



# Minutes of the OWBA AGM

Sunday 13th September 2015

11.00

Club Room, JESC, West Buckland School

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**Present:** Neil Kingdon (Chair), Adam Crispin, Peter Williams, Stuart Smith, David Cummins, Richard Heywood, John Molyneux, Jamie Conchie (Chair), Bill Geen (Foundation Chairman), John Vick (Headmaster), Valerie Bishop (Minutes), Colin Blackwell, Gerry Matthews, David Avery, Mark Baglow, Lesley Banbury, Geoff Bayles, Roger Jackson.

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## 1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies have been received from John Whitfield, Bill Woodman, Mike Hannaford, Mark Wightman, Ian Blewett, Barnaby Newell, Colin Yandle, Terry Curtayne and John Light.

Neil Kingdon (NK), outgoing President and Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and drew the meetings attention to a new Agenda Item, 3a, concerning constitutional changes which have been circulated among the community and no response received.

## 2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

NK asked for any factual inaccuracies of the minutes. None reported. The minutes of the last AGM were agreed as an accurate representation of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

## 3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

### 3a. Proposed Constitutional Changes

NK read out the altered definitions below

#### *Altered Definitions*

'Communications Officer' and 'Administration and Finance Officer' means the person(s) employed by the School who work(s) in the OWBA Office as Secretary. This (These) person's (people's) role, objectives and tasks related to the OWBA are determined by the Committee and monitored by their line manager. Their schedule of work is reviewed as and when deemed necessary by the committee.

#### *Altered Membership definition 5c*

Honorary Membership may be conferred by the OWBA to any person not eligible for Full Membership in recognition of their support for the OWBA which will normally have been over a period of at least fifteen years. The committee may nominate such people for Honorary Membership subject to election by a simple majority at the Annual General Meeting. Honorary Members may vote but may not hold executive office.

#### *Additional Definition*

'Patron' means the Patron of the OWBA. The person who may be nominated by the committee and confirmed by a simple majority at a General meeting.

NK explained that due to changed roles within the office team and the number of officers it was necessary to alter this definition to reflect it. He also explained that the definition for the Patron was not in the original constitution.

All voted to support the changes. None against.

#### **4. President's Report**

NK reported to the meeting that the OWBA Strategic Objectives set in the previous five year plan had now been achieved in full. This has been made possible by the change in management structure within the office. The OWBA were mentioned very positively at Speech Day; an illustration of how far the Association has come within the last two years. He expressed his gratitude to Valerie Bishop (VB) and her team and pointed to The Buckland Brief and Events Calendar as representative of the activities now undertaken by the Association. These include flagship events in the South West such as The Tom Hitchins' Lunch and the June Weekend which has focussed on specific decades over the last two years. NK also expressed his thanks to Baz and Donna Norden and Pete Williams for their help on the Speech Day BBQ for the second year running.

Regional Reunions attract people back to the OWBA who would otherwise be unable to travel down to North Devon, and are easy to access after work. Reunions in Exeter, Bristol, Manchester and London were very successful and this is something that will be continued this coming year.

Higher Education and Careers Advice is being led by Matt Brimson and helped by the OWBA with alumni joining parents and past parent in supporting the Career Lunch Programme. Other alumni support young graduates and leavers from WBS through mentoring. NK mentioned Col. Ian Blewett in particular.

The Buckland Brief is a full, 24 page magazine and is excellent with varied content. Social Media communications are working well, especially Facebook.

The strong financial position of the OWBA allows the Association to show its appreciation to the Foundation through sponsoring a room in the Sixth Form Boarding House.

NK concluded by offering his personal thanks to VB, her team and the committee. He is looking forward to starting his new role as Alumni Governor.

#### **5. Honorary Treasurer's Report**

Stuart Smith (SS) told the meeting that these were a pleasing set of accounts and that the financial objectives to cover costs and grow capital have both been met. He invited questions. Gerry Matthews (GM) asked for the average membership amount. NK said that it ranges from £2 to £100. David Cummins (DC) commented that the amount for Standing Order donations (annual membership subscriptions) is extremely low on the accounts. NK said that up until the last year the Association had seen a significant deterioration in this amount and it has actually risen again over the last year, because of the higher profile of the Association. Roger Jackson and his team in the Bursary handle the life memberships for new students through initial bills from the School. David Avery (DA) said that as the Foundation can claim Gift Aid perhaps the efficiency of paying membership amounts to the Foundation should be considered. The Foundation would benefit through tax and the Foundation could then pay the OWBA. It was agreed that the Subscription Fee should be put as an agenda item for the next Committee Meeting.

DC proposed that the accounts were accepted. DA seconded this motion. None against.

#### **6. Foundation Report**

Bill Geen (BG) thanked Neil Kingdon and VB for organising and supporting the OWBA so fully over the last few years. He also thanked Neil personally for his support and said that he was looking forward to working with Jamie Conchie.

BG told the meeting that the much of the success of the last year was due to alumni support. He also thanked Simon Fox who managed a lot of the building work that resulted in the two new buildings now on campus. He stated that there have three new Foundation Trustees appointed in the last year. Bill, Mike Hannaford and Lucy Wakefield have joined the Board.

The Capital Campaign has been very successful, and BG thanked VB and the team and all who made it work. The Telephone Campaign was very successful, and the alumni callers were superb. BG spoke of two examples

he had heard directly from people who had been anti the concept, or anti the School but enjoyed the conversations that they had, even if they chose not to give a gift.

BG told the meeting that the Foundation is now thinking about bursaries and the future of the fund, including target setting over the next 5 to 10 years. Money invested in equities is up and down at the moment, reflecting the markets but capital growth in the fund is good and the income OK. The Foundation awards three 100% bursaries annually for Year 7-11. It is difficult to fund all of them from income as fee inflation has been greater than anticipated over the last 3-4 years.

John Molyneux (JM) asked whether people considered legacy giving as a way of contributing to the bursary fund. BG said that legacies were an important part of giving a gift to the school, represented by The Brereton Society.

BG concluded by congratulating all involved in the OWBA on the achievements of the past two years.

## **7. Governors' Report**

NK asked the Headmaster, John Vick (JFV) to speak on behalf of the School as he is new to his role as Governor. JFV told the meeting that the end of the school year had been marked by a positive picture on GCSE's and A-Levels. West Buckland continues to be in the top three co-educational day and boarding schools in the south west. Results this year were 72% A – A\* at A Level and 50% A – A\* at GCSE. An established academic credibility is vital to the success of the school, for its marketing and appeal locally and internationally. The richness and diversity of extra-curricular activities is extraordinary but hard to sustain as the pupil role continues to fall within the school. The First XV had a great cup run in the Natwest Vase but netball is the most successful team sport across all age groups and tennis is growing quickly. Changes to academic scoring of exams will mean a pressurised summer term which could impact on extra-curricular activities. Performing Arts and Music are of a high quality, including Westside Story and The Armed Man in Exeter Cathedral next year. All OWBA are welcome to sing in the choir.

NK told the meeting that he was fortunate to be asked to present on behalf of the OWBA, a cup for the Sports Person of the Year for Seniors and Juniors. NK also thanked Roger Jackson who agreed to stay on as Bursar for an extra term while the School awaits the arrival of Bryan Login. He thanked him for all of his support over the years. He also thanked JFV who will be replaced by Philip Stapleton in September 2016 for his long service to the School.

Roger Jackson (ARJ) told the meeting that he was sure the Governors would want the OWBA to be aware of the state of the finances of the School. The loans taken out for the building of the JESC and 150 Building have been paid off, and a loan of £4.5 million has been taken out for the new development. The school has the resources to pay this off but the Governors have received a very good rate on the loan and have chosen to keep the reserves for the school. ARJ said that the Governors would say that the School was in a robust financial position.

BG commented that the governing body includes many people who help WBS in different ways, not least Colin Browne who successfully negotiated the favourable terms of the loan.

## **8. Election of Officers**

NK told the meeting that there is a biannual election for an executive committee which consists of the Headmaster, the Chair of the Foundation, the President, Vice President, Honorary Treasurer and two other members. Nominations were sought for the committee but none have been received. NK asked for nominations from the floor.

BG proposed that Jamie Conchie be elected to the role of President. Adam Crispin (AC) seconded. All agreed.

Jamie took over as Chair of the Meeting.

DA proposed a vote of thanks to NK and his family for they have done for the School. Jamie Conchie (JC) thanked NK for the work done in putting the OWBA back on the map and linked with other parts of the School. He told the meeting that IB has been nominated to the role of Vice-President. DC proposed. AC seconded. JC stated that Stuart Smith has been nominated to the role of Honorary Treasurer. BG proposed and Lesley Banbury seconded. JC told the meeting that Neil has agreed to remain on the committee as an Alumni Governor. NK proposed that Adam Crispin and David Walker continue on the OWBA executive. JC seconded. BG proposed that Mark Baglow and Lesley Banbury be elected to the committee. NK seconded.

## **9. Election of Past Parents and Honorary Members**

No nominations received.

## **10. AOB**

AC asked who won the Loving Cup. NK said that it had been drawn and received by both the President and the Head of School.

BG said that it is clear that past parents sometimes feel disengaged after students leave and the School and Foundation value what the OWBA do to support their continued engagement with the School. JC suggested that this should go into the next Five Year Strategic Plan.

JC said that Chris Allin, History Master, had spoken to him and a small group of students is going to Gallipoli during half term. He has sked the OWBA to pay for two wreaths to lay at the graves of two of the old boys. Colin Blackwell said that he would be happy to contribute to this.

The meeting closed at 12.10pm.