

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting

11 July 2020 13:00-16:00

Via Zoom

Present: Tamar Ghosh (TG, Chair), Ann O'Connell (AOC, Vice Chair), John Adams (Treasurer), Greg Atkins (GA), Tom Copley (TC), Iain Deboys (ID), Blaise Egan (BE), Ruth Kaufman (RK), Ewan Main (EM), Stephanie Niven (SN), 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), Tony Pinkney (TPi, Executive Assistant, Minutes)

Item		Action	Deadline
	<u>Procedural Matters</u>		
20/15	Apologies for absence: There were no absences.		
20/15/01	The Chair welcomed the newly elected trustees: Greg Atkins and Stephanie Niven, and all trustees present introduced themselves.		
20/15/02	There were no declarations of interest.		
20/15/03	Minutes of the last meeting: the minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2020 were approved with no amendments.		
20/15/04	The Board appointed Ann O'Connell as a trustee for a three year term and re-elected her as Vice-Chair for a three year term.		
20/15/05	The Board discussed the vacancy for co-option resulting from the appointment of AOC and agreed to co-opt Neil McKain, the next candidate in the recent election, noting that he would bring much-needed experience as a trained teacher of RE.	TPi	ASAP
20/15/06	The Board reappointed Iain Deboys and Emma Shepherd for a further one year trial period, so as to better judge the policy of having a trustee appointed from Northern Ireland and Wales.		
20/15/07	The Board noted Blaise Egan was the current Board nominee to the Defence Humanists Committee and his term ends in October 2020. Following a restructure within Defence Humanists there will no longer be a trustee on the committee.		

20/15/08	The Board re-appointed Blaise Egan and Jeremy Rodell to be the Board members responsible for disputes arising under the Partnership agreement with local groups.		
20/16	<u>Management</u>		
20/16/01	AC presented his management report on work in Q2 and plans for 2020Q3 and Q4. Reminding the board that the 2020Q2 management report will be available later this month and the VIG's continue to be updated monthly.		
20/16/02	AC reported from the next meeting he will include a report on our stakeholder engagement to date and a media report.	AC	
20/16/03	AC reported on the results of the opportunities and threats that had been identified in the Q1 SWOT analysis.		
20/16/04	<p>AC reiterated the specific aims that our 'emergency operation' of Q2 had been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance humanism in the new (hopefully temporary) environment • Retain support of members • Retain support of staff, volunteers, and other personnel • Preserve and enhance reputation <p>This identified work (i) specifically in response to the epidemic (ii) urgent and important ongoing work deemed essential (iii) work we aspired to do, given extra time [this was before we put some staff on furlough leave].</p> <p>The assessment revealed a number of successes across departments, some in progress, and some not started.</p>		
20/16/05	AC added as at the end of June we had passed the financial test to exit the 'emergency' operation and the external environment was also changing, offering opportunities to restart 'normal' activities in some manner.		
20/16/06	AC advised as a result exiting the emergency operation we are returning most staff from furlough leave. All staff will return to their normal full time hours, except two staff who will return part time. Two staff will remain on furlough, one due to sickness and the other for reasons set out in the confidential agenda.		

20/16/07	AC added his concerns about the fatigue of non-furloughed staff, the restructure in community services (ceremonies and pastoral care), and the lack of work on the strategy review. Revised department workplans were in draft form and actions are being reviewed in light of the return of staff.		
20/16/08	<i>This item relating to personnel has been minuted confidentially</i>		
20/16/09	The Board expressed thanks to the staff for their work and TG agreed to send a note on this matter.	TG	
20/16/10	<p>AC presented the 2020Q2 financial report.</p> <p>Our financial aims in Q2 were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain as much income as possible consistent with wider organisational aims ● Reduce expenditure as much as possible consistent with wider organisational aims <p>We achieved both of these aims and were extremely successful at income generation.</p>		
20/17	<u>Governance</u>		
20/17/01	TG led a discussion of the AGM. There was little to report in light of the decision to convene only for the necessary business in law due to the COVID19 pandemic.		
20/17/02	The Board discussed the election and noted that the turnout (9.4%) was poor compared to previous years. Lack of information meant no meaningful analysis could be made.		
20/17/03	The Board agreed to continue with the online voting system for 2021 but monitor open rates by email closely.	AC	
20/17/04	The Board discussed the trustees' skills audit and noted a decline in experience in areas such as Humanist Ceremonies, Pastoral Care, Teaching in Humanism, and IT.		
20/17/05	The Board noted skills in such areas such as Company law, Charity law, HR and Property management were also lacking however it was agreed that external advice could be sought where necessary on these matters.		

20/17/06	The Board agreed for a need to review how the skills audit is formulated and AOC will provide recommendations for the November Board meeting in the context of how they relate to trustee nominations.	AOC	
20/17/07	The Board reviewed and approved the amended Trustee Handbook.		
20/17/08	The Board noted the commencement of work towards the Trusted Charity Mark self assessment, the quality framework of assessment and working practices developed by the NCVO. AOC will provide more detail in the November Board meeting.	AOC	
20/17/09	<p>The Board approved the following meeting dates for the 2021 calendar:</p> <p>Board Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 20 February 13:00 - 16:00 • Saturday 8 May 13:00 - 16:00 • Saturday 31 July 13:00 - 16:00 • Saturday 20 November 13:00 - 16:00 <p>Strategy and Policy Away Days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 3 September 11:00-16:00 • Saturday 11 December 11:00-16:00 	AC	
20/17/10	<p>The Board reviewed and approved the Safeguarding policy and agreed to its implementation with the following amends:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The policy to be updated to include DBS checks for Trustees 2. The policy to be updated to include DBS checks for School speakers. 3. The policy be reviewed for grammatical instances that appear out of context with Humanists UK and to amend examples to fit our work more accurately. 4. The policy should be uploaded to the Trustee area when complete and the trustees notified by email. 	CM	
20/18	<u>Strategy</u>		

20/18/01	<p>The Board noted and approved Humanists UK's response to the Black Lives Matter campaign and the actions proposed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the September Away day to formalise our policy on black and minority ethnic visibility and other diversities. • Improve photography around events and activities to better represent our activists, membership, and personnel in our websites and communications. • Meet with black and minority ethnic members and activists to discuss their views on what we might do better. The Chief Executive and Chair are scheduled to do this in August. 		
20/18/03	<p>The Board discussed and noted:</p> <p>That continuing uncertainty about the future environment has paused our strategy review.</p> <p>This is expected to restart at the September Away Day, by which point staff will have completed mapping our current outputs against the new strategy agreed by the Board.</p> <p>Specific additional matters that we expect to discuss at the Away Day are (i) our future events strategy (ii) our pastoral care strategy (iii) our local organisation.</p> <p>The Officers had agreed that it is going to be very difficult to budget at the end of this year for a three year period and that this may mean delaying our new strategy, but that we should reconsider this in Q4.</p> <p>We would probably be looking at an interim strategy but we would not lose the refinements that have been already planned and would implement those.</p> <p>TG agreed to bring to the September away day a list of governance items relating to the strategy review that the Board will be addressing through the process.</p>	TG	
20/19	Any other business - See confidential minute		
20/20	Board of Trustees Policy and Strategy Away Day on 12 September 2020, 11:00 - 16:00 venue to be confirmed.		

	Board of Trustees Meeting on 14 November 2020 13:00-16:00 venue to be confirmed.		
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