

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

Present: Robert Ashby (RA, Chair), Patricia Rogers (PR, Vice Chair), John Adams (JA, Treasurer), Michelle Beckett (MB), Tom Copley (TC), Guy Otten (GO), Alan Palmer (AP), Naomi Phillips (NP), David Pollock (DP), Mary Porter (MP), Jeremy Rodell (JR).

In attendance: Andrew Copson (AC, Chief Executive and Company Secretary [excluding 27/14/2]), Jessica Layfield (JL, minutes [excluding 27/14/2]), Catriona McLellan (CM, Head of Operations [for 32/14]).

Item		Action
26/14/1	Apologies for absence were received from Natalie Haynes, Martin Rowson, and Alom Shaha.	
26/14/2	There were the following declarations of interest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AC declared an interest as a member of Humanist Society Scotland with regard to that discussion. 	
26/14/3	There were the following agenda additions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bank signatories - Christmas party 	
26/14/4	The Board approved the minutes of previous meeting, with the following corrections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15/14/1 – The candidates for next BHA President will be discussed at the December meeting. - It was confirmed that JL will send the notes of the Board Policy Day separately as it was agreed not to include these in meeting papers. 	JL JL
26/14/5	The Board approved the confidential minutes of previous meeting.	
26/14/6	There were the following matters arising from previous minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 07/14/8 – It was confirmed that the parliamentary question on which organisations are exempt from the Equality Act will not now be asked. - 07/14/33 – The Board requested an update at a future meeting on the progress of developing a process for affiliating political humanist groups. - 13/14/17 – RA confirmed he has been in touch with the Head of Pastoral Support about crowdfunding to support this area of the BHA's work. 	AC
27/14	<u>Report of appraisal of Chief Executive (Confidential)</u>	
27/14/1	The Board received a leave and TOIL report for SMT members in 2014 to date.	
27/14/2	The Board received a confidential report from RA on the annual appraisal of the Chief Executive, which was commended for its content and approved. (See confidential minutes for further details.)	
28/14	<u>Management (AC)</u>	
28/14/1	The Board received the management report for 2014Q3 from AC.	

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28/14/2	The Board appointed Lisa Bounds as a BHA representative to the Religious Education Council and the National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education, to replace Sara Passmore.	JL
28/14/3	The Board noted the success of the RE Teachers conference in July.	
28/14/4	The Board enquired about <i>The Humanist Companion</i> project. AC confirmed that this will be an anthology of humanist thought past and present, which we were approached by publishers to develop.	
28/14/5	The Board noted that AC is taking less of a role in Ceremonies marketing work now, as this is becoming more established.	
28/14/6	The Board congratulated the BHA on raising funds for Pastoral Support training. AC reported that this should allow the BHA to have a total of 120 volunteers trained by the end of 2015.	
28/14/7	The Board enquired about the decrease in videos watched on our YouTube channel since 2014Q2. AC advised that this was due to our launching the Stephen Fry videos in Q2, which received a lot of views.	
28/14/8	The Board noted that nothing further has been heard from Helen Ukpabio's lawyers with regard to her complaint against the BHA.	
28/14/9	The Board noted that an update on the Thought for the Commute campaign will be included in the 2014Q4 management report at the next meeting, as this took place in Q4. AC reported that the campaign will also be running in Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham from mid-November.	
28/14/10	The Board received a report from AC on the progress of the campaign to have Humanism included in the Religious Studies GCSE curriculum. The BHA has submitted a draft Annex on Humanism to the Department for Education for their new GCSE criteria, to allow this to be taught alongside other beliefs. The criteria have not yet been released, although they were due last week. We do not believe the Annex on Humanism will be included in the criteria when they are released, and we will therefore be launching a campaign on this during the consultation period.	
28/14/11	The Board received an update from AC on the progress of the campaign for legal humanist marriages. The BHA is in touch with the government about this and has asked members whose local MPs are on the Home Affairs Committee of the Cabinet to write to their MPs about this. HSS are also supporting the campaign and will be contacting all MPs in Scotland about this issue. The main concern at this stage is that legalisation may be delayed until after the election. We are working with all parties to ensure legalisation is in their manifestos.	
28/14/12	The Board received an update on the development of an 'Areas of Concern' policy for the Celebrant Network. This would allow celebrants to raise informal concerns about others in the Network without having to raise a formal complaint with the BHA. It was suggested that 'Suggestions of Improvement' should be added to the title of this policy, which AC will feed back.	AC

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28/14/13	The Board congratulated the BHA on the success of Cash Appeal 3, which has now raised £46,000 and does not seem to have adversely affected the Faith Schools Campaigner appeal.	AC
28/14/14	The Board enquired about what Islington Council business rates we are expecting to receive. AC advised that he will enquire with CM on this, although we are accruing for the charges.	
28/14/15	The Board noted that, under the ' <i>Income</i> ' section of the report, the update on Gift Aid claims should refer to '2014Q2', not '2013Q2', and that the £25,000 refers to additional Gift Aid claims dating back to 2013 since the last report.	
28/14/16	The Board enquired about the WHC2014 videos to be added to YouTube. AC advised that around half of these have been uploaded, with the others still being edited by volunteers.	
28/14/17	The Board received the 2014Q3 and YTD accounts.	
28/14/18	The Board noted that the projected surplus to be carried forward to 2015 may well be larger than stated, although it is also the case that a large amount of expenditure is due to fall in Q4.	
28/14/19	The Board received the final report on the World Humanist Congress from AC.	
28/14/20	The Board noted that some of the bank charges for the World Humanist Congress registrations were in fact accounted for in the 2013 cash accounts, and so the total deficit, in cash terms for 2014, can now be considered around £7000. The Board celebrated the enormous improvement that this represented compared with an initial budgeted deficit of £100,000.	
28/14/21	The Board expressed thanks to Andrew Copson, Catriona McLellan, Jessica Layfield, Patricia Rogers and David Pollock on their hard work in making the Congress a financial success.	
28/14/22	The Board noted from PR that the final report to the FCO is still in progress, as there are still some finance questions outstanding, but that this is close to being submitted.	
28/14/23	The Board expressed congratulations on the overall success of the PR campaign, and in particular the social media campaign. In addition, grant recipients have been able to speak about the Congress in their own countries.	
28/14/24	The Board noted that the funds raised for IHEU at the dinner were £27,000 in total.	
28/14/25	AC reported that the Congress seems to have had a positive effect on ticket sales for the 2015 BHA conference.	
28/14/26	The Board received a presentation on the BHA's fundraising strategy from AC. This included an overview of fundraising methods (the Life Cycle processes, cash appeals, individual campaigns, regular events, raffles and auctions, and major donor events and contributions) and personnel supporting fundraising efforts (the Chief Executive,	

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	Head of Education and Promotion, Communications Officer, Operations staff, the Development Board, and the Fundraising Committee). AC reminded the Board that this fundraising strategy does not prioritise membership, but income per capita.	
28/14/27	The Board noted that the next cash appeal will be the first which has not focused on campaigns, but purely on the promotion of Humanism. There is a risk that this may not raise as much as previous campaigns, but it will allow us to tailor our communications and fundraising better to our supporter base.	
28/14/28	AC advised that the major donor strategy is now starting to be embedded and developed, after much work to get this off the ground.	
28/14/29	The Board noted the Communications Officer role has been very successful in terms of supporting fundraising and other communications across the organisation.	
28/14/30	The Board congratulated the Chief Executive on developing and embedding these structures, which are manageable and offer the potential for further development. The Board agreed that the level of sophistication of fundraising channels, with distributed responsibilities, is a very good strategy for the BHA to raise funds from a wider range of people.	
28/14/31	The Board enquired about data from the member exit survey, to see if anything could be done to reduce attrition. AC advised this has only been implemented very recently, and so the data is not yet particularly strong. AC advised that the attrition rate of members has gone down.	
28/14/32	The Board enquired about average donations from members versus other supporters. AC advised that supporters who are not members donate a higher amount per year on average.	
28/14/33	The Board discussed the work of the Development Board following on from the WHC2014. AC advised they will be focusing on events, such as the annual fundraising dinner in March and the President's Reception in June.	
29/14	<u>Budget (AC)</u>	
29/14/1	The Board received the budget proposal for 2015.	
29/14/2	The Board noted that the total surplus carried forward from 2014 may increase, as a result of increased legacy or other income.	
29/14/3	The Board discussed the five-year budget agreed in 2013, which this budget aligns with. The five-year budget projected a deficit in 2014 and 2015 before a surplus in 2016. The current version of the five-year budget plan will be sent to the Board.	JL
29/14/4	AC confirmed that specific items in the budget are variable throughout the year to ensure the BHA meets the bottom line figure agreed by the Board.	
29/14/5	AC advised that the income projections are conservative, and do not take into account an increase in the number of the members and supporters in 2015, which	

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29/14/6	may occur.	
29/14/7	The Board approved the budget for 2015 as presented.	
29/14/7	The Board expressed thanks to the Head of Operations on her work allowing the five-year budget to be developed.	
30/14	<u>Governance</u>	
30/14/1	The Board agreed that from now on, Vice Presidencies should be given solely to Presidents upon their retirement from that role and that Distinguished Supporters should be re-named Patrons.	AC, JL
30/14/2	<p>The Board agreed the following amendments to the Byelaws (additions highlighted and deletions struck through):</p> <p>1.2.2.c Vice Presidents</p> <p>Unless otherwise resolved at any point by the Board, former Presidents become Vice Presidents are appointed for life upon retiring as President, or for a fixed four year term and may be removed at any time by the Board. Former Presidents automatically become Vice Presidents for life on stepping down as President unless resolved otherwise by the Board.</p>	JL
30/14/3	The Board noted that no changes are required to the role description of Vice Presidents.	
30/14/4	<p>The Board agreed to add the following to Section 5 of the Byelaws:</p> <p>Full results of each election shall be available to members at the AGM, but the Returning Officer will formally announce only the names of successful candidates in the order in which they were elected.</p>	JL
30/14/5	The Board received a written report from PD on the implications to the BHA of the new Lobbying Act. The Board were informed that the current recommendation was for the BHA not to register under the Lobbying Act, but directors were asked to read the paper and respond with any concerns by email. The Board noted that anything of import will be discussed at the December meeting or, if something urgent arises before that time, by email.	ALL
31/14	<u>Strategy</u>	
31/14/1	The Board received a report from AC on the working relationship that is being developed between the BHA and the Humanist Society Scotland. The management teams of the organisations have been in discussion about how to work more closely together and achieve better results, and are working on draft 'Heads of Agreement'. The discussions are still in the early stages, but AC will keep the Board updated on any progress.	
31/14/2	The Board received an update from AC on the BHA's work with Partner Groups. The	

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31/14/3	<p>review of the partnership agreement will not take place this year, as hoped, because of Sara Passmore's departure and the appointment of the Groups Coordinator, who will be working to implement the agreement better. GO, AP and JR volunteered to be involved in this project. It was agreed to circulate the SMT workplans on the review prior to the next discussion at the Board on this matter.</p> <p>The Board discussed the Board Strategy Day agenda. The following are already agreed for the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting against the Aims (this is a standing item) - Discussion to agree the Chair person specification - President candidates 	
31/14/4	<p>There were the following additional suggestions for the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An update on the lobbying act - Communications review presentation from Liam Whitton - An update from Richy Thompson 	AC, JL
31/14/5	It was agreed that the Pastoral Support update should be in the form of a written paper as part of the report against the Aims, and any discussion of the redevelopment of Education and Promotion should also form part of this section.	AC, JL
31/14/6	It was agreed that the departmental workplans will be circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting.	AC, JL
31/14/7	The Board noted that the five-yearly review of Strategies is due to take place next year.	
31/14/8	The Board received a confidential update from AC on the Good Funeral Guide.	
32/14	<u>Presentation from Head of Operations</u>	
32/14/1	The Board received a presentation from Catriona McLellan, Head of Operations, focusing on developments to the BHA's database, CiviCRM, over the past year.	
32/14/2	The Board requested that AC and CM look into whether it would be possible to import Twitter data to the database.	AC
32/14/3	The Board expressed thanks to Catriona for the presentation and for overseeing this work.	
33/14	<u>Any Other Business</u>	
33/14/1	Confidential Minute on bank signatories	
33/14/2	The Board were invited to donate, if they would like to, to the fund for the Staff Christmas Party. It was agreed that JL will circulate an email with further information.	JL

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34/14	<p>The Board considered the success of its working together in the meeting and concluded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Members had worked well together and reached the necessary decisions well. b) Sometimes the Board needed to be cognizant of what it had previously requested. c) It was happy with the way that the meeting had gone. 	
	<p><u>Date of the next Meeting</u></p> <p>BHA Board of Trustees Strategy Away Day on 13 December 2014 11.00-15.00 at 39 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB.</p> <p>BHA Board of Trustees Meeting on 7 February 2015 11.00-15.40 at 39 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB.</p>	