



جمعية الصداقة البريطانية اللبنانية  
THE BRITISH LEBANESE  
ASSOCIATION

Registered in England and Wales as a Limited Company  
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Minutes of the  
**Annual General Meeting**  
of  
**The British Lebanese Association Ltd.**  
held on  
Tuesday the 24th of June 2014  
at  
The Royal Thames Yacht Club  
60 Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7LF

Those present:

Sir David Richmond - Chairman  
Mrs. Maria Shammas - Vice Chairman  
Mrs. Lisa Zakhem – Hon Secretary  
Members of the Executive Committee  
Members of the Association

Mrs. Dahlia Salam Rishani  
Mr. Rajai El Khouri  
Ms. Rania Nassar  
Mr. David MacLennan  
Dr. Mohammad Barbir  
Lady Hala Cochrane  
Mr. Hisham El Solh  
Mr. Robert Bell  
Mr. Usamah Farah  
Mr. Anthony Dawton  
Mr. Shaz Ahmed  
Mr. David Turner  
Mr. Billy Dawton

## 1. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 19:00

The Chairman confirmed that the meeting had been convened in accordance with the companies act 1985, with written notices sent to all British Lebanese Association members, and public announcements were made in the Times and Daily Telegraph. He welcomed all members present and confirmed that with the attendance of 12 members of the Association, and 3 proxies received, there was a quorum for the meeting.

## 2. Apologies

Mr. George Shweiry - Hon. Treasurer  
Mrs. Myrna Boustany  
Mr. Douglas Gordon

Ms Joumana Karouni  
Mr George Fayad



### 3. Minutes of the previous AGM

The Chairman reported that copies of the minutes of the previous AGM were sent individually to all the British Lebanese Association members, and that no objections had been received. The Chairman put to the meeting that the minutes of the previous AGM be declared a true record of the proceedings of that AGM. The motion was proposed by Maria Shammass, and seconded by Lisa Zakhem and the minutes duly signed by the Chairman.

### 4. Chairman report 2012

#### THE PAST YEAR 2013 - 2014

During the past year the Association has been proud to help the British and Lebanese community to celebrate Lebanon's 70th Year of independence by sponsoring a wonderful production of Gibran the Play at the Theatre Royal Haymarket. This was a thrilling performance which filled this historic theatre on a cold and wet November evening and I was particularly pleased to see so many of our friends and supporters attending.

We look forward to supporting similar prestigious events and our Events Committee are already looking at organising another major event in the spring of 2015. It is too early to go into detail but it is envisaged that it will be different, fun and raise substantial funds for our Scholarship Fund here in London and the other charities we support in Lebanon. As ever we are delighted to have an ambassador in Beirut, Tom Fletcher, who is so supportive of our efforts and continues to encourage us onto greater things.

Most recently we co-sponsored with the Arab Banking Association the launch of Ghassan Hasbani's new book on the Economic future of Lebanon and the Middle East. This was very well attended and I hope we can arrange more such joint events.

The Scholarship Fund is at the heart of the Association's work, and we have set ourselves the task of raising the profile of what has been a very successful programme. While the Said Foundation has been hospitable in allowing us to use its electronic scholarship application on its website for the past two years, our Scholarship committee is keen to have an application form on our own BLA website. To this end we asked for a several quotes from web designers to build a suitable application form .

I understand that the most competitive quote has been selected and that we should have an electronic application form in place by the end of the summer. We are also seeking to set up a register of 'alumni' which will help us stay in touch with our past scholars. We have also recognised the need to increase our links with current scholars and are putting in place some ideas that will enable us to improve our support for them and ensure we maintain closer contact with them while they are studying in the UK. We believe that a section on our website



devoted to our scholars past and present would be both valuable and further raise the profile and reputation of our Scholarship Fund. That should be available our website in the next few months.

During to the future we are planning a Sir David Roberts Memorial Lecture for late September. My former diplomatic colleague Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, who began his Arabic studies at MECAS in Shemlan in 1978 and was later British Ambassador in Israel and in Saudi Arabia, has kindly agreed to be our speaker. We are also hoping that the former Lebanese finance minister and Business for Peace Honouree, Adnan Kassar, will be the centre of a fund raising event towards the end of the year.

I could not finish without mentioning our Leila Tannous evening last month for which our President the Lebanese Ambassador kindly offered her residence. It was a happy and up lifting event demonstrating in the music, the audience and of course in Leila herself the very best of our combined communities. As you all know Leila was one of the founders of the British Lebanese Association and for many years its leading light so I was particularly pleased that the Association was able to play a key role in organising this event.

I do hope to see many of you at our events in the coming year.

## **5. Comments on the Chairman's report**

There were no comments.

## **6. Treasurer's report 2014**

In the absence of the Hon. Treasure the report was read out by the Association's book keeper Shaz Ahmed:

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is with great pleasure that I submit to you the accounts of your Association for the year ended 31 August 2013.

During the year, your Association had a modest income of £4,456, a significant drop from the previous year. This is of course due to the fact that 2013 did not see a major fundraising event.

The year also saw a decrease in the student scholarship from £31,007 in 2012 to £21,162 in 2013.

Support costs were once again lower than the previous year. This time they were down by 17% to £28,689. As always, we owe Anthony Dawton and his team, our gratitude for



continuing to run a tight ship and constantly seeking ways to reduce expenses.

As a result of the above, our balance sheet shows a reduction in our cash position with a balance of £266,619.

Mr Chairman, I take the opportunity of this report to anticipate the appointment of our new auditors, Kingston Smith who we hope will provide us with a good service at a reasonable cost.

## **7. Appointment and remuneration of auditors**

Mr Shaz Ahmed continued: Mr Chairman, I take the opportunity of this report to anticipate the appointment of our new auditors, Kingston Smith who we hope will provide us with a good service at a reasonable cost.

## **8. Resignation and Election of Committee Members**

The chairman stated that in conformity with article 35b of the articles of association of the British Lebanese Association, the resignation of half the members of the executive committee takes place with effect from this announcement. Those resigning are eligible for re-election. Nomination forms were individually sent with the announcement of this annual general meeting to all British Lebanese Association members, inviting them to offer candidates for election to the executive committee.

The Chairman suggested that with the agreement of the meeting, the Executive Committee members currently willing to be re-elected, be re-elected to the committee en bloc. Consideration will be given later in the year towards possible co-options to fill vacancies. Proposed by Maria Shammass and seconded by Hala Cochrane and agreed by the meeting.

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The names were read out loud by the Chairman and consequently the following were approved as Executive Committee Members:



### Officers

Chairman: Sir David Richmond  
Vice-Chairman: Mrs. Maria Shammass  
Hon Treasurer: Mr. George Shweiry  
Hon Secretary: Mrs. Lisa Zakhem

### Hon. Executive Committee Members

Mrs. Myrna Boustany

### Executive Committee

1. Mr. Farid Barakat
2. Dr. Mahmoud Barbir
3. Mr. Bahaedine Bassatne
4. Mr. Robert Bell
5. Mr. Habib Bou-Habib
6. Lady Cochrane
7. Mr. Hisham El Solh
8. Mr. Ghias El Yafi
9. Dr. Bassam Fattouh
10. Dr. George Fayad
11. Mr. Douglas Gordon
12. Dr. Samir Hraiki
13. Dr. Saeb Jaroudi
14. Mr. Ghazi Jounblat
15. Miss. Joumana Karouni
16. Mr. Rajai El Khouri
17. Mr. David MacLennan
18. Miss Rania Nassar
19. Mr. Richard Palmer
20. Mrs. Dalia Salam Rishani
21. Mrs. Bushra Salha

This was proposed by Sir David Richmond and seconded by Maria Shammass.

### 9. Any Other Business

Nothing recorded

### 10. Closure of meeting

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 20:00.

Signed:

Date: