



**MINUTES OF THE OLD WEST BUCKLAND ASSOCIATION (OWBA)  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017  
Jonathan Edwards Sports Centre, West Buckland School**

Present: Jamie Conchie (Chair and President), Ian Blewett (Vice President), Stuart Smith (Treasurer), Neil Kingdon, Bill Geen (Foundation Chairman), Richard Heywood, David Cummins, Lesley Banbury, Geoff Bayles, David Avery, Adam Crispin, Neil Kingdon, John Avens, Angela Avens, Charlie Popplewell, Terry Curtayne, David Clark, Helen Clark, Bob Clarke, Dennis Morgan, Mary Cummins, Val Bishop (Minutes)

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

Jamie Conchie, President and Chair welcomed all present to the 2017 AGM, which due to the change of the date of Speech Day is being held earlier in the year.

Apologies were received from Michael Downward, Mark Wightman, Mike Hannaford, Roger Mills, Barnaby Newell, John Whitfield, Mike Bowles.

**2. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The Chairman asked for any factual inaccuracies of the minutes. There being none the minutes of the last AGM were agreed as an accurate representation of the meeting.

**3. Matters Arising**

David Cummins (DC) asked what progress was being made on capturing data preferences of alumni in light of the new data regulations outlined at the last meeting. Val Bishop (VB) explained that Personal Information Forms are being returned but not everyone has ticked the boxes, and this will mean they will have to be approached individually. There appears to be a good return rate for the forms. Jamie Conchie (JC) reminded the meeting that the association needs each individual's permission to contact them and asked all present to ensure they had completed a form which should have been received in the post. Charlie Popplewell (CP) asked whether they could forward the form to others. VB said that the office would need paper copies but anyone could pass these on. New regulations come into force in May 2018

**4. President's Report**

JC told the meeting that the new date for the AGM had been purposefully chosen to dovetail with Speech Day to encourage better attendance. Future dates are up for discussion but the intention at present is for the two to continue to coincide. Sports fixtures will continue to take place in September and the July and September weekends will be the two main OWBA weekends in the calendar. They are closer together than would be ideal, but the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2017 was the only weekend available when WBS did not have fixtures against other schools. It will mean that students will not have returned to University and will be available for teams.

Election of officers will take place at the AGM but they will not take up their posts until September 9<sup>th</sup>.

There has been a full 12 months of OWBA activity. November 2016 saw the first Phoenix Society Debate which attracted a good gathering of around 60 people, including OWBA members, parents

and pupils. The OWBA won the motion and also paid for food for the sixth form students. It is hoped that it will become an annual event. The next debate will be on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2017. In 2016 the Tom Hitchins' Lunch came to the School and was an enjoyable event. This year it will return to Plymouth and the Royal Western Yacht Club. JC thanked Terry Curayne for facilitating this. There have been two regional reunions, one in Cardiff which attracted around 30 people, and one in Oxford which was attended by 14 people. These informal gatherings continue to be popular events. Reading and Bristol are the locations for the next year.

One of the most successful events of the year was a 1960s Reunion, organised initially by Mark 'Sam' Wightman. 60 people attended a dinner in the evening before The Exmoor and approximately 60 people walked or ran the race the following day. The concept of a reunion prior to the Exmoor is one the committee would greatly support. This event brought people back who hadn't been back for many years.

Mike Hannaford organised another successful Golf Day and has agreed to do so next year. Geoff Bayles (GB) suggested that those who travelled to this event should meet for dinner the night before,

There is a Thai Reunion planned for 21<sup>st</sup> October and Jonathan Ralph has offered to host a Reunion in Sydney, Australia at Christmas.

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

Stuart Smith (SS) reported to the meeting that finances are in good health. As the date for the AGM has altered the full years accounts are unavailable. He reported against the financial terms of reference set out for the OWBA committee.

1. The association has covered costs and grown investment capital over the last 9 months. The fund has grown to £36,857 from £33,000 last August.
2. The association has supported the WBS community through quarter shares in a marquee (total cost £5,640). This is well used already. The OWBA shooting team have been bought a gazebo, which will be presented at the President's reception. Hoodies have been bought for Year 13 leavers (costing £1363)
3. Income of £9424 has been received, and to date expenditure is £6771. Income has increased from last year.

There is currently £14,550 in the current account, £9,000 of which will be transferred to the Smith & Williamson investment account. Members thanked SS and congratulated him.

## **6. Foundation Report**

Bill Geen (BG) updated the meeting as to progress in the Foundation over the last year. Valerie Bishop is leaving the Foundation shortly. She has been instrumental in the Foundation working more closely with the OWBA. Beth Poole, the Admin and Finance Officer has left to join Queen Elizabeth, Crediton. The office is therefore short staffed. JC, VB and BG did interview for this post but decided not to appoint. Three new Trustees have joined the Foundation, Stuart Smith, Brenda Daly and Angela Webb. Financially the Foundation is in a strong position. Returns are good on investments. The Bursary Fund stands at £2.2 million. The Foundation continues to hold money for the School from the Capital Campaign.

This year the Foundation awarded Sixth Form bursaries for the first time. In 2017-18 one new Bursary Scholar will start in Year 7 and four will start in Year 12 (three are existing bursary scholars). The programme continues to work well and is a worthwhile cause, and Trustees would like to expand it.

BG feels fortunate in having very supportive Trustees who are currently looking at altering their ways of working to become more effective. This includes the new role of a Vice Chair.

Thanks to the Aubrey Orchard-Lisle Trust and a major donor the Foundation has been able to provide flood lights to the School and support the re-development of the external Pre-Prep environment. Other smaller projects continue to be supported. The Foundation is keen to spread benefits throughout the School.

## **7. Governor's Report**

Neil Kingdon (NK) presented the Governor's Report to the meeting, explaining that it was an unusual time to give this report as it is always given a year in lieu, meaning that GCSE and A Level results could not be shared. These will not be known until August. Recruitment to the School is good at present. Total roll for September is 557 (115 in Prep, 442 in Senior and 81 Boarders). This is always fluid and may alter by the start of the new term. The School is in a great period of change. Three significant appointments have been made, Headmaster, Bursar and the Head of Pastoral Care.

The Karslake has been altered and the caterers have taken 12 months to bed in. External catering was brought into the school due to complaints about team teas and boarders' breakfast and tea. NK commented that 50% of schools who outsourced went back to internal catering after 5 years.

A new Registrar means that there have been changes in the admissions process, making it more robust and easier to track. The Headmaster has reported that normally when there is a new Headmaster, there is a dip in numbers of pupils. It appears that this potential challenge has been overcome.

The strategy employed by the Governors for the School has been identified as follows:

1. Create staffing capacity to manage and teach effectively.
2. Develop acceptance among all staff of appraisal and performance across the School.
3. Provide pupil support within the maths department.
4. Encourage the integration of the whole school community. There is huge potential for the improvement of interrelationships. Students can get involved in the process.
5. Looking at development of separate weekend and weekly boarding offers to reflect a move towards weekly boarding.

NK explained that feedback from parents was that they were unhappy at travelling at weekend to fixtures. This would mean pulling fixtures into the week.

JC asked whether this was still under review as it is a significant departure. NK explained that it was partly because of the expansion of weekly boarding to students further afield.

## **8. Election of Officers**

JC told the meeting that he had served his two year period as President. One nomination has been received for the role of President from 2017-19, Ian Blewett (IB) has been nominated by JC. Ian has been a wise counsel and great support to the committee. He is retired and local to the School. NK seconded this nomination.

GB asked whether JC would continue on the committee. JC said that he would remain for a year at least, but would then step down to ensure that fresh people came forward to make sure that the committee continues to evolve.

JC proposed Stuart Smith as Vice President. IB seconded.

The Treasurer position is vacant. No one is forthcoming. SS commented that there is very little for the Treasurer to do as the office does the work. SS will continue in this role at present.

DC asked if there were any nominations for the committee. JC said that Barnaby Newell has attended the last meeting. SS suggested Kevin Underwood and Adam Crispin (AC) suggested Richard Allen.

JC said that the OWBA was a community association group for the whole school community. They would welcome anyone who would like to, to put themselves forward. BG said that past parents should be invited to join now, so that they were part of the community immediately. AC suggested that the BBQ could be badged as a 'Welcome to the Association'

## **9. AOB**

JC wished OWBA patron, DC a very happy birthday on behalf of the association.

JC thanked VB on behalf of the OWBA for her work over the last 4 years. He extended this thanks to the team in the office who make the job of the President and Committee much easier.