

**Minutes of the BHA Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**7 February 2015, 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), Naomi Phillips (NP), David Pollock (DP), Mary Porter (MP), Jeremy Rodell (JR), Martin Rowson (MR), Alom Shaha (AS).

**In attendance:** Andrew Copson (AC, Chief Executive and Company Secretary), Jessica Layfield (JL, minutes), Isabel Russo (IR, Head of Ceremonies [for 05/15]), David Savage (DS, Head of Pastoral Support [for 05/15]).

| Item     |   | Action |
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| 01/15/01 | Apologies for absence were received from Natalie Haynes (NH) and Alan Palmer (AP).  |        |
| 01/15/02 | There were the following declarations of interest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AC declared an interest with regard to the discussion on the Humanist Society Scotland, as a member of that organisation.</li> </ul>  |        |
| 01/15/03 | There were the following agenda additions, to be discussed under AOB: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support for SACRE reps in promoting humanist values (JA)</li> </ul>  |        |
| 01/15/04 | <b>The Board approved</b> the minutes and the confidential minutes of the November 2014 meeting.  |        |
| 01/15/05 | There were the following matters arising from the minutes of the November 2014 meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 07/14/33 – AC confirmed that the Director of Public Affairs and Campaigns has started developing a procedure for affiliating political humanist groups.</li> <li>- 28/14/22 – PR advised that there are still some refunds outstanding from those who received Congress grants but who then couldn't attend. This action will carry forward. About £1500 outstanding.</li> <li>- 28/14/16 – DP enquired about the progress of uploading the videos from the World Humanist Congress. AC advised that progress is slow as we are entirely dependent on volunteers to edit these before they can be uploaded. However, we are investing in a new camera that should make this process quicker in future.</li> <li>- The Board enquired about the approaches being made for the next BHA President. AC confirmed that the invitation letters have been drafted and the first choice candidate will be approached in March.</li> </ul> |        |
| 02/15    | <u>Management (AC)</u>  |        |
| 02/15/01 | <b>The Board received</b> the management report for the period 2014Q4 from AC and <b>congratulated</b> the management on the success of activities in that quarter.   |        |
| 02/15/02 | <b>The Board noted</b> the Bentham lecture was a sell out, as were all of this quarter's events. AC reported that the book launch event with Anthony Pinn was very engaging, with lots of discussion between those who attended.  |        |
| 02/15/03 | <b>The Board congratulated</b> the BHA on surpassing the Church of England (CoE) in social media reach, and on the successful 'Thought for the Commute' campaign.   |        |

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| 02/15/04 | <b>The Board enquired</b> about the launch of Young Humanists, and the development of their governance structure. AC advised that, as has worked well with other Sections, they will be developing governance and structure based on what they find works best as the Section grows further. AC further confirmed that they are working on an engagement strategy to reach a wider pool of young people.  |        |
| 02/15/05 | <b>The Board congratulated</b> management on the growth in Ceremonies numbers. AC reported that the new Humanist Ceremonies website is almost ready to go live. There has also been some recent positive coverage in Saga magazine, in which they reported that 37% of over 50s they surveyed said they wanted a Humanist funeral, and 21% said they wanted another type of non-religious funeral. This shows a clear differentiation of our brand, which is very positive.   |        |
| 02/15/06 | <b>The Board enquired</b> about the number of celebrants, which appears to have been static. AC reported that there have been a number of celebrants who had left or been removed from the network since the new administrative processes have been in place, but that there has concurrently been a lot of new celebrants trained. Therefore, although the number looks static, there has been a fair amount of change within the network. AC clarified that those leaving were predominantly those who were less engaged, and so the network has strengthened as a result.  |        |
| 02/15/07 | <b>AC reported</b> on recent resignations by three celebrants in the Sussex region. This resulted in some unhelpful posts on the celebrants' forum, which were dealt with very well and by the Ceremonies Board and the Head of Ceremonies working together. The response to the network was very open and transparent and was able to make reference to the various ways the network have been consulted on recent decisions. This reflects the fact that the new structures are working effectively. The resignations in Sussex have left a gap in the Brighton area, but there are some trainees on the Spring courses from this area. In addition, the review of network structures locally is underway, and when finished this should provide more support for celebrants in their day-to-day work in their regions. |        |
| 02/15/08 | <b>The Board congratulated</b> the Ceremonies department on the improvements in the feedback from the Annual Survey.  |        |
| 02/15/09 | <b>AC reported</b> that he, Pavan and David Savage will be meeting with NHS England to discuss their new chaplaincy guidelines to ensure these include provision for the non-religious. We anticipate the new guidelines will be published by March.  |        |
| 02/15/10 | <b>The Board received</b> an update on the meeting of the APPHG in November. This was an excellent meeting where members heard from students who had been educated in very isolated faith environments. AC confirmed that there is a concern that the APPHG will not be able to continue after the election, depending on the outcome, as there needs to be a certain number of members from the opposition party which may not be possible.  |        |
| 02/15/11 | <b>The Board enquired</b> about the BHA's public support of the Assisted Dying Bill, which is not in line with our policy. AC advised that it is unclear whether the bill could be a stepping stone towards the policy we want, but that the bill is unlikely to be successful in any case. However, the Canadian Supreme Court has recently struck down a ban on assisted dying there, which may help our campaigning.   |        |

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| 02/15/12 | <b>The Board received</b> an update on the campaign to have Humanism included as an annex in the new RE criteria. We have been advised that it will not be, but there have been continued delays in the new criteria being published. AC confirmed that we have submitted Freedom of Information requests to find out how the Church of England influenced this decision. However, these may be refused.   |        |
| 02/15/13 | <b>The Board enquired</b> about the BHA's response to the consultation on teaching 'British Values'. We advised that Government use the terminology 'shared values', as we do, but this recommendation was not taken forward.  |        |
| 02/15/14 | <b>The Board received</b> an update on the success of the Cash Appeal 4, which performed better than expected.   |        |
| 02/15/15 | <b>The Board noted</b> some errors in the report. The table on sales, referred to in the report, was in fact removed from the final draft. The figure for 2013 Gift Aid is a typo and is higher than reported. The percentage of our investment portfolio in equities is not correct, and AC will find out from Catriona what the correct figure is. JA clarified that the budget for subscription income was in fact £71,635, so we have performed even more successfully than the report shows.  | AC     |
| 02/15/16 | <b>The Board enquired</b> about whether we will still receive charity relief on business rates as we used to in Gower Street. AC will follow this up with Catriona.  | AC     |
| 02/15/17 | <b>The Board congratulated</b> management on the number who are already signed up to attend the conference in June.  |        |
| 02/15/18 | <b>The Board received</b> an update from AC about the IHEU Presidency. AC has been invited to take this role on, and has discussed this with RA. It will not be an additional amount of work, so AC is likely to accept. IHEU will be looking to employ Chief Executive in 2015 as well, although the specifics of this have not yet been agreed.  |        |
| 02/15/19 | <p><b>The Board received</b> a verbal report from AC on the recent changes to staff structure and personnel. These resulted in part from the opportunities arising from the surplus carried forward from 2014.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two new staff posts have been created: a Groups, Sections, and Membership Coordinator, and a Campaigns Manager.</li> <li>- Pavan has been appointed Director of Public Affairs and Campaigns, and has taken on responsibility for communications and fundraising.</li> <li>- Richy has been promoted to the Campaigns Manager role, and so a new Faith Schools Campaigner will be recruited. Richy will be responsible for more of the media relations work in this position.</li> <li>- Liam has been appointed Communications Manager, with responsibility for social media, and he will now report to Pavan.</li> <li>- The Groups, Sections, and Membership Coordinator post will sit in the Operations department and be managed by Catriona. Blakeley has been appointed to this position, which he will take up in March. We will therefore be recruiting a new Administrative Officer.</li> <li>- An Events Manager position has been created for two days per week, which will sit within the Operations team and report to Catriona. This person is being recruited and will probably work from outside the office.</li> </ul> |        |

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|          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A significant amount of work has therefore been reallocated from the Head of Education and Promotion, so this role has now become a part-time Head of Education role for four days a week. Lisa has taken on this position.</li> <li>- Unrelatedly, Tamsin will be leaving and Jessica will be moving in to her role as Office and Administration Manager. Therefore another Assistant to the Chief Executive will be appointed.</li> <li>- The majority of staff therefore have new roles in some way, so there has been a lot of work to reorganise workplans and try to ensure as little disruption as possible.</li> </ul> |        |
| 02/15/20 | <b>The Board were supportive</b> of the new opportunities being given to existing staff. AC confirmed that he is happy with these new structures and thinks they will work best for the organisation in the longer term. AC is happy that the SMT are able to manage things in his absence.   |        |
| 02/15/21 | <b>AC advised</b> that the new organisation structure is available on the intranet site.  |        |
| 02/15/22 | <b>The Board received</b> the accounts for 2014Q4 and 2014 and <b>congratulated</b> the management on a successful year.  |        |
| 02/15/23 | <b>The Board enquired</b> about the WHC income and expenditure. AC advised that overall there was a £7k deficit, and so their effects on the annual accounts will be negligible.  |        |
| 02/15/24 | <b>The Treasurer drew the Board's attention</b> to the significant increase in income on all but one budget line, alongside a corresponding decrease in expenditure in two departments. JA is pleased to see the subscription income increasing, as well as the number of members. This is a very positive outcome.   |        |
| 02/15/25 | <b>The Board expressed congratulations</b> to management on the success of last year's income and expenditure management, and were extremely happy to see the growth of the organisation.   |        |
| 02/15/26 | <b>The Board congratulated</b> the management team, in particular AC, on the success of the fundraising structures that have been developed internally, which are working very well without unnecessary additional work by AC.  |        |
| 02/15/27 | <b>The Board enquired</b> about whether it would be possible to have a set of 2014 accounts produced with the World Congress expenditure separated. JA advised this will not be possible on the formal accounts, although there will be a separate accounting note in the Annual Report to this effect. The accounts will also be presented separately in the Annual Review.  |        |
| 02/15/28 | <b>AC reminded the Board</b> that the first notice of the AGM will be circulated in BHA News in March. GO, AP, and MR will reach the end of their term in July.   |        |
| 03/15    | <u>Governance</u>   |        |
| 03/15/01 | <b>The Board received</b> an update from PR on the trustee and officer review process, which has now been completed. RA, PR, JA, TC, DP, MP, and AS were reviewed this year. PR thanked the Board for engaging with the review process and for their thoughtful   |        |

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|          | comments on those being reviewed. All those reviewed found the process helpful. AC thanked the Board for their dedication and support of the organisation.   |        |
| 03/15/02 | <b>The Board received</b> an update on the review of the Risk Register by PR, as Chair of the Risk Subcommittee. The Subcommittee met in January and reviewed each risk in detail, as well as considering what other risks might occur. It was clarified that the probability figures are agreed based on current circumstances, and that therefore we would expect the overall risk to go down in the year after mitigation.  |        |
| 03/15/03 | <b>The Board agreed</b> the Risk Register for 2015, and noted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- G1 – RA and AC will be meeting to ensure the Strategy Away Day in December is more constructive.</li> <li>- O2 – All staff will have action plans this year, and the new staff structure will help spread the workload across more people.</li> <li>- O8 – The Disaster Recovery Plan does exist, and now needs to be formally documented. This will include Business Continuity Management.</li> <li>- O11 – It was clarified that this probability has gone up as we now have more users of our systems, and our data has been consolidated and centralised. The new password change system will help to lessen this risk.</li> <li>- The previous F7 has been removed because the impact was now 0.</li> <li>- F10 has been removed as there are no premises costs attached to the current lease.</li> <li>- L1 – All local groups are reminded when they receive data of their obligations in storing and using this.</li> <li>- L3 – The probability of this will go down as Sections become more familiar with reporting requirements.</li> <li>- L9 – AC clarified that celebrants have been told they cannot discuss fees with each other. They will be reminded of this again in Q3.</li> <li>- L10 – AC will confirm that we have adequate insurance cover in place for libel claims.</li> </ul> |        |
| 03/15/04 | <b>The Board discussed</b> the appointments to the Chair recruitment committee to be agreed at today's meeting.  |        |
| 03/15/05 | <b>The Board appointed</b> John Adams, Michelle Beckett, and David Pollock to the committee.   |        |
| 03/15/06 | <b>The Board noted</b> that the committee will now proceed with the recruitment timetable and process previously agreed.   |        |
| 04/15    | <u>Strategy</u>  |        |
| 04/15/01 | <b>The Board received</b> a verbal report from AC on the ongoing development of the BHA's relationship with the Humanist Society Scotland (HSS). Their Chief Executive resigned in January and their Chair is now the acting Chief Executive until a new one is recruited. This has meant that progress on the Heads of Agreement had been slightly delayed but it was now ready to be noted by both Boards.   |        |
| 04/15/02 | <b>The Board noted</b> the Heads of Agreement document as included in the papers. This is now final, and no longer a draft. AC requested any serious concerns be discussed with  |        |

| Item     |  | Action |
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|          | him directly and any small errors be sent to him. The process of developing our relationship with HSS has been fruitful so far.  |        |
| 05/15    | <u>Presentation from Head of Ceremonies and from Head of Pastoral Support</u><br><br><b>The Board received</b> a presentation from Isabel Russo, Head of Ceremonies, and from David Savage, Head of Pastoral Support, on developments within their departments over the past year. |        |
| 06/15    | <u>Any Other Business</u>  |        |
| 06/15/01 | Confidential minute on bank signatories  |        |
| 06/15/02 | Confidential minute on bank signatories  |        |
| 06/15/03 | <b>The Board discussed</b> additional support that the BHA could give to SACRE reps to help them address issues about teaching extremist views as part of the RE curriculum. These appointees have legal powers that mean they might have a positive impact in such situations.    |        |
| 06/15/04 | <b>The Board recorded</b> their gratitude to Tamsin Van Dyken for her many years of dedicated work for the BHA.  |        |
| 06/15/05 | <b>AC reminded the Board</b> that it will receive the Annual Report to read in advance of the next Board meeting.  |        |
|          | <u>Date of the next Meeting</u><br><br><b>BHA Board of Trustees Meeting on 9 May 2015, 11.00-15.40</b> at 39 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB.   |        |