

TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday February 1st, 2022
The Malthouse, at 1100



In attendance: Michelle Ryan (MR, Chair), Navin Sehmi (NS, Vice Chair), Andrew Longland (AL, Treasurer), Mike Sankus (MS), Paul Barton (PB), Alastair Durkin (AD), Steve Westmore (SW).

Apologies: Alan Simson (AS), Keith Sacre (KS).

Staff: John Parker (JP).

No.	Agenda item	Actions
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1	Opening	
1.1	Welcome and signing attendance. Attendees recorded for minutes as above.	
1.2	Apologies for absence Apologies were accepted from AS and KS.	
1.3	Conflicts of interest No conflicts of interest were declared.	

2	Minutes and actions of previous meetings	
2.1	The Minutes of the November 2021 Board Meeting were accepted as a true record.	
2.2	JP provided an update on the actions arising from November 2021. <ul style="list-style-type: none">All Board members have now completed declarations of interest and Trustee Eligibility forms.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JP explained that the question of whether or not we should seek corporate sponsorship for individual documents would be considered when the publications/advertising policy is produced. • MS asked if the Board could see the eBooks again to check where the sponsor logo is currently positioned. Action JP. Have working links to eBooks sent to the Board. • It was agreed that the Association will no longer be printing an article relating to two closed complaints. • JP has arranged for an estate agent to visit to Malthouse to value the property and land. • The new Complaints Procedure has been launched and is online. • The old Complaints Procedure and whistleblowing policy have been withdrawn. • Board meeting dates for 2022 have been set: February 1st, May 3rd, August 2nd and November 1st. • The Committee structure is on the agenda for this meeting. 	JP1
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3	Finance	
3.1	<p>JP presented the proposed 2022 budget. This was put together by JP, Finance Manager HB and the team at the Malthouse. The proposed budget had previously been reviewed and agreed with the Finance Group (MR, NS, AL). The proposal is to budget for a consolidation year in 2022 after our recovery year in 2021, with a projected profit of £48k. Most activities will hopefully return to pre-pandemic levels but the increased income in certain areas, such as events, will be offset by an expected reduction in publication sales (after the record performances in 2020/21) and an increased investment in personnel in order to deliver the Strategic Plan 2022-24.</p> <p>After careful consideration, some discussion and comparisons to previous budgets (2019, 2020 and 2021) it was proposed by AL that the budget should be accepted as proposed. This was seconded by MS and unanimously supported.</p> <p>Action JP. Circulate digital versions of the 2019-2022 budgets to Board.</p>	JP2

4	CEO Operational Report	
4.1	<p data-bbox="300 338 603 371">Brief operational update</p> <p data-bbox="300 412 1161 479">JP provided a written operational update to the Board in advance of the meeting and invited questions/discussion. Some of the key items were:</p> <ul data-bbox="347 519 1262 1809" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="347 519 1262 658">• ARB Show at APF has been confirmed and announced. We have negotiated a positive deal on ticket revenue which we are hopeful might mean we can generate similar income to that which we would ordinarily bring in from ARB Show. <li data-bbox="347 698 1262 909">• Discussions are in progress with Forestry England and Westonbirt about a new public-facing event to be held there in the usual Arb Show May slot. This event will be called the Tree Care Forum and will be a showcase of all things arboriculture. Forestry England are keen to run this as a joint event, which offers quite a few possibilities for us. JP will update as information becomes available. <li data-bbox="347 949 1262 1016">• We have now signed a contract with Loughborough for Conference 2022 and planning is well underway. <li data-bbox="347 1057 1262 1267">• We have partnered up with the Ancient Tree Forum to submit a Heritage Lottery Fund bid for a project intended to help deliver more training and exams for VET Cert which will allow us to break through the bottleneck in course delivery caused by limited numbers of examiners in the UK. The expression of interest bid was successful and the full bid was submitted in the week of January 17th. <li data-bbox="347 1308 1262 1554">• The Bats and Trees event at Tortworth on January 24th and 25th was a great success, attracting around 110 attendees of which approximately half work in ecology rather than arboriculture. This is a brand new audience for us and was a very effective collaboration between professions. Feedback from delegates has been very positive so far. The sessions were recorded and will be available for on-demand purchase in the coming weeks. <li data-bbox="347 1594 1262 1809">• Two of our current team members will be leaving the Association. Jim Mullholland will be departing in April to focus on his increasingly successful training business. It is intended that Jim will continue to work with the Association as a trainer and CEnv interview on a freelance basis as required. Sophie Chappell will be leaving in February for an exciting new job opportunity with a charity. <p data-bbox="300 1850 1262 2018">MS and AD raised a concern that JP referred to a further exploration of virtual reassessments in the CEO report. When trialed in 2020 the virtual reassessment process was seen as a success by two experienced ArbAC assessors and an long-time ArbAC. However, despite this there were some concerns from members of the Board that virtual reassessments were not as thorough as traditional</p>	

	<p>reassessments. JP clarified that all we are hoping to do is revisit the possibility of virtual reassessments, for which the general feeling seems very positive.</p>	
4.2	<p>Complaints</p> <p>JP provided an update about complaints.</p> <p>We have one open complaint, C078, which has been sent to Professional Committee for review.</p> <p>One previous (unvalidated) complaint referred to in correspondence as B v N (November 2021) was referred by the complainant to their local MP. The MP has been in contact with JP, and an explanation for our decision has been provided.</p> <p>JP noted that there seems to have been a considerable increase in allegations of logo misuse, with eight examples in the last three months. These are addressed via an email/letter from JP to the company/individual in question describing the problem and seeking an explanation/resolution before we have to take legal advice. This tends to bring the cases to a close.</p> <p>SW suggested that this might not be a task that the CEO has to complete. JP explained that it is not an onerous task because the emails/letters are largely templates, and that it helps to highlight the seriousness of the issue when the correspondence comes directly from the CEO. If numbers increase significantly then this task can be delegated to a team member.</p>	

5	Updates from Committees	
5.1	<p>The minutes from Professional Committee held in November 2021 were circulated in advance of the meeting and taken as read. There were no questions or matters arising.</p> <p>Neither Education & Training Committee nor Media & Comms Committee have met since the last Board meeting.</p>	

6	Items for discussion	
6.1	<p>Committee proposal</p> <p>JP had previously circulated a proposal for a new Committee structure, the two key points of which were to recommend that 1) Committees should only be comprised of Trustees, 2) the existing Committees be replaced by a Finance Committee, a Standards Committee and a Resources Committee, and 3) beneath these Committees a network of working parties be established to increase member engagement and offer a route to become more involved with the Association and perhaps ultimately progress to Board membership.</p> <p>There was a lot of discussion around this topic. Some Trustees felt that this was a preferable structure to that which we currently have and that it would increase productivity, efficiency and grow member engagement. Others felt that the changes were too radical and that there was a risk of overloading Trustees with work through additional Committee meetings and that it was important to have non-Trustees on Committees as well.</p> <p>It was noted that this issue has been being discussed for at least nine years and agreement on a way forward will be needed soon. It was further noted that a decision would be useful in advance of June, when we ordinarily invite members to nominate themselves to join Committees.</p> <p>It was decided that this should be discussed in more detail at the next Board meeting.</p> <p>Action JP. Produce a SWOT analysis of the current and proposed Committee structures, including time commitments.</p> <p>Action JP. Draft terms of reference for the proposed Committees.</p> <p>JP asked for a decision about who would review and allocate the Association’s Research Grant in 2022. Rather than send to E&T the Board instructed that JP should review the applications and make a recommendation to Board. In future years this will likely be delegated through the new Committee terms of reference.</p> <p>Action JP. Review research grant applications and make a recommendation to Board.</p>	<p>JP3</p> <p>JP4</p> <p>JP5</p>
6.2	<p>Co-opting Trustees</p> <p>It has been proposed that Co-opted places on the Board should be filled by individuals with specific skill sets that the Board requires, rather than from the arboricultural profession, in the same manner as the Treasurer is recruited.</p>	

	<p>MR and AL had previously circulated draft advertisements seeking potential Trustees with legal and HR experience. These were unanimously approved by the Board pending one minor change.</p> <p>Action JP. Amend the term 'leadership team' in the final bullet point of the advertisement.</p> <p>Action MR. Provide JP with a list of places to advertise.</p>	<p>JP6</p> <p>MR1</p>
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7	Items for information	
7.1	<p>Update on insurance. AL has spoken to the Association's insurers and feels comfortable with the current situation and level of cover. Our policies are due for renewal at the end of April.</p> <p>Action JP. Work with the Finance Group to undertake a review of our current policy to ensure value for money and service.</p> <p>Update on Scheme of delegation MR reported that this is being looked at by MR and JP. There are many examples of template Schemes of Delegation online and it is hoped that one of these will be suitable from which to create our own.</p>	<p>JP7</p>

8	Any other business	
8.1	<p>PB asked how things are going with regard to the ArbAC Scheme. JP summarised the situation and noted that there was still a lot of work to be done. The pandemic badly effected the ArbAC Scheme and there have been a lot of changes in terms of personnel and management in the last few months. Things will take a while to settle down but we have identified the key areas for attention and are working to resolve them.</p> <p>MS suggested that some of the working groups previously assembled to look at the ArbAC Scheme might be helpful in working through the current situation. JP confirmed that a wide range of stakeholders will be involved as things develop and that the Board would be kept fully apprised throughout.</p>	

9	Date of the next meeting	
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9.1	The next meeting is due to be held online, via Zoom, on May 3 rd . Action JP. Finalise a time for the next Board and send out an invite.	JP8
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Meeting concluded at 15:50

Minutes to be circulated to all Trustees.