hold the event on a Friday as it is cheaper or to pay a bit more and hold it on a Saturday. AC said it is nice to have a bigger venue as a number limit can attract or detract. He said it would be a good idea to do a deal with the venue, subsidise the tickets and/or drinks. AB said that the OWBA lost money on the dinners but he thought that Saturday was preferable.

8. Any Other Business

ARJ said that Shebbear College had been in touch with Mike Tucker, who is soon to be their new President. They want to organise a rugby match on 19th October, and possibly also Speech Day, with the OWBA. NK and AC said that they would get in contact with Mike and other OWBA rugby players to organise this.

AB said that he wanted to talk about the printed version of the Buckland Brief. It was becoming clear that many are missing out as they are not online or on email.

NK referred to the email that the Foundation send to all Year 13s requesting their email addresses, mobile numbers, degree and future plans so that they can keep in touch. He said he would like to see a school "social" session for leavers, which is face to face, where the President informs them of what the OWBA does. Forms could be completed at this session in order to guarantee we have all the information needed for the database. AC said that there used to be sessions where they met and explained the work of the OWBA. JFV said that there is not currently anything. AC said that it is a very useful exercise. ARJ said it may be better to have the session before the Easter holidays as they are harder to contact during their exams and in the lead-up to them. NK said it would be good to organise the meeting in February.

The meeting ended at 6.20pm.

Next Meeting:

Friday 7th June, 4pm in the Downward Room.