

**Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting
20 July 2019 13:10-15:50
39 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB**

Present: Tamar Ghosh (TG, Chair), Ann O'Connell (AOC, Vice Chair), Jenny Bartle (JB), Tom Copley (TC), Blaise Egan (BE), Ruth Kaufman (RK), Ewan Main (EM), David Pollock (DP), Jeremy Rodell (JR), Imtiaz Shams (IS), Emma Shepherd (ES), Hamza Walayat (HW), Amy Walden (AW).

In attendance: Andrew Copson (AC, Chief Executive and Company Secretary), NeeraShah, Minutes

Item		Action	Deadline
19/13	<u>Procedural Matters</u>		
19/13/01	Apologies for absence were received from John Adams and Alexander Williams. Donna Holland was absent.		
19/13/02	The Chair welcomed the new trustees: Ruth Kaufman, Emma Shepherd, and Hamza Walayat, and all trustees present introduced themselves.		
19/13/03	There was one declaration of interest from Ewan Main, who declared an interest as an accredited celebrant in relation to any discussion of matters related to our ceremonies activity.		
19/13/03	The Board appointed Iain Deboys, Chair of the Northern Ireland Committee, to the Board for a one year trial period, to monitor the value and impact of the presence of a Northern Ireland knowledge within the Board, as previously decided in 19/10/07.		
19/13/04	The Board noted Blaise Egan was the current Board nominee to the Defence Humanists Committee and that his term would end in July 2020 so there was no need for a Board appointment this year.		
19/13/05	The Board noted Jenny Bartle was the current Board nominee to the LGBT Humanists Committee and that her term would end in July 2020 so there was no need for a Board appointment this year.		
19/13/06	The Board appointed Richy Thompson as head of our delegation to Humanists International.		

19/13/07	The Board noted Andrew Copson (Humanists UK Chief Executive) was also President of Humanist International.		
19/13/08	The Board re-appointed Andrew Copson as the head of our delegation to the European Humanist Federation.		
19/13/09	The Board appointed Luke Donnellan as head of our delegation to the Religious Education Council of England and Wales.		
19/13/10	The Board appointed Blaise Egan and Jeremy Rodell to be the Board members responsible for disputes arising under the Partnership agreement with local groups.		
19/13/11	<p>The Board approved the minutes of the decision made by email and of the previous meeting, with some changes to the numbering of the items on the confidential minutes and the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19/08/24 finish the sentence with "the strategy review findings" • 19/10/03 add "until" 	AC	
19/13/12	<p>There was the following matter arising from previous minutes in relation to 19/05/07 on TG's producing Terms of Reference for a Finance and Audit Subcommittee:</p> <p>The Chair tabled the draft terms of reference, which was discussed.</p> <p>The Board agreed to provide feedback on the document by the end of July and that a final draft should be agreed by the Officers for agreement by the Board.</p>	ALL	31/07/19
19/14	<u>Management</u>		
19/14/01	AC presented the management dashboard, explaining that the short time between the May meeting and the July meeting meant that there was less to report than in other meetings.		
19/14/02	AC reported that ceremonies numbers were still not meeting our targets and there seemed little doubt that this is mainly due to the increased competition faced from secular providers. It was being addressed through increased business to business marketing at national level and through increased marketing support to celebrants.		

19/14/03	The Board agreed that ceremonies must be examined as part of the current strategic review.		
19/14/04	AC reported that while there was some delay with the evolution of website, the delivery of our new site is expected in the autumn and is moving more quickly than reported last time.		
19/14/05	AC reported that TG and he had met with consultant Matt Wells to review the structure of the organisation around the Chief Executive and a further meeting was scheduled for August.		
19/14/06	AC reported no complaints had been received and there had been no serious incidents.		
19/14/07	AC reported on the new structure that had been recommended for the management of our ceremonies work. The review by consultant David Christmas was targeted at achieving growth in the number of ceremonies performed and would involve staff, consultant, and volunteer role changes.		
19/14/08	AC presented accounts for 2019Q2 and 2019YTD, together with a 2019 annual forecast.		
19/14/09	AC reported that funds could possibly reach £2m by the end of 2019. This was due primarily to receipt of legacies of £385k and a further possibility of £945k within the next six to twelve months.		
19/14/10	<p>The Board agreed, with one abstention, the following increases in expenditure in 2019 in light of legacy income received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £20k on pastoral support training, especially to qualify providers for the armed forces, given that this was noted as a strategic priority at the time of the budget when sufficient funds were not available; • £20k for any research or other external support required in the development of our new strategy, a cost that was not envisaged at the time of the last budget but which it is now clear is desirable; • £30k for additional IT support which can be spent on commissioning some of the work needed to develop 	AC	

	<p>our database, as the need for additional IT capacity, should funds become available, was highlighted as an ambition at the time of the IT department review;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £30k for developing the new ceremonies structure, a matter that has arisen since the budget; • £30k on educational resources, which was a priority but for which funds had not previously been available; • £40k on member and supporter recruitment to experiment with diversification and scale up our current successful activities, which was a need noted by the Board's group to review fundraising. 		
19/14/11	The Board noted a report from Professor Callum Brown and Professor David Nash on their progress in writing our history for publication by Bloomsbury in 2021.		
19/14/12	The Board requested a report on the impact of the new government for its next meeting.	AC	25/10/19
19/15	<u>Governance</u>		
19/15/01	TG led a discussion of the AGM. It was generally agreed to have gone well and that the decision to hold it at the annual convention was paying off in terms of both number and diversity of members attending.		
19/15/02	The Board discussed the election and noted that the raw turnout had not increased as membership increased and that percentage turnout was lower. Opinion was divided as to whether this was necessarily a cause for concern but it was agreed that the cost of online voting be investigated.	AC	25/10/19
19/15/03	The Board discussed the trustees' skills audit and noted there was no significant skills gap other than property management which, if we proceeded with property purchases, could be met with external advice.		
19/15/04	<p>The Board approved the following meeting dates for the 2020 calendar:</p> <p>Board Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 8 February, 13:00-16:00 • Saturday 9 May, 13:00-16:00 • Saturday 4 July, 13:00-16:00 	AC	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 14 November, 13:00-16:00 <p>Strategy and Policy Away Days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 12 September, 11:00-16:00 • Saturday 12 December, 11:00-16:00 <p>Other Dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Conference - 19-21 June • AGM - Sunday 21 June 		
19/16	Strategy		
19/16/01	The Board received a paper from the Strategy Working Group proposing a draft new Vision and Mission for Humanists UK and noted that (i) the development of our new strategy is an iterative process, with the draft vision and mission therefore not being final but may change in light of aims we adopt or as a result of research we carry out or commission in the next 18 months and (ii) we have not necessarily decided to use the words 'Vision' and 'Mission' but they were used here all knew what they signify.		
19/16/02	<p>The Board agreed the following draft as a good provisional one which, if the SWG proceeded on the basis of it, we will not be going far wrong:</p> <p><i>Our vision</i></p> <p><i>A tolerant world where rational thinking and kindness prevail.</i></p> <p><i>Our mission</i></p> <p><i>By promoting humanism and advancing freedom of choice, we inspire and support non-religious people to lead happy, confident, and ethical lives, and work with them and others for a kinder and more rational society.</i></p>	SWG	
19/16/03	The Board noted the final paper on 'Big Issues' presented by the Strategy Working Group following previous board input, and that this paper would now proceed to inform the commissioning of research and discussion papers for the planning process.		
19/16/04	JR presented proposals on how we should respond to the arguments made by some members at the AGM that we need to take action on the climate crisis.		
19/16/05	The Board agreed, following discussion, to ask the Chief Executive to consider making simple adjustments to our	AC	

	publicly facing communications, primarily the website, in order to ensure that our existing recognition of this as an important issue was properly reflected and report to the Board on the action we take in support of the Reykjavik Declaration of Humanists International.		
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