

MINUTES OF THE OPEN MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

Held on Monday, February 5th 2018 at the British Acupuncture Council

63 Jeddo Road, London, W12 9HQ

GB members present:	Anthony Lock (AL) (Lay)	Anthony Sigrist (AS)
	Cathy Chapman (CC)	Helen Smallwood (HS)
	Joanna Brown (JB) (Lay)	Philip Rose-Neil (PRN) (Chair)
	Professor Mary Lovegrove (ML) (Lay)	
In attendance:	Paul Hitchcock (PH) (CEO)	Rob Strange (RS) (Company Secretary)
	Harriet Lansdown (HL) (BAAB)	Anna de Oliveira (ADO) (Secretary to the Board)
Apologies:	Daniel Maxwell (DM)	

1. Introduction and Apologies

- The Chair welcomed Harriet Lansdown (HL) (BAAB Lead Accreditation Officer).
- Apologies were received from Daniel Maxwell (DM) (GB member).
- All present at the meeting introduced themselves.
- There were no conflicts of interest declared for the open part of the meeting.

6. & 7. Minutes and Actions

- The open minutes and action points from the October 24th 2017 GB meeting were approved.
- ML asked if open minutes were indeed open to all BAcC members and to members of the public.
- PH clarified that the open minutes were published on the BAcC website for all to see.
- It was suggested by RS that the minutes should be easier to find on the website. **Action: Fellow Board members were in agreement and suggested that the location of the minutes be better advertised to the membership.**
- HL made the point that David Tredinnick, the Chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Integrated Healthcare, is a strong supporter of acupuncture and she was therefore surprised David was not a listed contact in the CEO Activity Report.
- RS reminded the Board spaces were still available to attend the finance familiarisation session on Friday.

8. Activity Reporting

- PH commented that the CEO/Chair Report fed back broad activity and business as usual. He wished to draw the Board's attention to the project management and activity tracking system that Gavin Erickson had effectively designed for the whole BAcC staff team, with the support of Ann Gordon and Anna de Oliveira. PH then asked ADO to talk the Board through the online portal system.
- After the online project management and activity tracking system was showcased to the Board, a number of questions were asked. One Board member asked if it was an optional system, to which the answer was no. It was stated the system was mandatory for all BAcC staff members to input into, to keep track of their projects. A question was also raised about what was considered a project. The answer given was any piece of work not considered business as usual, with a clear start and end date, and with clear milestones in between. The point was raised that the system was only as good as the data that was put into it. Overall, the Board were impressed with the system particularly with the red, amber, green (RAG) flagging method to keep track of milestones and progress. The point was made that BAcC staff had until end of February to input their projects into the system. The Board were pleased the system was going ahead.
- A few questions were then asked of Paul regarding the CEO Report. ML asked how the BAcC audits its members. Was CPD a checking tool or a development tool, to which PH answered that the debate was still open. ML then asked about Professor Ke and if it was the Asante Academy that approached PH about being interviewed for the documentary about acupuncture in the UK. PH replied that the Asante Academy approached him about giving his views on the role of the BAcC and the position of traditional acupuncture in the UK.

- AS then made two points. First, that there had been comment around the fact that the first two membership strategy events were advertised after the date had passed. Second, that the membership renewals were sent out with direct debit mandate return dates that were due to be returned after the letter was received. In other words, the date of the letter was 2-3 weeks after he received it. AS made the point that members were unimpressed by these issues. PH said he did not know that this was the case. PH thanked AS and said that this was useful to know.

9. & 10. Treasurer's Report & Income and Expenditure Schedule

- RS stated that the cash flow figures for 2017 were examined and that there was no anticipated problem with cash levels. He also noted that the £75k invested during March 2017 in an Aldermore twelve month account at a rate of 1.3% would be maturing in March 2018. A decision would need to be made in terms of what the BAcC wished to do with that investment. **Action: It was agreed that RS and AL would discuss this in the next month.**
- RS stated that the draft 2018 budget would be presented as a separate agenda item by PH. He went on to note that the BAcC Finance Handbook had been largely rewritten as part of the Governance Review, and that the proposed document would be circulated to GB Directors for comment and approval. RS reminded the Board of the Finance Familiarisation session that both he and an auditor representative from H L Barnes and Co would be running on Friday, February 10th.
- RS went through the Income and Expenditure Account for the twelve months ended 31.12.17. Contrary to what RS had been suggesting to the Board in previous meetings, that positive variance was merely a question of timing differences and that they would have worked themselves out by the end of the year, RS commented that in fact they hadn't. Overall, the out-turn for the twelve months showed a surplus of c£128k, being c£124k better than budgeted. RS made clear that a good deal of the apparent surplus should disappear during the year end accounts preparation process, although some (about half) of the underspend would remain. RS was pleased that BAcC reserves were at a good level.
- PH then clarified the areas of expenditure that were expected to occur, but did not. He mentioned that certain projects hadn't yet started and therefore money did not get spent because vacancies had not been recruited, leading to capacity challenges. PH noted the database project was an example of money not spent. He also mentioned the regional support work did not happen to the scale he would have liked, and that these shortcomings were both disappointing.
- RS pointed out that PR was underspent, and that the heading called contributions should be changed because it was much more about research. Overall, therefore, RS assured the Board the BAcC was in a very positive financial situation.
- ML thanked RS for his presentation, report and budget which she found very helpful and which she could understand. ML noted PRN's comment in his Chair report that the financial position of the organisation was in fair shape. ML went on to ask RS that given there might

be a bit of surplus, which could go in to the 2018 budget, was there something specific that the money should be spent on?

- PH answered that there were two earmarked projects last year, which did not happen, namely the project about electronic record keeping support for members and the database project. PH mentioned that support to the regions linked to education and CPD was also not spent. His recommendation would be to spend the money in these areas.
- ML then asked where communications, as in the lay person speaking about what the BAcC does, fits into the Income and Expenditure figures?
- PH replied that when he arrived, the BAcC was spending money inappropriately on PR so the decision was taken to cut it out and redirect it to research. The result is that the evidence gathering is now happening at the BAcC, but that the BAcC do now need to invest in communications and PR again. This investment will go into the work stream of the person heading Professional Development, which is a vacant post that PH is ready to appoint for.
- When asked if there would be a separate line in the budget for this, PH replied that his budget needs work and that he would like to send it to the Board as a separate paper after the meeting.
- RS commented that by allocating the budget to individual budget holders, it will be more apparent to see if one is underspent or overspent.
- HL commented that regional groups, CPD, student services and PR, namely all of the services that members see, are very underspent. HL asked if that was related to a lack of activity in these areas?
- AS confirmed that the lack of PR was an area members were noticing.
- **Action: PH agreed with the comments and PRN stated this (more PR) needed to be actioned.**
- CC asked if this would be a priority in the next year as there had been a lot of concerns expressed. PH agreed.
- A debate on whether the underspend should be spent on services or go into the reserves took place, with agreement that members have got to see something for their membership fee.

11. 2018 Draft Budget

- PH presented the draft 2018 budget to the Board. He stated that at the last Board meeting he presented the Board with some options/scenarios but that much greater clarity was needed on the income figures and how that was generated. PH got hold of historical data and redid the maths, and stated he was confident the income streams were now correct, based on a calculation of 300 more new members, and taking into account different membership categories and hence differing fee structures. PH stated he had yet to provide

the Board with a budget which divides the statutory budget into a work streams budget, and that he would be emailing this to the Board.

- AS pointed to the fact that the communication and engagement line on the budget was £52k less this year than last year. AS was very concerned about this, stating that this was a huge reduction at a time when the BAcC needed to engage with members. PH stated he would find a way of pulling that figure up.
- ML also commented that from her point of view this was a big risk to the organisation, particularly at a time when the younger generation is all about communication.
- AL commented that income had gone up substantially in the budget and yet subscriptions had gone down in the last couple of years. AL commented that it looked a bit too good to be true. PH replied that the number he was asking for, notably the 300 new members, was doable, but that yes, it was always a risk.
- AL warned that reserves might go down again so this point was quite critical, and that if increased member engagement and involvement was a priority, then the draft budget was not reflecting this. AL further made the point that salaries aside, the draft budget had not taken into account rising inflation. According to AL, this was a very negative situation to be in and that according to his calculations the figures would come to an important loss. Further work needed to be done to the budget. AL asked for the confidence to prove him wrong.
- HS commented that she did not get a sense PR was being planned out in the budget. PH replied that a decision on PR could not be taken until the Board took a decision of the BAcC's strategic direction. If the profession of acupuncture was to go down the route of integrating into health and care, then PR would not be a priority, the way doctors, for example, do not do advertising and PR. If a decision was taken not to go down the integrated route, then PR would indeed be a top priority.
- CC stated she too was concerned about the lack of communications and engagement in the budget and that more of a breakdown and detail was necessary.
- HL commented that the budgeted £87k earmarked for the BAAB was OK and that she would welcome the opportunity to present BAAB's reports and accounts to the Board. It was noted that the BAAB's financial reporting had always been meticulous.
- **Action: PH agreed to rework and resend the budget to the Board by the end of February.**

12. International strategy

- PRN led the discussion on international strategy and briefly talked about the key stakeholders. In Europe, the European Traditional Chinese Medicine Association (ETCMA) was noted as the prime stakeholder, with direct contact with 25 acupuncture organisations across Europe, the BAcC being the largest.

- Direct contact was particularly recommended with the organisation in France because of their lead role in the UNESCO World Acupuncture Day (WAD) to be held in Paris in November 2018.
- Other key stakeholders discussed were the Ireland organisations, Israel, the emerging USA wide umbrella organisation, the Australia Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association, and New Zealand.
- In China, the key organisations noted were the World Acupuncture and Moxibustion Societies (WFAS) and the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (WFCMS). WFAS contribute to the promotion of acupuncture and moxibustion in the world, with a 600-700 strong membership from around the world. The BAcC are not currently members of the WFAS.
- The Board were asked to take a vote on membership to WFAS. There were 5 abstentions, with many Board members agreeing that not enough information was provided for them to take an informed decision.
- CC commented that although it is important how the BAcC engages in the international arena, the BAcC have more pressing engagement to do at home with its members and current stakeholders. AS commented that as the BAcC are already members of the ETCMA, and the ETCMA are members of WFAS, the BAcC, in effect, should have the benefit of being at the WFAS table, without having to pay for two different memberships.
- That having been said, the Chair made clear the advances coming from China. China is developing a system, evidence- based and empirically supported, which means that sloppy, second rate research in the field of acupuncture, will be a thing of the past in China.
- **Action: It was suggested the Board should deliberate further on how beneficial membership to WFAS would be to the BAcC, at the next Board meeting.**
- With the exception of joining WFAS, the Board voted unanimously on the broad international engagement strategy outlined by the Chair.

13. Communication

- PH presented a paper outlining the current lines, and frequency, of communications between himself and both the Chair and the Board.
- Feedback from the GB to the Chair had suggested that the current process of communications was insufficient.
- A new proposed timetable and system of regular emails and conference calls was discussed and was broadly supported.

Next Board meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 22nd 2018 at 10:30 am at 63 Jeddo Road.

PRN closed the Open part of this meeting of the Board at 4.30 pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Rose-Neil', written in a cursive style.

Signed Philip Rose-Neil (Board chair)

Dated: May 22nd 2018