

# Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting

13 May 2023 13:00-16:00

Online

**Present:** Iain Deboys (ID), Tamar Ghosh (TG), Neil Hawkins (NH, Chair), Charley Jarret (CJ), Ruth Kaufman (RK), Ewan Main (EM), Neil McKain (NM, Vice Chair), Stephanie Niven (SN), Sophy Robinson (SR), Andrew Russell (AR), Emma Shepherd (ES), Simon Walker-Samuel (SWS).

**In attendance:** Andrew Copson (AC, Chief Executive and Company Secretary), Aaron Wilkins (AW, Minutes)

Item		Action	Deadline
	<b><u>Procedural Matters</u></b>		
07/23	<p><b>Apologies for absence were received from</b> Ann O'Connell</p> <p><b>Declarations of interests:</b> None</p> <p><b>Minutes of the last meeting:</b> the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2023 were approved with no amendments.</p> <p><b>The Chair thanked</b> retiring Board members Stephanie Niven and Ewan Main for their service on the Board.</p> <p><b>The Board recorded</b> its sadness at the death on the previous day of longtime Board member David Pollock and gratitude for his many years of service.</p>		
08/23	<b><u>Management</u></b>		
08/23/01	<b>AC presented</b> the 2023 Q1 Management Report and Accounts		
08/23/02	<b>AC reported</b> there were no serious incidents.		
08/23/03	<b>The Board discussed</b> the 2023Q1 Accounts and welcomed the positive outcome in this quarter's accounts.		
08/23/04	<b>The Board noted</b> the 2023 and 2024 forecasts given in the Accounts, which would see a closing balance on 31 December 2024 of £1.82m.		
08/23/05	<b>The Board discussed</b> the management report, in particular:		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding Facebook's algorithm favouring simple, optimistic and uncontroversial posts.</li> <li>• Our continued use of Twitter and the need to purchase verification for our accounts, given its importance for the promotion of humanism and for supporter acquisition.</li> <li>• Progress made over the quarter on our work in Humanist Care, in particular recent trends in NRPSN activity and plans to continue to expand capacity in this area of our work including the rollout of NRPSN volunteers in the Armed Forces.</li> <li>• The upcoming High Court case against Kent County Council and in particular the strength of the legal arguments advanced by Kent and that fact that losing the case would not set a legal precedent for preventing humanist membership of SACREs.</li> </ul>		
08/23/06	<b>The Board agreed</b> a more in-depth presentation on Humanist Care should be included in the away day in December.	AW	
08/23/07	<b><u>People Report</u></b>		
08/23/08	<b><u>Confidential minute due to discussion of individual personnel</u></b>		
08/23/09	<b>The Board agreed</b> to have a session on the current status and future development of the Branch Pilot Project at the September Board Away Day	AW	
09/23	<b><u>Annual Report</u></b>		
09/23/01	<b>The Board adopted the</b> Annual Report and Accounts for 2023 with amendments.		
09/23/02	<b>The Board agreed</b> that alternative versions of the Annual Report's Public Benefit statement should be drafted for discussion at the Board Away Day in September.	AC	
09/23/03	<b>The Board agreed</b> that the FAC should discuss the wording of the Reserves section of our Annual Reports at its next meeting.	FAC	
09/23/04	<b>The Board authorised the Chair</b> to sign the letter of representation.		
09/23/05	<b>The Board received</b> the auditors' management letter and noted its positive report.		
09/23/06	<b>The Board approved</b> the AGM notice and agenda to be circulated to members with the Annual Report and Accounts on 21 May.		

09/23/07	<b>The Board discussed</b> the motion proposed to the AGM by Cath Sutherland and seconded by Phil Walder and <b>agreed</b> that staff should prepare a statement on google doc for the Board's comments, by which the Board could oppose the motion and the same time as outlining our current commitments in relation to the climate crisis, including our current environment policy, Humanist Climate Action, resources for schools relating to the humanist perspective on the environment and others. The statement could also include additional actions we could decide to take, such as reporting on our carbon consumption through CDP and our biodiversity impact.	AC	25/05/23
09/23/08	<b>The Board agreed</b> Tamar Ghosh should speak to members about the motion on behalf of the Board at the AGM.		
09/23/09	<b>The Board noted</b> that five candidates submitted nominations to stand for the Board. Four were accepted after consideration by the Board Recruitment subcommittee and, given that there are six vacancies, candidates will be submitted for election by show of hands at the AGM.		
10/23	<b><u>Staff Benefits</u></b>		
10/23/01	<b>The Board discussed</b> changes to parental leave policies proposed by the Head of People (HOP).		
10/23/02	<b>The Board agreed to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to a parental leave policy in which all staff will have access to the same parental leave benefit when starting or extending their family through pregnancy, adoption, or surrogacy.</li> <li>• Pay a living wage weekly rate instead of SMP.</li> <li>• Increase the overall pay benefit combination as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 26 weeks leave at full pay</li> <li>○ 13 further weeks at living wage weekly rate</li> <li>○ 13 further weeks unpaid</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Introduce a sliding scale claw back as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 100% if employee returns for less than three months</li> <li>○ 75% if the employee returns for less than six months</li> <li>○ 50% if the employee returns for less than a year</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Implement the changes with immediate effect.</li> </ul>		
11/23	<b><u>Governance</u></b>		

11/23/01	<b>The Board agreed</b> to share their recommendations for changes to the existing Trustees Handbook on a google doc ahead of the next Board meeting	AW	
11/23/03	<b>The Board discussed</b> the documented policy on Board members' attendance at events and discussed possible amendments in the future based either on what events would benefit from Board members working at them or possible ways in which Board members attending events might thereby have their capacity to fulfil their role as a board member enhanced.		
11/23/04	<b>The Board agreed</b> to add the policy on Board attendance at events into the Trustees Handbook.	AW	
11/23/05	<b>The Board agreed</b> to receive a paper at its July meeting detailing the cost of Board attendance at the Convention in order to decide whether to introduce this.	AC	
11/23/07	<p><b>The Board agreed</b> to amend the Byelaws as below, in order to reflect a recent change in the celebrant accreditation fee structure:</p> <p><b>3. Membership</b></p> <p>a. There shall be <del>four</del><b>five</b> classes of membership of Humanists UK as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Individual</li> <li>ii. Family</li> <li>iii. Honorary</li> <li>iv. Affiliate</li> <li>v. <del>Celebrant</del></li> </ul> <p>b. Membership subscription rates shall be determined from time to time by the Board. Authority shall be delegated to the Chief Executive for the setting of special offers. <del>In the case of accredited celebrants, the obligation to pay membership may be met by the payment of the celebrant accreditation fee. For all other members, the current rates which represent the minimum payable for each class are:</del></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Full membership: £5 per month or £850 for life</li> <li>ii. Family membership: £7 per month</li> <li>iii. Low or no income: £2 per month</li> </ul> <p>c. Individual Member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Subject to the right of the Board to refuse an application in accordance with Articles 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4, any person over the age of 10 years shall be entitled to join Humanists UK on payment of the subscription.</li> <li>ii. Such a person will have all the rights, privileges and obligations of membership (save that those under the age of 16 shall not have the right to vote at any Annual and other General Meetings, be eligible for election to any post, or propose or second any motion, resolution, or candidature). These rights shall only be exercisable if the person's subscription is not in arrears.</li> <li>iii. Individual Membership may be by payment monthly <del>or</del> annually in advance or by a single lifetime payment. <del>In the case of qualified and accredited celebrants, the obligation to pay membership shall be met by the payment of the celebrant accreditation fee, quarterly or annually in advance.</del></li> </ul>		

12/23	<b><u>Date of next meeting:</u></b>  <b>AGM on Sunday 11 June 2023 at the Liverpool Guild of Students</b>		