

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
BRITISH & FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY HELD AT  
METHODIST CHURCH HOUSE, 25 MARYLEBONE ROAD,  
LONDON AT 2.00PM ON FRIDAY 20 MAY 2011**

Present: Rt Hon David Lammy MP (President)  
Professor Richard Aldrich (Vice-  
President)  
Mr R B Howarth (Chair)  
Mr G T Kingsley (Vice-Chair)  
Rev D F Tennant (Vice-Chair)  
Mr D A Swain (Treasurer)  
Mr P Bond  
Mr S Campbell  
Ms D Chipanga  
Mr V S G Craggs OBE  
Mr C M C Crawford  
Mrs F Dodwell  
Mr P Fishpool  
Mr J Hickman  
Mrs A Hillyard  
Prof S R Hodgkinson  
Mrs D Hoy  
Mr S Hussain  
Mr J Kidd  
Prof V Koshy  
Mr S Neil  
Rev Prof S C Orchard  
Mrs S Phoenix MBE  
Ms C Portman Smith  
Ms S S Rao  
Mr M Roger  
Mrs M Rollason  
Mr S A Ross  
Dr J Saggi  
Mr D Stephens  
Miss R E Stephens  
Ms G Trodden  
Dr I Turner  
Ms S Villarreal  
Dr E I Waitt  
Ms E J Weale  
Ms B Williams  
Miss G Wood  
Ms C Yardley  
Mr D Zahn

In Attendance: Mrs I Wilde (Secretary)  
Mrs B R Lawrance  
Mrs P Bowers

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

Welcome: The President welcomed all those present and particularly Belinda Lawrance and Pat Bowers on the staff of the BFSS and the guest speakers, Professor Valsa Koshy and Ms Carole Portman Smith (Brunel University) and Mr James Hickman and Ms Bethan Williams (Children in Crisis).

Prayer: The Reverend David Tennant, Vice-Chair, led the meeting in prayer.

**AGM11/01**

**Apologies for Absence** were received from Dr Hazel Bagworth-Mann, Mr Humphrey Barclay, Mr Roger Barrett, Mr John Bell, Mrs Jean Bingham, Ms Lynne Broadbent, Mrs E Charlesworth, Professor David Chiddick, Ms Lauren Coe, Dr Gillian Collins, Mr Neil Haynes, Dr Diana Jones, Ms Lisa Jones, Mr Brian Limbrick, Mr Ivan Mgobo, Rev Dr S J Oxley, Mrs Constance Purkiss, Mr Malcolm Ridge, Rev Geoffrey Roper, Mr Robert Rouse, Mr Graham Russell, Dr Emily Tomlinson, Rev Dr Patricia Took, Mr Cliff Winlow, Mr Brian York and Sir Brian Young.

**AGM11/02**

**Minutes of the AGM held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

The Minutes were approved and the record signed.

**AGM11/03**

**Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**AGM11/04**

**Annual Report 2010**

The Director gave a presentation consisting of an overview of the Annual Report for 2010 and an update on key developments for the Society.

She said that the Report, which was as usual a succinct, formal document, had been supplemented by a Grants Brochure containing case studies of some of the grants given in 2010. The intention was that this should be used to help raise the profile of the Society.

The Report summarised the outcome of the review of the Society undertaken in 2009-10. A key outcome was a statement of the Society's vision, values and mission and the way in which it met its objectives. The statement recognised and built on the Society's Lancasterian heritage and Christian principles and provided a framework for the Society's future

strategic direction. The words from the vision statement "Maximising educational opportunity for all" now appeared as a banner on the Society's letter paper, its website and its publicity material. The new version of the website at [www.bfss.org.uk](http://www.bfss.org.uk) reflected the Society's refreshed visual style and had been developed in such a way that the content could be managed and updated regularly by the Office.

The Review had also addressed Governance, including the roles of President and Vice-President, as a result of which David Lammy MP and Professor Richard Aldrich had been approached to be President and Vice-President respectively. 2010 had seen the launch of an external recruitment process for new Trustees and a tender process for the Society's Auditors. A review of the Archive under the chairmanship of Dr Emily Tomlinson had led to the decision to establish a new Heritage and Archive Committee. The former Archive Committee had held its last meeting in October 2010 and it was hoped to establish the new Committee later in the year.

Another outcome of the 2009-10 Review had been the establishment of a new Grants Committee and a more streamlined approach to the Society's core business of grant giving. The Grants Committee now met quarterly to assess applications, with a number of applicants being invited to present their case in person before the Committee.

The Grants Committee had reviewed and firmed up the grants criteria and narrowed down considerably the eligibility for individual awards in the interests of making the process more manageable and equitable. The decision had led to a considerable reduction in the number of applications from individuals. The number of applications from organisations had remained relatively low, reflecting perhaps the Council's decision to channel grant to or through UK registered charities or major international ones as in the case of UNESCO. This was designed to mitigate risk having regard also to HMRC guidelines. In total the Society had given grants of just over £330,000 in 2010. As the Annual Report pointed out, there was an excellent spread by country and by phase of education.

Through the International Link Scholarship Scheme, the Society had supported 13 students in 2010 who were undertaking educational gap years and who were sponsored by a charitable or not for profit link organisation. Considerable success had been achieved in bringing about a shift in the kind of students supported, with much more emphasis on students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Turning to property, the sale of the playing fields and the Butler Hall residential block of the former College at Saffron

Walden had been completed in April 2010. The Society owned one remaining property, a nursery school in Darlington, now a Sure Start Centre, which was leased to Darlington BC.

As a result of the sale of the last significant property, the Society now relied on its investment portfolio not only for income but for future growth. The increase in the value of the portfolio in 2010 from £11.4m to £18.2m was accounted for in part by the sale of Butler Hall – which yielded approximately £5m – and in part by the favourable movement in the stock market. This increase in value meant that the amount available for grant giving in 2011- based on withdrawal of 4% of capital value - was considerably higher than in 2010.

The Archive was an asset that was impossible to value. It was probably the most important collection in the world on 19th-century elementary education and teacher training. Following the sale of the former Runnymede campus of Brunel University where it was located, it would be going into temporary accommodation before moving to a long term home on the main Uxbridge campus next spring. Perhaps reflecting its location on the Runnymede campus, which was not easily accessible by public transport, figures for research visitors were relatively low. The number of enquiries remained relatively stable at around 37 over a six month period. The Director took the opportunity to show photographs of some of the material held in the Archive.

Turning to the Office, the Director thanked her two colleagues, Belinda Lawrance and Pat Bowers, for their sterling work over the last year.

She also showed photographs of the British Schools Museum at Hitchin. She said that the Society were pleased to be working with the British Schools Museum Trust on a competition for school children to design an image for the BFSS to use on certificates and medals as rewards for children in schools and organisations funded by the Society.

She paid tribute to Computer Aid International, one of the Society's key partners. Recent grants to Computer Aid International had included one for a project in New Guinea and another for a project in Kenya. The Society was now working with Computer Aid International on ideas for an in depth study of the impact of its projects.

Finally, she highlighted a number of challenges and opportunities facing the Society over the coming year. With a clear sense of mission, robust governance arrangements, a wider network and a considerable increase in the value of its

portfolio, the Society was in a strong position, as the Annual Report demonstrated. Now there was a need to generate more high quality applications for grants, to raise the Society's profile and to promote innovation.

The President thanked the Director for her report.

## **AGM11/05**

### **2010 Audited Accounts**

The Treasurer made a brief report on the Accounts. He said that distributions from the Common Investment Fund had risen reflecting the increase in the value of the investment portfolio. Bank interest had risen primarily as a result of the injection of funds from the proceeds of sale of Butler Hall. Rental income continued to be received for the Nursery School at Darlington. Over 72% of total income received had been distributed by way of grants. Support costs and governance costs were almost the same as in the previous year, once property support costs were excluded. The overall net surplus of around £60,000 was similar to the previous year's figure.

He said that the Society's investments had performed very well, resulting in a net movement in funds of £1.8m. Quarterly review meetings were held with the Society's Investment Managers. The Society's total funds at the end of the year amounted to just under £18.5m, made up almost exclusively of the investment portfolio. All were free reserves, apart from £745,000 in restricted funds.

In conclusion, therefore, he said that the Society was in a healthy financial position and he thanked the Director and the staff as well as the auditors for their work.

There was a question about the Restricted Funds. In response the Treasurer confirmed that most of them continued to be active.

There being no more questions, 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.

## **AGM11/06**

### **Appointments**

#### President

Rt Hon David Lammy MP having indicated his willingness to continue as President was re-elected with acclamation.

### Vice-President

Professor Richard Aldrich having indicated his willingness to continue as Vice-President was re-elected with acclamation.

### Chair

Mr Roger Howarth was confirmed as Chair for the second year of his second term of office.

### Treasurer

Mr David Swain was confirmed as Treasurer for the third year of his third term of office.

### Auditors

The Treasurer proposed and the Chairman seconded the appointment of Chantrey Vellacott DFK as the Society's Auditors. This was agreed unanimously.

### Members of Council

The recommendation that the minimum number of Councillors should be 12 and the maximum 20, to be reviewed annually, was approved.

The Director read the names of those members of Council who were due for re-election and who had confirmed that they were willing to stand. They were:-

- Mr Charles Crawford
- Mr Graham Kingsley
- Dr Emily Tomlinson

The Chair of Council paid tribute to the retiring Council Member, Mr Peter Fishpool, and thanked him very warmly for his contribution.

In addition the following had been recommended by the Council for election:

- Professor David Chiddick
- Ms Shubhi Rao
- Mr Stephen Ross
- Dr Jaz Saggu
- Mr David Stephens
- Mr David Zahn

All were elected unanimously.

**Presentations**

The President introduced Professor Valsa Koshy, Director of the Brunel Able Children's Education Centre and Founder of the Urban Scholars Programme, Brunel University, and Carole Portman Smith, Programme Co-ordinator. They gave a presentation on the background to the establishment of the Programme in 2000 and its subsequent development. The Programme was a unique intervention for urban students, based on the belief that education was at the core of an enlightened and fulfilling life. The scholars, who came from 30 schools across 9 London local authorities, attended the University one Saturday a month. Schools were issued with selection criteria to support teachers in their search for students from disadvantaged backgrounds who had the potential for high achievement but who might not necessarily be achieving their best. A multifaceted approach was adopted incorporating an interactive teaching style. Specific teaching was offered in Mathematics, English, Critical Thinking and Science. Motivational speakers worked with the students. The scholars' parents also benefited from talks on the importance of early planning to go to university, how to research career paths and how to support their children's education. Undergraduate ambassadors worked with the children. Overall, 80% of students achieved or exceeded their learning targets. Brunel were very grateful to the BFSS for their support for the Programme. The BFSS Scholars from Southwark, who had to get up very early on a Saturday morning to travel to Uxbridge for a 9.30am start, had a 100% attendance, with the Hillingdon Scholars not far off with 95% attendance. Following questions the President thanked Professor Koshy and Ms Portman Smith very warmly for their presentation.

The President then introduced Bethan Williams, Afghanistan Programmes Manager for Children in Crisis, and James Hickman, Trust and Major Donor Manager. Ms Williams said that Children in Crisis had been working in Afghanistan for 13 years. The war had had a devastating impact on infrastructure and 400 people were still being displaced every day. Barriers to education included the following: much greater value was placed on the education of sons than of daughters; the school day was very short, which meant that a lot of studying needed to take place outside school; 48% of marriages were between boys and girls under 18; 90% of the population were engaged in vulnerable employment which did not yield a reliable income stream; and there was violence towards children in schools and in homes. Children in Crisis were trying to break down the barriers to education. They tried to employ female staff wherever possible, they invited parents to visit and they ran child rights training sessions.

The aim was to reintegrate children back into schools by establishing and operating community-based education centres with an emphasis on ensuring that as many girls as possible were provided with access to education. They were very grateful for BFSS grant, which had supported the establishment of four centres in and around Kabul. In 2010 there were some 265 children – including 204 girls – attending accelerated learning classes in the centres to prepare them to be reintegrated into government schools in grade 2. Peer educators had been recruited to each of the four centres and in 2010 it had proved possible to recruit all female peer educators. Following questions, the President thanked Ms Williams very warmly for her presentation.

**AGM11/08**

**Concluding Remarks and Date of Next Meeting**

The President said that he was very pleased indeed to be engaged with the Society. As someone who represented one of the poorest constituencies in London, who had a Christian background, and who had experience in the fields of education and international relations, he felt that there was an excellent fit between his interests and experience and the work of the BFSS. He looked forward to helping to promote the activities of the Society.

The President announced that the next Annual General meeting would be held in late May 2012 (since arranged for Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May at 2pm). He then declared the meeting closed at 3.30 pm.

Minuted by:

Secretary

Authenticated by:

Chairman

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