

Minutes of the BHA Board of Trustees Meeting
8 February 2014 11.00-15.40 at 39 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB

Present: Robert Ashby (RA, Chair), Patricia Rogers (PR, Vice Chair), Blaise Egan (BE), Guy Otten (GO), Alan Palmer (AP), David Pollock (DP), Mary Porter (MP), David Savage (DS), and Alom Shaha (AS).

In attendance: Andrew Copson (AC, Chief Executive and Company Secretary), Jessica Layfield (JL, minutes), Isabel Russo (IR, Head of Ceremonies) [for 04/14].

Item		Action
01/14	<p>Apologies for absence were received from John Adams (JA), Paul Blanchard (PB), Tom Copley (TC), and Martin Rowson (MR).</p> <p>Declarations of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Pollock declared an interest as a Board member of the Rationalist Association for any discussion relating to the Rationalist Association. <p>The Board approved the minutes and the confidential minutes of the November 2013 meeting with a correction to the confidential minutes (separated).</p> <p>There were the following matters arising from the minutes for the November meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Board discussed again the wording for the Byelaws on ballots and agreed this is sufficient. - 29/13/8 – The Board noted the meeting with the BHA’s financial advisor from Barclays has been scheduled for March. - 30/13/5 – The Board noted that Alice Fuller declined with thanks the invitation to join the Board as a co-opted member. - 30/13/7 – The Board requested that the appointment of scrutineers to monitor the counting of votes for the trustee elections be added to the agenda for all May Board meetings. - 30/13/8 – It was confirmed that decision on whether or not to list candidate nominators on nomination forms will be discussed at today’s meeting. - 33/13/4 – The Board received an update from RA and AC on their recent meeting with the Rationalist Association, who are interested in further cooperation. AC will be meeting with them again this week to discuss this further. - 33/13/5 – The Board requested that references to UKAFHA be updated to reflect their new name (Defence Humanists) in the November 2013 meeting minutes and the December 2013 meeting notes. - 33/13/5 – The Board requested an update on the progress of Baroness Warsi’s communication with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to request the presence of Defence Humanists at the Remembrance Day service. AC confirmed he is in touch with the relevant civil servant and will follow up on this. <p>The Board received the notes from the December Policy Away Day, which were circulated for information purposes.</p>	<p>JL</p> <p>JL</p> <p>JL</p> <p>AC</p>

Item		Action
02/14	<u>Management</u>	
02/14/1	<p>The Board received the management report for the period 2013Q4 from AC and thanked the BHA staff for continuing to deliver a high level of activity.</p> <p>The Board congratulated the BHA on the continuing increase in attendance at our events.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the BHA are looking at how best to integrate the CFI UK events into the recurring BHA programme.</p> <p>It was clarified that David Pollock ran PGCE training at Liverpool Hope University and Sheffield Hallam University and did not attend the conference at Middlesex University.</p> <p>The Board noted that the Ceremonies team have taken advantage of a number of media opportunities recently, and have been helping celebrants take advantage of these locally by providing them with information to help with local radio, magazines and newspaper features. The Board congratulated the Ceremonies team on these achievements.</p> <p>The Board discussed the quarterly Ceremonies figures and noted that the Ceremonies Board have developed a new recruitment policy for training additional celebrants. The Board also noted that work is underway, with the help of AS, to try and improve levels of diversity amongst the Celebrant Network.</p> <p>The Board noted the progress on rolling out the school volunteer training programmes. It was confirmed that 100 volunteers should be trained and accredited through the programme by the end of the year.</p> <p>The Board received a verbal update from DS on the progress of the Pastoral Support work. It was confirmed that this programme has not yet received any additional funding. DS also confirmed that discussions with the Multi-Faith Group for Healthcare Chaplaincy are still ongoing. The Board noted that all Pastoral Support volunteers trained in November will be undergoing reviews this month.</p> <p>The Board noted that GRAM was very well attended and the initial feedback was positive. The Trustees who attended noted that this was an excellent opportunity for groups to exchange ideas and learn more about the wider work of the BHA and how they can support this. The Board noted that there will be a review of the local groups partnership agreement and arrangements taking place later this year.</p> <p>The Board congratulated the Public Affairs team on the number of media mentions and strong media coverage in 2013Q4.</p> <p>The Board received an update on the progress of the assisted dying cases at the Supreme Court. AC confirmed that the Court asked the BHA for a draft declaration of incompatibility. If this is issued by the court, then Parliament will be required to review the law.</p>	

Item		Action
02/14/2	<p>The Board congratulated the BHA on the success of the RE Subject Framework, which included references to Humanism throughout.</p> <p>The Board noted the Information Commissioner rulings in the BHA's favour have not proved useful, as the Department for Education continue to ignore our requests until it reaches the point of time when they are irrelevant.</p> <p>The Board congratulated the BHA on the success of the final cash appeal of 2013. The Board requested that the BHA ensure members are thanked for their generosity and are made aware that their support has been effective in allowing us to carry on with the activities we highlighted as being at risk.</p> <p>The Board received an update from AC on the work being done to review the legality of Ceremonies fee banding arrangements. The BHA have instructed a lawyer – Christopher Brown of Matrix Chambers – to provide legal advice on this issue, and AC will keep the Board updated on the outcome. PR confirmed she has a contact who may be able to provide pro-bono legal advice if we need this in the future.</p>	AC
	<p>The Board received an update from AC on a query that was sent in by a member regarding the ethics of having Amazon.co.uk links on our webpages. It was confirmed that this service brings in income to the BHA and that there is no other company offering the same service. The Board were happy for the BHA to continue with the arrangement in this case.</p>	AC, JL
02/14/3	<p>The Board received the accounts for 2013Q4 and 2013 and congratulated the management on their success in reducing the 2013 deficit significantly.</p> <p>The Board requested clarification on how the rent-free period the BHA enjoyed in 2013 may affect the financial position in the future. AC confirmed this has all been factored into the budget for 2014 and will not negatively affect our position.</p> <p>AC confirmed that he is receiving advice from the auditors on the best way to manage in the accounts the projected deficit from the World Humanist Congress and from the office relocation. It was confirmed that the Board will receive the draft statutory accounts in late March which will have been approved by the auditors.</p> <p>The Board were reminded that any questions on the accounts should be emailed to the Chief Executive in advance of the Board meetings and that the email enclosing the paper should remind trustees of this.</p> <p>The Board congratulated the BHA on the success in reducing expenditure in 2013, particularly in light of the high level of activity as detailed in the management report.</p> <p>The Board noted the need to maintain a good reserves level. The Chair reported comments from the Treasurer relating to concerns about the potential deficit from the Congress.</p> <p>The Board enquired about the possibility of producing a reconciliation of the management accounts with the statutory accounts, when these are produced. It</p>	AC

Item		Action
02/14/4	<p>was agreed that some commentary could be provided, but not a full reconciliation.</p> <p>The Board received the World Humanist Congress progress report from AC.</p> <p>The Board noted the Programme is very firmly on track and thanked DP for his support.</p> <p>The Board noted that the marketing and PR work has been managed predominantly by AC and JL, with all web work completed by Emma Bell, a volunteer. The PR and media work will be supported by Pavan Dhaliwal, who is approaching organisations for pro-bono support.</p> <p>It was confirmed that 430 of the 570 tickets on sale for the Congress have been sold. Once weekend tickets have sold out, additional separate sessions will then be made available for sale.</p> <p>The Board noted that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have agreed to provide a grant to support the Congress and have agreed to help with visas for grant recipients. The Board congratulated the BHA and PR on this success. The Board thanked PR for her support with regard to the Grants work.</p> <p>The Board received an update on the fundraising for the Congress. This is progressing and any funds raised will contribute to lowering the deficit.</p>	AC
03/14	<u>Governance</u>	
03/14/1	<p>The Board received an update from PR on the progress of the review process. It was confirmed this will be completed before the next Board meeting and that the collated comments will be sent to AC and RA for final review, and for any further action if necessary.</p> <p>It was noted that, if Board members feel they do not know other Board members well enough to review them, they should be comfortable about saying so as part of the review process.</p> <p>The Board requested that they review their performance as a group at one of the meetings. AC confirmed that this was agreed previously and will be on the agenda for the May meeting, which JL will check.</p>	PR, AC, RA
03/14/2	<p>The Board received a report on the updated Risk Register for 2014 from PR, Chair of the Risk Subcommittee.</p> <p>The Board suggested that key data be further backed up, perhaps on a USB. It was confirmed that the Disaster Recovery Plan is being developed, which will address those issues.</p> <p>It was agreed that 'Auditors' will be added to the 'Monitoring' column for risk item F7.</p> <p>The Board noted that the WHC2014 has its own separate Risk Register.</p>	JL AC JL

Item		Action
03/14/3	<p>The Board agreed to add the following two items under the 'Legal risks' section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Non-compliance with competition laws' – Probability: 4, Impact: 4, Lead responsibility: Chief Executive, Monitor: Board. - 'Non-compliance with other laws' – Probability: 1, Impact: 3, Lead responsibility: Chief Executive, Monitor: Board. 	JL
	<p>The Board agreed that the word 'disobeying' should be changed to 'non-compliance with' throughout the 'Legal risks' section.</p>	JL
	<p>The Board discussed the process for sharing data with local groups. AC confirmed that they should be receiving information on data protection requirements with every email sent to them containing data, and that he will check this is the case.</p>	AC
	<p>The Board agreed that there should be descriptors for each of the impact levels 1-5, which AP will send to JL.</p>	JL
	<p>The Board approved the Risk Register for 2014 with the changes as above.</p>	
03/14/3	<p>The Board discussed whether or not candidate nominators should appear in the booklet of candidate statements for the trustee elections. The Board agreed that they should not. The Board agreed that the Assistant to the Chief Executive will check with both nominators that they agreed to nominate the candidate when nomination forms are received. In order to help identify the nominators, in case there is more than one in the database with the same name, the Board agreed to change the 'Signature' field in the nomination form to 'Email or postal address'.</p>	JL
03/14/4	<p>The Board appointed Alom Shaha to fulfill the function of Partner Groups contact alongside Mary Porter.</p>	JL
03/14/5	<p>The Board reviewed and agreed the Usages for Humanist Marriage. It was confirmed that this document sets out what exactly would need to happen for a legally valid humanist marriage.</p>	
	<p>The Board discussed the following points in the Usages for Humanist Marriage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2e – It was confirmed that the descriptor 'non-religious' in this sentence needs to remain. As per the current guidance for humanist weddings, rituals or actions that are derived from religious ceremonies but which have purely cultural significance to the participants can be included in humanist weddings, as they are carried out without religious connotations and are therefore considered non-religious. - 2b – It was agreed that the Ceremonies Board should review this sentence to ensure the wording makes clear that humanist marriages may be held in a variety of locations, which do not necessarily need to be meaningful to the couple. The power to amend it was delegated to the management. - 2e – It was suggested that 'contributions from other people' may be added to this list. 	AC
04/14	<p><u>Presentation from Head of Ceremonies</u></p>	

Item		Action
	The Board received a presentation from Isabel Russo, Head of Ceremonies, on the market research report conducted for the Ceremonies department in 2013 by Roger McCarthy, and how this has been useful in informing strategy decisions for Humanist Ceremonies.	
05/14	<u>AOB</u>	
05/14/1	The Board noted that Paul Blanchard has offered to resign his post due to time commitments and personal circumstances which have limited his availability over the past six months. The Board accepted Paul's offer to resign with a view to him offering his support to the BHA in other ways.	RA, JL
05/14/2	The Board agreed that there will be four vacancies on the Board for this year's election and that, after the AGM, they will co-opt a suitable replacement into the position left open by Paul's resignation.	
	<u>Dates of the next meeting</u> BHA Board of Trustees Meeting on 24 May 2014 11.00-15.40 at 39 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB	