

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH  
& FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY HELD AT THE NUT  
HEADQUARTERS, HAMILTON HOUSE, MABLEDON  
PLACE, LONDON WC1H 9BD AT 3.05PM ON FRIDAY 23  
MAY 2014**

Present: Rt Hon David Lammy MP (President)  
Professor Richard Aldrich (Vice-  
President)  
Professor S R Hodgkinson (Chair)  
Rev D F Tennant (Vice-Chair)  
Mr S J King (Treasurer)  
Mr J Bell  
Mrs P Bowers  
Mrs E Charlesworth  
Mr V Craggs  
Ms C A Emmet  
Mrs F Dodwell  
Ms M Francois  
Mrs A Hillyard  
Ms D Hoy  
Mr D R Hoyle  
Mr J Kidd  
Mr S J King  
Mr G T Kingsley  
Ms S Lane Cawte  
Mr P E Miller  
Rev Prof S C Orchard  
Ms M Patel  
Dr B Ramm  
Mr T Ransome  
Mr S A Ross  
Dr J Saggu  
Ms R Stephens  
Mr D A Swain  
Prof L Thomas  
Dr E J Tomlinson  
Dr I Turner  
Dr E I Waitt  
Ms E J Weale  
Mr S J Wordsworth  
Mr B A York

In Attendance: Mrs I Wilde (Secretary) BFSS  
Mr R J Goatcher (Finance Manager)  
BFSS  
Mrs B R Lawrance, BFSS

Introduction: The President sought and received agreement to start the meeting at 3.05pm (ie earlier than 3.20pm which was the time originally stated).

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

**GM14/01**

**Apologies for Absence** were received from Dr Hazel Bagworth-Mann, Mr Ayodele Bandele, Mr Raymond Beven, Rev Inderjit Bhogal, Mrs Jean Bingham, Mr Peter Bond, Ms Lynne Broadbent, Dr Geoffrey Chorley, Mr Charles Crawford, Mr Robert Dimsdale, Mrs Pamela Draycott, Mr Raymond Elson, Mr Arthur Giles, Mr Roger Howarth, Ms Sandra Lawman, Mrs Yvonne Limbrick, Ms Ijeoma Okoli, Professor Joy Palmer-Cooper, Mrs Meg Reed, Mr Malcolm Ridge, Mrs Margaret Rollason, Rev Geoffrey Roper, Bishop Mano Rumalshah, Mr David Stephens, Mr Tony Stevens, Rev John Sutcliffe, Mrs Joyce Taylor, Miss Gillian Wood and Ms Claire Yardley.

**GM14/02**

**Members' Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest in relation to matters on the agenda.

**GM14/03**

**Presentation on proposed amendments to the Charter and Statutes**

Mr Stephen Ross introduced a presentation on the proposed amendments to the Charter and Statutes. He explained that the Council had appointed a Constitutional Working Party under his Chairmanship to carry forward the work and he paid tribute to the contribution made by members of the Working Party and BFSS professional staff. The proposed amendments had been approved by the Council and, following informal consultations, lawyers had reported that neither the Privy Council Office nor the Charity Commission had any comments.

He said that the review of the Charter and Statutes was one of the actions coming out of the 2009/10 review of the future of the Society. It had become increasingly clear that there was a need to bring the Statutes up to date and enshrine good governance practice and principles. There was also a need to clarify the Society's grant making powers. Opportunity had been taken too to demonstrate public benefit in accordance with Charity Commission guidelines.

He reported that, so far as possible, the approach had been to leave the Charter intact as a historic document, which respected the Society's heritage and the fact that it was rooted in the Christian tradition. While recognising that historically the Society had fulfilled its objects within its own schools and

colleges, there was however a need to clarify its remit to include the giving of grants and financial assistance more widely and to reflect the reality of current grant giving.

In summary, he said that the Royal Charter and Statutes defined the broad framework of the rules governing the Society. The proposed amendments sought to reflect the points that had come out of the 2009/10 review and to reaffirm the Society's purpose while building in sufficient flexibility for further development over time.

Professor Steve Hodkinson then focused on some of the most significant of the proposed amendments to the Statutes. He said that in a number of respects the proposals represented a sharp shift in the relationship between the Membership and the governing body. In particular, the Council would give up the right to nominate retiring Council Members for re-election. In future, the right to nominate candidates for election to the Council would rest solely with the Membership. Further, with the introduction of postal voting, Members who were unable to attend the AGM would still be able to vote in elections.

Under other proposed changes he said that the introduction of fixed terms of office for Council Members would provide opportunity for regularly refreshing Council Membership. The reduction in the maximum size of the Council agreed at the AGM would have the advantage of creating space to bring in non-Council Members on Committees.

Another significant proposal was that Membership of the Society would be opened up to organisations, which would make it possible to bring in people with fresh ideas working in the field. Membership would be streamlined by making it possible to remove from the register those Members who failed to contact the Society or respond over a period of more than 12 months ie in response to invitations to two AGMs.

Finally, he explained that, under transitional provisions, the initial term of office of eligible Council Members – if re-elected – would be staggered depending on length of service ie the first generation would serve one year, the second generation two years and the third generation three years.

The President thanked Mr Ross and Professor Hodkinson and invited discussion other than on points relating to Membership, which were the subject of Dr Waitt's paper.

In discussion questions were raised on the reason for deleting the word "existing" in one place in the preamble to the Charter but retaining it elsewhere, on the rationale for keeping reference to "intelligent reading of the Bible" in a multi faith

society, and on the appropriateness of the Council retaining power to make unsecured loans. In response Professor Hodkinson said that the point about consistency with regard to use of the word "existing" would be examined and that any loans whether secured or unsecured could only be made if they were consistent with the charity's purpose. Mr Ross explained that "intelligent reading of the Bible" was being retained for historical reasons;

The President concluded the discussion by thanking those who had contributed.

**GM14/04**

**Paper by Dr Ian Waitt**

The President then invited Dr Waitt to speak to his Paper.

After some initial recollections, Dr Waitt said that he had decided to withdraw his Paper in light of assurances given to him by Professor Hodkinson over lunch that there would be a report back in a year's time on arrangements for involving the Membership and there would be more communication with Members. Professor Hodkinson confirmed that, as he had explained in his presentation, Members would indeed have more involvement in the work of the Society. Various proposals would be brought forward on which any Member could submit comments in a year's time. Further, any Member could submit a Paper through the Secretary. The Membership would be able to judge progress in a year's time.

The President thanked Dr Waitt for his Paper and Professor Hodkinson for his response.

**GM14/05**

**Resolution for the purpose of amending the Charter for which a formal resolution will be submitted to the Privy Council**

The President called for a vote on the Council's resolution for amending the Charter, noting that a majority of at least three quarters of the Members present and voting at the Meeting was required to pass the resolution.

Voting took place. All those present voted in favour. There were no votes against and no abstentions. The President reported that the resolution had been passed unanimously.

**GM14/06**

**Resolution for the purpose of amending the Statutes for which a formal resolution will be submitted to the Privy Council**

The President called for a vote on the Council's resolution for amending the Statutes, noting that a majority of at least three

quarters of the Members present and voting at the Meeting was required to pass the resolution.

Voting took place. All those present voted in favour. There were no votes against and no abstentions. The President reported that the resolution had been passed unanimously.

**AGM14/07**

**Concluding Remarks**

The President closed the meeting at 4.00pm and expressed the hope that the Society would now be able to move forward with its programme of modernisation.

Minuted by:

Secretary

Authenticated by:

Chairman