Minutes of the 132nd Annual General Meeting held 10th March 2009

at County Upper School, Bury St Edmunds

**A 01.09** Association President Alan Wright opened the AGM at 5.00pm and welcomed all those present.

**A 02.09** Present: Alan Wright (President), Linda Rutter (Secretary), Martin Goold (Treasurer), Rob Murray (Membership), Graham White (Division Secretary), Peter Dunnett, Keith Borrett, Rebecca Green (Committee), Paul Finley (Thurston), Phil Hills, Ian Nurcome (King Edward VI), Avril Dawson (Parkway MS)

**A 03.09** **Minutes** Mr Goold proposed the “the minutes of the AGM held 5th March 2008 and the accompanying Secretary’s Report which form part of the minutes, be agreed as a true record”. Mr Murray seconded and the motion was passed.

**A 04.09 Matters Arising** The donation made to Graham White which is recorded in the Secretary’s report as £250 should have been shown as £300.

**A 05.09 Apologies** No apologies had been received.

**A 06.09** It was noted that following the death of Mark Slater there was now no-one looking after the ‘retired section’ of the Association. Several members had attended the woodland burial.

**A 07.09** The Association Secretary presented her written report for 2008-09. She spoke briefly about the contents of the report and emphasised the very positive aspects of union membership for members. She suggested that the Association provide a twilight session on behaviour management by Gererd Dixie that would be free to members in order to raise the profile of the Union and provide an additional benefit.

**A 08.09 Treasurer** Mr Goold presented his report accompanied by copies of the association accounts which had been audited and were in good order. There remains a substantial balance available in the Association’s accounts. The Treasurer was pleased to report that the situation with PAYE and HMRC was now closed and in future it will be up to the individual to declare receipt of honoraria. The Association’s payment of £800 to the Teacher Support Network had not been paid during the year 2008 but this has now been rectified. St Felix Middle School has not yet requested the £500 donation that had been agreed and the order of thermometers has not yet been delivered.

**A 09.09 Membership Secretary** Mr Murray presented his report and said that membership had increased slightly to 965 members. Bury St Edmunds remains the largest association in Suffolk. He spoke of the ongoing difficulty in obtaining Newly Qualified and Newly Appointed Teacher lists from the Authority which hampers recruitment every autumn term. Mr Murray has organised a direct mailing to all members in respect of the last two meetings. While this had not increased attendance it was thought that postcards with ‘promotional messages’ on the front could be used in future to advise members of forthcoming meetings or events.

**A 10.09 Health & Safety** Mr Wright presented a written report and noted that asbestos remains a concern in many school premises. He has been attending CYP consultation groups and lately there had been a specific focus on asbestos. The other major concern for H&S is Well-Being, with stress being a growing problem. The HSC toolkit stress management audit is not being used uniformly. Schools have been told they have to sign up to the well-being scheme, and there is an on-line form to fill in but not much ever seems to come from it. Results of the survey are largely ignored and nothing seems to be done to address issues. The problem of obtaining the ‘free eye test’ was raised. The difficulty is that a free eye test is available to those who are considered ‘habitual’ users and it is this ambiguity that has led to several requests for an eye test not being met. Mr Borrett voiced his concerns about the levels of lighting in areas where VDU screens are commonly used. It was noted that whenever a school undergoes a Health & Safety inspection. staff should be asked for input. It seems this is not happening in local schools.

**A 11.09** Mr Dunnett presented a report on international matters. He continues to maintain an active interest in international affairs. The association is affiliated to Amnesty International and takes an interest in things to do with education or trades unions in particular. This year the Association donated $200 to GUPT, £100 to MAP and £50 to the Gaza Aid Appeal. Mr Dunnett proposed that we renew our affiliation to Amnesty International, seconded by Mr Goold. Mr Dunnett also proposed that we make our usual donation of $200 to GUPT, seconded by Mr Wright.

**A 12.09 Suffolk Division NUT** Graham White delivered a report on the work of the Union within Suffolk. The big issue of course is the schools reorganisation. The NUT has come up with many proposals which have been ignored. The re-organisation will be a major upheaval though the county seem to think that staff will follow pupils. CSD/HR will put staff forward for jobs unless the staff member advises them within 48 hours that they don’t want to be considered for the vacancy. Under the schools reorganisation some staff have lost TLR payments. Safeguarding was supposed to protect salaries for three years, but some staff who have received internal promotions are only being given temporary contracts. This would appear to be a move to avoid meeting commitments in the future. SCC still insist there will be no redundancies. None of the consultations has resulted in a positive response for the county and any judicial review needs to come from a parent. Forest Heath are considering such a move. It would appear that finance is the issue stopping the request for a judicial review. The county are sending out a ‘Self Evaluation’ form to staff in closing schools. While the front of the form contains the usual information ie qualifications, employment, experience etc, the reverse contains a self-evaluation and asks staff to grade themselves on categories such as honesty and sense of humour.

Apathy amongst staff is frightening, especially in academies where staff are not subject to the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document. In Trust schools redundancy pay comes out of the school’s budget which is a concern because if they need to save money by making a teacher redundant, where will they find the money for a redundancy payment? It was reported that in Haverhill TAs are being used as teachers, with tutor groups and timetabled lessons.

A Governor from a local school had requested a copy of the schools that had signed up to the schools protocol. It was sent to him by email and when he opened the document he discovered it contained contact details of one staff member for each school. This does raise concerns about the copying of documentary evidence of identity. Can SCC be trusted to guarantee protection of data? For new teachers proof of identity and qualifications must be produced and copied. The NUT is to challenge this on the basis that it should only be kept for as long as it is required, in other words, until identity is proven.

**A 13.09 Young Teachers’ Conference** Paul Thurston was our delegate to the Young Teachers’ conference held at Stoke Rochford last June. He said the main topic of discussion was workload and the whole weekend was very worthwhile.

**A 14.09** Secretary proposed “that the reports as given be accepted”. Mr Borrett seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

**A 15.09** Treasurer proposed “that a fee of £73.50 be paid to each of the two auditors Mr N and Mrs M Freeman for auditing the Bury St Edmunds and District Association accounts for the year ended 31st December 2008”. Mrs Rutter seconded the proposal which was then passed unanimously.

**A 16.09** Mr Wright proposed “that each Association delegate to the NUT Annual Conference Cardiff 2009 is paid a sustenance allowance of £90 per day up to a maximum of 5 days, depending on attendance. This allowance is in addition to travel costs incurred”. Mr K Borrett seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

**A 17.09** Mrs Rutter proposed “that the honoraria paid to the Membership Secretary be increased to £133”. Mr Goold seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

**A 18.09** Mrs Rutter proposed “that the honoraria paid to the Treasurer be increased to £200”. Mr Borrett seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

**A 19.09** Mr Wright thanked officers, committee members and delegates to Division and Annual Conference over the past year for their work and proposed “that the agreed honoraria as detailed in the AGM notes be paid”. Mr Borrett seconded the motion which was then passed unanimously.

**A 20.09** Mr Alan Wright was then installed as President of the Association for 2008-09.

**A 21.09** The Secretary proposed “that the auditors of the Bury St Edmunds Association accounts for the year ending 31st December 2009 be Mr N & Mrs M Freeman”. The motion was seconded by Mr Goold and passed unanimously.

**A 22.09** The Secretary proposed “that the Association Scrutineers 2009-10 be appointed by the Association Committee if so required”. Seconded by Mr P Dunnett and passed unanimously.

**A 23.09** Mr Dunnett proposed “that this Association nominates Christine Blower for the position of General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers”. Seconded by Mrs L Rutter and passed unanimously.

**A 24.09** There were no other motions submitted in writing prior to the AGM for consideration.

**A 25.09** There being no further business Mr Wright thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 6.30pm

Signed .....................................................................................

Dated .......................................................................................