

THE CHOLMELEIAN SOCIETY
127th Annual General Meeting of The Cholmeleian Society
Remote meeting – Covid-19 lockdown

44 participants

MINUTES

1. Welcome

Richard Brewster (RDB) welcomed OCs to the meeting, which has a record numbers of OCs present. Apologies have been received, notably from OCs in Australia who would have been keen to attend barring time difference.

RDB introduced the full OC General Committee before moving to the items on the agenda.

2. Minutes of the 126th Annual General Meeting.

The approval of the Minutes of the AGM was proposed by Peter Jensen, seconded by Hazem Megerisi

The minutes of the 126th meeting were approved unanimously
Matter Arising from last year's minutes will be picked up under the Sports report below.

3. Reports and accounts: Rule 14(a)1.

Treasurer's report on financial matters – Tony Friend (TF)

The main activities and spending for the OC society include supporting sports teams (namely the cost of entering competitions) and providing a subsidy for Annual Lunch at House of Lords.

The 2018 Accounts included a prudent provision for Corporation Tax and in 2019 the accrual for tax has been adjusted whilst we try to establish greater certainty as to the Society's tax status.

Our investment portfolio is managed by JM Finn. Our portfolio's historic performance has been better than benchmark.

As a result of COVID 19 the markets have been very volatile in last few months. At the market's nadir markets were off by nearly 30% and as in the Notes to the Accounts on 3 April 2020, the value of our portfolio was down 16.3% (benchmark 16.7% down).
At 9 June, as the value in Q2 was up 11.8, there was a resulting net year to date decline of 3% (against a 4.52% benchmark)
The portfolio is valued at Approx £325,000

Hazem Megerisi proposed the approval of the accounts, Jon Polledri seconded

¹ References are to relevant rules in 'Rules of the Cholmeleian Society'.

The accounts were approved unanimously

4. To elect Officers: Rules 14, 9 and 8(a)

Resolution to extend the current President's term in office (Rule 9)

Proposed by John Zani and seconded by Adam Benson

Election approved unanimously

Nick Friend and Alberto Fraquelli are proposed for election to the Committee Proposed

Adam, seconded by John Zani

Both appointments approved unanimously

Adam Benson, Dein Harry, Ruth Khaw, John Zani are proposed for re-election

Proposed by Tony Friend seconded by John Roberts

All appointments approved unanimously

5. To receive the following reports.

President's Report – RDB

Highlights of the year

- In the early part of the year there were 12 OC events including reunions of year groups and career evenings covering a variety of different business sectors. These were building up to our sell-out flagship dinner on 18th March, which reluctantly has had to be cancelled. We are contacting all dinner ticket holders and providing a full refund.
- Over 500 OCs have physically attended events since our last AGM and that ignores all the informal gatherings of OCs such as lunch clubs etc.

Lockdown activities

OC activity has not ceased with lockdown

- In terms of communication it has increased – and is two-way communication
- Weekly newsletters being sent out by the Development Office
- Far greater feed-back and participation from OCs
- OC meetings have continued using Zoom and some fruitful decisions have taken place remotely to increase the level of activity of both OC Sports and the Business Section.

RDB updated the meeting on the activities of the OC Business Section

In recent years, the greatest demand for the OC Business Section has been careers advice and OCs have generously given time to help both Highgate pupils as well as partner Schools' pupils as they navigate an ever-changing economic landscape. Some of the sectors covered are the - creative arts, entrepreneurship, sustainability, technology and hospitality/leisure and law. In all cases OCs have emphasised the increasing need for businesses to think more about social responsibility. All these events provide the opportunity for networking and we look forward to being able to meet face to face again for more OC social interaction.

Our first online event: a webinar with a panel of OC entrepreneurs is being broadcast on 24 June.

Other points of note:

The Committee has several specialist working groups providing invaluable assistance. One such has been the Communications group who are helping us work with the School to re-establish an interactive website for all OCs and our various societies and clubs.

RDB thanked the OC General Committee for their support.

RDB thanked the Development Office for their support.

Sports Section Report

RDB handed over to Alberto Fraquelli to present the Sport's' Report.

The first OC Sports Committee meeting was held on 20 May, outlining plans for increased participation from OCs and Sports Clubs. The focus was on three pillars:

1. Framework –assigned our roles and responsibilities creating three core new roles:
 - a. Intra-club communications role: who will liaise with our Sport Clubs and cross collaborate with regards to best practices for recruitment, communications and fixtures
 - b. OC Community Communications role: engage with other OC societies and sections to enhance exposure for key events and milestones
 - c. Social events secretary: to work with Stuart Evans to prepare a calendar of events for individual and collective Sports Clubs.
2. Recruitment – building a strategy with the school to enhance communications with recent leavers from school and university to participate in competitive OC sport
3. Website – working with the CWP to put our best foot forward and build appropriate templates for each Sport Club to manage their own page

The OC Sports Club is proud to have a diverse representation and in particular of the work Nina Sorensen has been doing to build female OC Sport. The Netball team had two successful fixtures against the school which they won, despite playing very rarely together. With Stephanie Pride's support Nina will be working towards playing other schools in an alumni fixture beyond competing in a league.

Regarding the Matters Arising from last year's AGM:

- Eton Fives, the number of courts available nationally were significantly reduced last year due to renovations at Eton School of their sport facility. Thanks to Emily Scoones, an OC who sits of the Eton Fives National Association, we understand that the Eton courts may be available again this year. Emily worked with **Jonny** Ho to host a very successful "Back to Fives" event at Highgate School which was attended by 17 female and male participants. They hope to host another event this year.

- HWL event the Sports Committee is working on hosting a BBQ at HWL in September involving all Sports Club and hoping to increase the exposure and connectivity of all Sport Clubs for the wider OC community.

6. Any Other Business: Rule 14(d).

Questions had been asked re HWL (covered in Head's address) and future events. The OC Committee is watching national changes and will begin plans to organise events, including the Annual Dinner, when it is possible to do so.

The formal business of the meeting was concluded

7. Address from the Head

Adam Pettitt (ASP) thanked RDB for his efforts and his delight at the OC BS 'rebirth'.

HWL

- Girls sport increases the School's need for HWL. School-OC need in this area aligned
- Barnet Council are now aware and have been approached for a request for a pre-app meeting, to develop HWL for school and OC use: improve the club house and the grounds (short, medium and long term improvements)
- Barnet have also been engaged re the School taking on the lease
- Barnet are interested in Highgate's educational help
- We would like Barnet's views on the architectural plans, which have been shared with the OC Sports club
- This is a once in a generational opportunity for school – especially Co-Ed – sport
- OC Leadership would be able to have an agreement which would enshrine their usage, managing competing needs and usage
- ASP paid tribute to the OCs involved for driving this plan forward
- The costs will be considerable but Governors agree the need; the School have taken on the grounds costs in the interim. Support will make this project happen significantly sooner.
- All weather pitches may be a longer term ambition (of up to ten years perhaps), but improvements to the club house will be sooner
- Good movement on HWL, ASP thanked OCs for their efforts

Website

- ASP underlined the brilliant work of the OC Communications Working Party
- The School Communications Director will lead on this project and will work closely with OCs to take this forwards, in the best and most 'future proof' way
- The website would be private to OCs
- Due to Covid-19, the completion date may be February 2021, which means this project should be completed under Richard's stewardship

ASP thanked RDB again for his time and efforts

Anti-Racism

- All schools are dealing with issues around racism, brought to the fore by George Floyd's death
- All OCs – especially BAME OCs - have been encouraged to talk to the school about their experiences, should they wish to do so
- Young black alumni have described their experiences of covert, systematic and prolonged racism whilst at school.
- Highgate is not atypical – this is systemic to all institutions and often a result of a lack of awareness, sensitivity and education
- We, Highgate, want to move to being actively anti-racist
- A rush to action is not the answer
- Listening is not inaction
- Salima Virji is heading up this work, with two lead Governors; a staff and pupil working party will also be set up to look at our curriculum and the way they teach
- This is not the extent of our ambitions
- No one in this situation is neutral: we are all involved in finding a solution and changes needed to build a better and fairer society

ASP thanked everyone who donated towards his marathon efforts, raising £75,000 for laptops for Year 12s in our partner schools. For context, around 3,000 students in Camden do not have access to a digital device.

ASP handed back to RDB, RDB thanked ASP for his address and for his commitments on HWL and the website.

Conclusion

RDB closed the meeting at 7.10pm. thanking all OCs for attending and supporting the Society.

Emily Clarke, Honorary Secretary
16 June