

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
BRITISH & FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY HELD AT RESOURCE
FOR LONDON, 356 HOLLOWAY ROAD, LONDON N7 6PA AT
2.15pm ON FRIDAY 22 MAY 2015**

Present:

Rt Hon David Lammy MP (President)
Professor S R Hodgkinson (Chair)
Rev D F Tennant (Vice-Chair)
Mr S J King (Treasurer)

Ms S Brown	Prof J Palmer-Cooper
Ms D Chipanga	Ms M Patel
Mr V Craggs	Dr B Ramm
Mr R Dimsdale	Mr T Ransome
Ms A Hillyard	Mr S A Ross
Mr R B Howarth	Dr J Saggi
Ms D Hoy	Mr L Stephen
Mr D R Hoyle	Mr D Swain
Mr J Kidd	Dr E J Tomlinson
Mr G T Kingsley	Dr E I Waitt
Ms S Lawman	Ms E J Weale
Mr P E Miller	Mr S J Wordsworth
Ms T Moore	Mr B A York

In Attendance:

Mrs I Wilde (Secretary) BFSS
Mr R J Goatcher (Finance Manager) BFSS
Ms C Ellis (Communications and Membership Officer, BFSS)
Mrs B R Lawrance (Administrator), BFSS
Mr R Wilkins, Chantrey Vellacott DFK

Convening Notice: The Secretary read the Convening Notice at the request of the President.

Welcome: The President welcomed all those present including Ms Tracey Moore from the auditors, Moore Stephens.

Prayer: The Reverend David Tennant, Vice-Chair, led the meeting in reflection. In particular he remembered Professor Richard Aldrich, former Vice-President and the first "working" Vice-President of the Society, who had died in September 2014 and Mr Hugh Papworth, a Member of the Society from 1980 until his death in early 2015 and a Member of Council from 1984 to 2001. He also prayed for the people in Nepal affected by the recent earthquakes, on which a report would be given later in the meeting.

AGM14/01

Apologies for Absence were received from Dame Jocelyn Barrow, Dr John Bell, Mr Raymond Beven, Ms Lynne Broadbent, Dr Geoffrey

Chorley, Miss Joyce Cook, Mr Charles Crawford, Mr Chris Daynes, Ms Fiona Dodwell, Ms Pamela Draycott, Mr Reginald Elson, Ms Monique Francois, Professor John Furlong, Mr Andy Gibbs, Mr Arthur Giles, Dr Diana Jones, Ms Yvonne Limbrick, Rev Professor Stephen Orchard, Ms Anne Ostrowicz, Rev Dr Simon Oxley, Mrs Jean Peel, Dr Martin Richardson, Mr Malcolm Ridge, Mrs Margaret Rollason, Bishop Mano Rumlshah, Ms Rachel Stephens, Rev John Sutcliffe, Mrs Joyce Taylor, Professor Linda Thomas, Dr Iris Turner, Mrs Jean Williams, Mr Cliff Winlow and Miss Gillian Wood.

The Director also announced with regret that she had just heard that, since giving apologies, Mrs Pat Bowers, former Bookkeeper for the Society, had died.

AGM14/02

Members' Declaration of Interest

Dr Waitt said that the agenda had been set by "the Secretariat" and that, since there was no "Any Other Business" item, he was raising a number of matters at this point. First, he pointed out that, notwithstanding what was said by the Charity Commission in its publication RS7 about the appropriateness of proxy voting where Members were old or disabled, there was no provision in the Society's revised Statutes or in the Bye-laws for proxy voting. Second, on the subject of declaring interests, he said that he wished to point out that the Secretary/Director also worked for Harvey Nash, an executive search firm, which was shown on the website as having done work for BFSS.

The President noted what he said but said that none of this was relevant to Members' Declarations of Interest.

AGM14/03

Minutes of the AGM held on 23rd May 2014

Mr Graham Kingsley proposed and Mr John Kidd seconded approval of the Minutes. The Minutes were approved and the record signed.

AGM13/04

Annual Report 2014

Report by the Director

The Director gave a presentation focusing on achievements and developments during 2014. She started by thanking the President for the interest he took in the Society's affairs and she thanked the Chairman of Council and all Council Members for the considerable time they devoted to the Society.

She said that 2014 had been another busy and successful year:

- There had been a solid investment performance.
- The constitutional reforms had been implemented.
- A Strategy Day had been held to review and update Strategic Priorities.

- 2014 had seen the highest ever level of grant giving (£630,082).
- A successful second Grants Workshop had been held in November 2014
- The communications strategy had been carried forward.
- There had been an increase in BFSS's office capacity with the appointment of a Grants Consultant and a Communications and Membership Officer.

On the constitutional reforms, she reported that:

- Amendments to the Charter and the revised Statutes had received Privy Council approval in October 2014.
- New Bye-laws had been approved by the Council in February 2015.
- Elections to all offices had been held early in 2015.

Reporting on the Strategy Day held in November 2014 she said that:

- A thorough analysis had been undertaken of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (internal and external).
- Strategic options had been reviewed and BFSS Strategic Priorities updated.
- The Vision and Values had been reviewed and sharpened up.
- The strategic direction for grant giving had been agreed.

On grant-giving she reported that:

- The total level of grants awarded was the highest ever, with funding given for a wide range of projects in 25 countries.
- The application process had been progressively streamlined and the possibility of an "eligibility filter" was now under consideration to screen out ineligible applications and save time for both applicants and the office.
- Charities were being encouraged to collaborate including through submission of joint projects.
- Much greater emphasis was being placed on reporting using BFSS's new Report Form.
- BFSS's support included detailed feedback on applications, help with networking and the Grants Workshop.

She showed some slides of projects supported by BFSS in Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the UK. She also reported that, for the first time since 2008, BFSS had been able to make a grant from the Berridge Trust Fund, which was for the purpose of promoting the training of cookery teachers. (Cookery had been off the curriculum until its recent re-introduction into the primary curriculum.)

She then reported on the Grants Workshop held in November 2014 which had received very positive feedback. Discussion group topics had been as follows: Promoting change in teaching practice; Sustainability; Monitoring and evaluation; Developing capacity

among local stakeholders; Supporting and empowering headteachers in their leadership role; and Supporting Special Educational Needs.

Finally, she showed some examples of how the communications strategy had been carried forward through publications in print and online, news items on the website and use of social media. She also thanked the Finance Manager, Richard Goatcher, the Communications and Membership Officer, Christine Ellis, and the Administrator, Belinda Lawrance, for all their support.

She then asked Mr Peter Miller, Council Member, to report on the Members' Conference which had preceded the AGM.

Report by Mr Peter Miller on the Members' Conference

'Young Lives' Study: Mr Miller said that the meeting had heard an interesting presentation from Dr Paul Dornan, Senior Policy Officer, University of Oxford Department for International Development who had spoken on the 'Young Lives' study, a long-term study being carried out in four developing countries on childhood poverty and its relationship to academic achievement. It was already clear from the study, which was not yet complete, that education was only one element in academic achievement; health care and nutrition were also crucially important, particularly in the very early years. Also, although primary enrolment was one of the measured matrices, enrolment did not equal education, nor did it necessarily mean attendance. It was clear that teachers, who played such a central role, needed to be properly trained and motivated – a point that was taken up later in the conference by Build Africa and STIR Education. Also, the need to balance the genders was clearly important, although the disparities between attendance by boys and girls varied between the different countries for various economic and social reasons which demanded complex solutions beyond the scope of this study.

Build Africa/STIR Education: Mr Miller also reported on the joint presentation from these two charities which, with the active encouragement of BFSS, had developed a joint programme to expand their work, initially in East Africa and later in other countries. As had been highlighted by Dr Dornan earlier, the role of good teaching was paramount. STIR Education were seeking to ignite changes in teaching by encouraging micro-innovations led by the teachers themselves. They were also working on professional development for teachers including widely recognised qualifications and the need to use ICT. In order for schools to flourish, both charities had emphasised the importance of ensuring support from the whole community and, in particular, encouraging mothers, who might not themselves have ever been educated, to support the education of their daughters. On the practical side, the charities were working together on construction, hygiene, sanitation, dormitories and the need to encourage the community to use the buildings as a community hub.

Presentations by the Chairman of Council and Chairman of Grants Committee: Mr Miller reported that Professor Hodgkinson, the Chairman of the Council, had brought the conference up to date on the work of the Society during the last, very busy, year. In particular, he had updated Members on the Strategic Priorities for the Society, a proposed Members' Charter, plans to extend Membership to certain organisations and other matters set out in a paper circulated to the Meeting. Dr Ramm, the Chairman of the Grants Committee, had given a presentation on the work of the Committee during the year, with examples of the range of grants given.

The Director then asked Mr Vic Craggs, Grants Consultant to BFSS, to give a report on the situation in Nepal, with particular reference to charities supported by BFSS.

Report by Mr Vic Craggs on the situation in Nepal

Mr Craggs said that, as Members would already be aware, the tragic situation in Nepal in recent weeks had brought catastrophic devastation to a country which was already one of the world's poorest countries. Of the seven projects currently supported by BFSS, only one was unaffected by the earthquakes and the aftershocks.

He said that examples of the projects supported by BFSS were:

- An early years school refurbishment, resourcing and teacher training project (the CAIRN Trust).
- A teacher training project to help develop more interactive teaching (Our Sansar).
- A project to provide books to improve literacy in primary schools (Resolve International) – the only one unaffected at present.
- A science education project (Childreach International). This project had featured in the 2014 but sadly the laboratory shown in the photographs and the school concerned had been very badly damaged in the earthquake.
- A project supporting street, working and at risk children in Pokhara, where 80% of schools had physically collapsed and where the charity concerned – Kidasha – was having to scale up its work in response to the earthquakes.

In the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes, the need was predominantly for humanitarian aid. However, BFSS was in contact with all seven projects and many of the charities concerned were starting to re-establish activities, subject to the difficulties involved in transport and communications. Once they were able to make realistic proposals, BFSS would be flexible in allowing them to use the grant funding effectively, given the changed situation. Most importantly, the Grants Committee would be considering how BFSS could contribute most effectively to Nepal and its recovery.

In discussion a question was raised relating to the difficulty of getting aid to Nepal. Mr Craggs reported that the organisations supported by BFSS had good local networks but that travel was always difficult in and around the mountainous terrain.

There being no further questions, the President thanked the Director, Mr Miller and Mr Craggs for their reports.

AGM14/05

2014 Audited Accounts

The Treasurer gave a brief report on the Accounts. The audit report had been an unqualified one.

He reported that the Society was in a healthy financial position. Total income had increased from £642,000 to £753,000. Total outgoings amounted to £816,000, the deficit having been met from capital. (There was nothing to stop the Society from dipping into its capital if it wished.)

He said that the Society was in the enviable position of net current liabilities being only £133,000. The end year cash balance had fallen from over £200,000 to £70,000, reflecting careful cash management on the part of the Finance Manager.

Turning to the Society's investments, he said that at the end of 2014 the investment portfolio stood at £22m, which represented an actual total return for the year of 5.7%. The funds, the majority of which were unrestricted, were managed by Investec. He showed some slides, one of which illustrated how the portfolio had outperformed the customised benchmark. Investec were tasked with achieving a performance target of a real return after taking into account RPI of at least 4.2% on a rolling three year basis. In fact the total return achieved, after taking account of RPI, was 9.1%.

In conclusion, therefore, he said that the Society continued to be in a sound financial position.

In the discussions which followed, Dr Waitt objected to the use of the word "enshrine" (on page 3 of the Annual Report) to describe how the Statutes reflected good governance principles. He considered that the Society's vision - "Educational opportunity for all" - was no more than a motherhood statement. He said that, following the 2014 AGM, he had submitted a number of papers setting out proposals for reform of the Society and that he had a number of supporters. He also complained that the revised Statutes failed to include provision for proxy voting.

The Chairman of Council, Professor Steve Hodgkinson, reminded the meeting that it had been open to Dr Waitt, if he felt so strongly, to bring a Resolution to the meeting. Challenged to say who his supporters were, Dr Waitt declined to do so. However, he said that he would come back with a request for a General Meeting.

No Members present spoke in Dr Waitt's support. Several made plain their strong disagreement with both the manner and substance of Dr Waitt's interventions.

The President concluded that the matters raised by Dr Waitt were not to do with the Accounts. He expressed his frustration and strong displeasure at Dr Waitt's repeated interventions. Noting that Dr Waitt seemed to be dissatisfied with everything the Society was doing, he called on Dr Waitt to resign his Membership forthwith. If he would not do that, he should at least be silent. Members warmly applauded the President's statement.

There being no questions on the Accounts, the President told the meeting that the Accounts had been approved by the Council and were recommended for adoption. The meeting approved their adoption unanimously.

AGM 14/06

Results of election of President and Vice-President pursuant to Statute 5

The Director reported the election of Rt Hon David Lammy MP as President and Professor John Furlong as Vice-President, each for three years.

Professor Steve Hodgkinson introduced Professor Furlong in his absence. He said that Professor Furlong was a distinguished academic, a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences who had been Director of the Oxford University Department of Education from 2003-09. He had chaired and participated in five national reviews of teacher education on behalf of different governments and was currently teacher education adviser to the Welsh Government. He said that Professor Furlong regretted not being able to be present at the meeting as he was recovering from an operation but he had thought long and hard before agreeing to stand for the Vice-Presidency and had already attended the Strategy Day in November 2014, at which he had demonstrated his interest in and wish to contribute to the Society.

AGM 14/07

Appointment of Auditors

Ms Sarah Brown proposed and Dr Jaz Saggi seconded the appointment of Moore Stephens LLP (previously known as Chantrey Vellacott DFK LLP) as the Society's Auditors. This was agreed by an overwhelming majority.

AGM14/08

Results of election of Councillors pursuant to Statutes 6 and 55

The Director reported the results of the elections as follows:

Chairman

Professor Steve Hodkinson had been elected as Chairman for three years.

Vice-Chairman

Reverend David Tennant had been elected as Vice-Chairman for two years.

Treasurer

Mr Stephen King had been elected as Treasurer for one year.

Councillors

The following had been elected Councillor:

- Mrs Diana Hoy for three years
- Mr Graham Kingsley for two years
- Mr Peter Miller for one year
- Dr Ben Ramm for three years
- Mr Stephen Ross for three years
- Dr Jaz Saggu for two years
- Mr David Swain for two years
- Dr Emily Tomlinson for three years
- Ms Juliet Weale for three years
- Mr Stephen Wordsworth for one year

Professor Steve Hodkinson, Chairman of Council, thanked Mr Brian York, retiring Councillor, for his long and committed service to BFSS. He said that Brian had joined the Society in 1974 when he was a lecturer in the History Department at Borough Road College and became a Life Member in 1996. He had worked closely with George Bartle during the 1970s and 1980s to pull together and organise the myriad of documents, photographs and artefacts. Brian had retired from his Senior Lectureship in what had become Brunel University College in 1997 only to replace Bryan Seagrove as Archivist, a position he held until December 2005 when the Archives moved to Brunel University's Runnymede Campus.

Brian was elected to the BFSS Council in 2006, was Secretary of the Society's Archive Committee from 2006-10 and the BFSS representative on the 'Heritage Builds Bridges' project group that received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to digitise the BFSS and University and Hillingdon Borough archives. He then chaired the Society's Heritage and Archive Group until the formal gifting of the Archive to Brunel University in 2013. In recognition of his dedicated service to the archive Brian was invited to be one of the two BFSS signatories to the Deed of Gift of the Archive. Members joined with Professor Hodkinson in thanking Brian for his long and valuable service to BFSS.

Mr York thanked Professor Hodgkinson and recalled that, when he had joined the Society in 1974, it had been virtually moribund. It was now a vastly different organisation. He was pleased to be a Member of such a forward-looking Society and he only regretted that the Chairman of Council and Director found themselves having to deal with unwanted and unhelpful interventions alongside the normal business of taking the Society forward.

AGM14/09

Concluding Remarks and Date of Next Meeting

In conclusion the President said that it was a privilege to be part of a movement that began so long ago and made a difference to some of the poorest people in the world. He said that he was very grateful to so many of those present who gave up their time to support the Society and he hoped that this might long continue in the spirit of charity and generosity.

The President announced that the next Annual General meeting would be held on 13th May 2016. He then declared the meeting closed at 3.30pm.

Minuted by:

Secretary

Authenticated by:

Chairman