



The New Beacon

Parents' Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd November 2022

Present

Headmaster	Mike Piercy (MP)
Chair	Astrid Henwood (AH)
Secretary	Gina Porritt (GP)
Events	Cheryl Leonard (CL)
Treasurer (outgoing)	Liezl van de Merwe (LvM)
Treasurer (incoming)	Kate White (KW)

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Lizzie Humphreys, Lou Moodie, Phil Tippin, Clarissa Sumovskij, Holger Binding, Christeena Sun, Yasmin Marar, Jasmine Hartley.

Adoption of the Minutes from the last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM held on 5th October 2021 were accepted as being a true record of the proceedings with no matters arising. Their adoption was proposed by Sarah Hinds and seconded by Emma Dowell.

AGM Scheduling

AH proposed that all future AGMs are scheduled immediately prior to the Rep Meeting in the Spring Term. Back-to-back scheduling will optimise calendars for all involved. This was seconded by Lucy Cleaver.

The Treasurer's Report

LvM shared the year's financial information. The NBPA has nearly £70,000 Net Current Assets with just over £53,000 in the bank.

Overall profit of just over £23,000 compared to £4,700 last year.

Profits obtained from:

School shop - nearly £18,000
The Ball - £5,600
Summer fete - £6,600
Boys' disco - £1,200
Movie Night screening - just shy of £500
Christmas Fayre - £1000
Quiz Night - just shy of £500
Shopping portal - £135
Seals - broke even

Expenses incurred:

Gifts to teachers - £1200 (total over the year; xmas and year end)
Goodtill POS system - £760 (*incl x2 ipads*)
Ice cream van for the boys at year end - £650
General expenses - £470 (*incl Quickbooks and insurance*)

The Chairperson's Report

See attached for full report.

Election of new Committee members

The 2021-2022 Sub Committee resigned en bloc and the 2022-2023 Sub Committee were voted in en bloc. The motion was passed unanimously.

Liezl van de Merwe resigned and is replaced by Kate White. The motion was proposed by Sarah Hinds and seconded by Emma Dowell.

Details of the Committee and Sub Committee are set out at the end of this report.

The Headmaster's Report

MP announced planning permission for a new nursery building, location to be confirmed. Construction will begin in January and it will be open in time for September 2023.

MP outlined the plan for Mrs Sarah Brownsden's transition to the school in the Spring term. There will be an invitation coming out in due course for early in the Spring term welcoming parents to a Q&A with Mrs Brownsden. Following this there will be smaller, year group based Q&A arrangements, all of which will be communicated in the coming months.

MP announced a second mental health conference to be held at the school in March 2023. These will follow on from the success of the previous mental health conference and it is intended for parents and educators. Details will be coming in due course.

Closure of the Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting ended.

**Committee and Sub-Committee of The New Beacon Parents'
Association 2022/2023**

Chair	Astrid Henwood
Secretary	Gina Porritt
Treasurer	Kate White
Events	Cheryl Leonard
Merchandising	Lucy Cleaver
School Shop	Sarah Stigant
School Shop	Jane Peterkin
School Shop	Yuan Ma
School Shop	Virginia Yordanova
School Shop	Katherine Mitchell
Seals	Sarah Hinds
Nursery	Yasmin Marar
Nursery	Jasmin Hartley
Reception	Lizzie Humphreys
1	Laura Edwards
1	Deborah Adams
2	Stephanie Belcourt
2	Laura Fletcher
3	Anjulika Kaul
3	Zoe Rogers
3	Irina Zykova
3	Rajashri Chakraborty
4	Harriet Ashdown
4	Alex Garfield
4	Emma Dowell
4	Richard Lawrance
4	Nancy Jones
5	Phil Tippin

5	Clarissa Sumovskij
5	Holger Binding
5	Lou Moodie
5	Christeena Sun
6	Gina Porritt
7	Melissa Tinkler
7	Amanda Saunders
7	Sarah Hinds
7	Jen Coogan
7	Jane Peterkin
7	Hannah Czerkawska
7	Tori Bryden
8	Liz Cowie

The Chair's Report

As we turn to a new year and reflect on the news and the events that continue to shake the world with alarming frequency, we are reminded of the privilege we have as families at The New Beacon. We also recognise that that privilege doesn't exempt us from the effects of illness, war, the cost-of-living crisis and change.

The NBPA was founded twenty years ago, and our stated objectives remain relevant. When we consider our activities, we are careful that they meet the following objectives:

- To Build Community for boys and parents
- To Raise Funds for boys and local charities
- To Serve the school community

These aspects are even more cherished in times of unpredictability and change. The work of the NBPA is deeply appreciated by the school and our events are some of the most anticipated for the boys. We intend to continue in the same manner this year, keeping an eye on the changing landscape.

EVENTS

Last year was the first year of 'back to normal' post-pandemic and resulted in some unusual hurdles. The pandemic had put paid to events for a couple of years and without the yearly repeats, the committee found itself planning events that it hadn't experienced. With the unwavering support of the reps, we delivered several extremely successful events, of which the Christmas Fair, the Quiz, senior school disco, movie nights and the phenomenal summer fete stand out.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Jen Coogan and Liz Cowie on public record for their assistance with the summer fete. Their input not only saw the execution of one of the most successful, well attended and complemented fetes, but also bridged the chasm

caused by covid. They established a fighting team of wonderful helpers, who all know who they are, and made the fete a true joy to behold.

COMMUNITY

Emerging from Covid, we discovered that the world had changed. The three trends we identified are consistent with what we are hearing from other local schools, and we feel worth mentioning. Firstly, there are less volunteers, possibly as both parents are working. Secondly, there is lower attendance at events, possibly as less people seem to embrace going out. Thirdly, there are lower ticket sales, possibly a result of the contraction of the economy.

We have identified that we need to focus on reigniting a sense of community. To that point, I think it is worth mentioning what a wonderful event the Welcome Drinks for new parents was at the beginning of this term. We had almost double the number of attendees than we were expecting. Teachers and existing parents welcomed new parents, who were delighted and optimistic about the journey they'd chosen for their children. It was a special evening, filled with the warm camaraderie and sense of community that we hope to inspire with all our events.

With the end of the pandemic, we relaunched the Seals Swimming Club. This is an initiative where TNB parents who are signed up as paid members can use the school pool over all holidays and half terms (apart from Christmas). Membership is calculated to cover the cost of the lifeguard. In the past, this has been a highly successful programme and annually oversubscribed. Since 2021, we have struggled to break even. While Seals is certainly a service to the school community, it is not worth continuing if it is not subscribed to. The Seals Swimming Club will continue this year as we have paid members, though its future requires careful and appropriate consideration.

CHARITABLE

Last year, The NBPA was involved in fundraising for Jenny Yeats-Brown, who was tragically diagnosed with brain cancer in September 2021. We were involved in all

fundraising events, though as Jenny's condition deteriorated, some of these events were postponed and later cancelled. When events were cancelled, participants were given the option of receiving a refund or donating their ticket contribution. It is a testament to the generosity of our community that most parents donated their contributions. Some of these funds were put towards home-style pre-cooked meals for the Yeats-Brown family. The remainder of the funds will be reflected as donations in the 2023 accounts, the local charities being those requested by the Yeats-Brown family.

SCHOOL SHOP

The school shop is a considerable retail operation, which raised more than 50% of NBPA funds. The shop requires an enormous amount of work, from sorting donations, selling stock, reconciling payments; and disbursements to parents for their second-hand uniforms.

Thank you to the current volunteers for their time, effort, and unfailing smiles: Lucy Cleaver, Sarah Stigant, Jane Peterkin, Yuan Ma, Virginia Yordanova, and Katherine Mitchell.

In addition, many thanks to Lesley Harrison, who has left the shop after a sterling six years of volunteering. Thank you for your magnificent contribution, we are incredibly grateful.

The school shop is currently actively recruiting additional volunteers as two volunteers will finish at the end of the academic year when their sons move to senior school. The team is warm and efficient, and a wonderful place to make friends and meet parents across the other year groups.

TREASURY

Many thanks to our outgoing treasurer Liezl van der Merwe for her many years of service to the NBPA. During her four years as treasurer, she has not only run the treasury function but implemented many changes that have brought our backend financial operations into the 21st century. These include connecting credit card payments to the online booking

system, implementing a credit card facility in the school shop, and most recently implementing a point of sales system to automate stock and payments in the school shop.

Thank you too to our independent auditor Nicki Kurd. Nicki has been auditing the NBPA accounts free of charge for over six years. As her son moves on to senior school at the end of this academic year, Nicki will be passing the reins on to someone else. Thank you for your generous contribution of time and skills.

As the Treasurer's report highlights, we have approximately £40,000 available to pledge.

We will look to pledge these funds towards projects that benefit all boys. Suggestions received to date include:

- Non-permanent bandstand on the headmaster's lawn
- Wooden round tables and benches facing the Astro
- Seating for sports teams on the Upper
- Outdoor kitchen
- Mac suite upgrade
- Additional iPads
- Digital notice board on the wall near the school room

We will be asking parents and boys for their suggestions, and look forward to reverting in due course.

TRANSITION

Given the prolific leadership changes that have taken place this year in the country and the school (new monarch, new prime minister, new TNB head!), it should come as no surprise that we have our own much less illustrious leadership changes afoot. We will be looking for a new chair and new secretary to start in September 2023.

To ensure a seamless handover, we are hoping to run a shadow program much like Mr Piercy and Mrs Brownsdon are doing. We will advertise the position in the Spring Term.

The successful candidates will shadow the incumbent trustees in the Summer Term. There is an additional advantage in that while the chair and secretary will be retiring, the treasurer and head of events will remain for another year. This allows for streamlined knowledge transfer and a flatter learning curve. If anyone is interested in joining the NBPA team, please contact either myself or Gina.

END

In ending, as we look forward to another wonderful year at our special school, it is most important to thank the committee and subcommittee. We couldn't do this without you.