

Bedford School Foundation

Company Registration Number 4551824

Charity Registration Number 1095681

BEDFORD SCHOOL FOUNDATION

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD VIA 'ZOOM' ON SATURDAY 5th DECEMBER 2020 AT 11.15am

Present:

Mr LJ Feaver	<i>Chairman/Trustee</i>
Mr J Hodgson	<i>Head Master/Trustee</i>
Mr DSM Pinkney	<i>Trustee</i>
Mr JH Rowe	
Mr PJ Valentine	
The Rt Hon Lord Taylor of Holbeach CBE PC	
Mr GD Quarry	
Mr AJ Ormerod	
Mr SC Gray	
Mr R Janahi	

In attendance: Mr HAJ Maltby *Clerk and Company Secretary*

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed members and thanked them for attending the first and hopefully last 'virtual' Foundation AGM. The Chairman introduced Mr Maltby, the new Clerk to the Foundation who joined last year and thanked him for his help and support during a difficult time.

2. Apologies

Mr R Banks	Mr CM Johnson	Mr M Rhodes
Mrs AL Barnes	Mr GER Blakely	Mr RPF Shorten
Mr HGD Brooks	Mr MJ Deacon	Mrs H Turnham
Mr JH Castle	Wg Cdr RW Gamblin	Wg Cdr Turnham
Mr SJ Haggie	Dr HH Henn	Mr RE Gordon
Mr T Markham	Mr CJC Ibbett	Mr GFG Lloyd
Col. JMW Stenhouse	Mr WB Kendall	Mr JRB Godber
Mr M Sismey-Durrant	Mr P Wallace	Mr MGB Shaw
Mr PM Young		

3. Minutes of the Seventeenth AGM held on 11th May 2019

These were passed unanimously as a true record of the meeting having been proposed by Mr DSM Pinkney and seconded by Mr JH Rowe.

4. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising.

Bedford School Foundation

Company Registration Number 4551824

Charity Registration Number 1095681

5. Chairman's Report

The Chairman commented that this had been an extraordinary year in so many ways due to the pandemic. Ordinarily the AGM would have been held in May but due to government restrictions this had not been possible. The Chairman noted that his comments would address Foundation activity during the 2020 calendar year. To date, the Foundation has received just over £130,000, with a sizeable donation from one individual. It is pleasing to note that in the absence of any formal fundraising campaign the Foundation has still received meaningful contributions from donors, both large and small, for which the Trustees are very grateful.

One of the highlights of the year is the annual service of Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors. Ordinarily we would have between 50-60 invited guests at the Chapel service and lunch afterwards. This year the Foundation created an online version of the event which attracted over 300 viewings. The Chairman encouraged everyone to watch the production, if they have not done so, which featured OB Miles Young. Going forward the Foundation will look to see whether we produce a similar feature alongside the traditional physical celebration. Mr Maltby commented that school tutors had been asked to show the video during tutor lessons, which had raised the profile of the Foundation amongst the boys.

A Foundation member observed at last year's AGM that more needed to be done to promote the Foundation. Online events have enabled us to do this, reaching a far wider audience than normal, and some of the other initiatives mentioned below should also help to achieve this objective.

The Chairman reported that he had written to all Foundation members in early May to explain that because of government restrictions it had not been possible to physically hold the AGM in May. Accompanying the letter had been a fascinating piece from the Head Master outlining the School response to the initial lockdown and how different parts of the community were supporting each other.

The Foundation has continued to look at the backend processes associated with the Foundation and has introduced an online giving process making it much easier to donate. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 several facility related projects had to be cancelled in the summer. The one project that did go ahead was the refurbishment of the sculpture studio, largely paid for by a generous donation from OB Gilbert Lloyd.

Looking forward, the Clerk is working on a document entitled 'A decade of giving and changing lives' which will showcase the support that both the Foundation and the School have received during the last decade from the community, which has enabled the school management team to further enhance the educational experience of the pupils. It is anticipated that the document will be distributed early in the new year.

Mr Gray asked if any of the recent donations had been earmarked for scholarships or whether they are being kept back for a large project in the future. In general terms, the Chairman commented that the Foundation supports the strategic direction which is set by the School governors as this identifies those areas which may require financial assistance from the Foundation. However, where a donor has made a specific request as to how their donations are to be applied, for example scholarships, the Foundation oversees that these wishes are followed. Unallocated, unrestricted donations are held in a general fund which supports the areas of greatest need, in line with the School's strategic objectives, which may include capital projects or scholarships.

Bedford School Foundation

Company Registration Number 4551824

Charity Registration Number 1095681

The Head Master provided a general update from the perspective of the school. Most of the financial donations are now received through the Foundation, although there still some coming in via the Bedford School Trust, which was established many years before the Foundation. For example, more than £1.2m has been received from two significant legacies this year, which is in addition to the £130k received through the Foundation.

The whole school community, teachers, and staff alike, have coped well with the challenges caused by the pandemic and the inevitable change to school life. The Foundation and Bedford School Trust have provided invaluable support. For example, the Bedford School Trust recently paid for every member of the academic staff to have a laptop to help facilitate teaching both in the classroom and online. In addition, the pupils themselves now bring in their own devices which compliments the classroom teaching experience. The pandemic has forced the school to look at the way it uses technology in the classroom, some of which will remain when the school returns to normal.

Philanthropy has helped the school in several ways this year, such as the refurbishment of the sculpture studio, provision of scholarships and the purchase of technology. The Foundation has also given the Head Master more flexible criteria in granting scholarships, which has helped to increase the take up of scholarships. Historically, the maximum that could be awarded was 25% of tuition fees from the Saville and Roach funds. These restrictions have been eased to allow a slightly more generous award if the prospective pupil shows exceptional talent. On average £1.4m is assigned to scholarships and bursaries on an annual basis, which represents between 6-8% of annual tuition income, which is well above the figure the Charities Commission would expect from a school our size. The school hardship fund has helped 25 families with tuition fees during the pandemic.

While it has been a tumultuous period for the school and society, there have been some significant benefits. For example, the school's accelerated use of technology in and out of the classroom will serve the school well in the future once things return to normal.

Mr Quarry thanked the Head Master for his leadership during this difficult period for everyone.

6. Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for Year Ended 31st December 2019

The Report and Accounts had been approved by the Board of Trustees earlier in the year and sent out to Foundation members for comment in May. The Clerk confirmed that he had received no comments from members.

7. Governance

The Chairman highlighted that there are several Trustees whose term of office will complete at next year's AGM. Mr Pinkney and Mr Godber were thanked for their hard work, help and support over the years that they have been trustees. The Chairman noted that we would be interested to know of any potential trustees that maybe interested in joining the Foundation.

8. Auditor

On the recommendation of the Clerk, Collett Hulance was reappointed by members present as the Foundation's auditors.

Bedford School Foundation

Company Registration Number 4551824

Charity Registration Number 1095681

9. Any Other Business

The Head Master thanked everyone associated with the Foundation for their help and support during the year.

Mr Janahi, a new Foundation member, made several observations regarding the operation of the Foundation. It was agreed that a separate meeting would be organised in the new year with the Chair, Head Master, and the Clerk to discuss these in more detail, as the scope of these discussions fell outside the remit of the meeting.

10. Date of Next AGM

A date in the Summer Term 2021 is to be confirmed.

Mr L J Feaver
Chairman