



Minutes of Council Business Meeting

Saturday, 21st September 2024, 10am to 1pm

Present: Claire Louise Vaculik (Chair), Michèle Wood (Vice-Chair), Sinead Braiden, Sarah Challenger, Jacqui McKoy-Lewens, Liliana Montoya De La Cruz, Francesca Norouzi, Catherine Stevens, Caryl Sibbett, Simi Warah

In attendance: Gary Fereday (CEO), Debbie Noel (minutes)

Apologies: Jess Collier

#	Item	Actions
1.	Apologies and of Conflicts of Interest <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, in particular Jacqui McCoy-Lewens, who was attending her first Council meeting since being elected at the AGM. She noted that apologies had been received from Jess Collier. Council members then introduced each other, as many were meeting in person for the first time.</p> <p>Conflicts of interest</p> <p>The Chair explained the importance of completing Conflict of Interest forms so that the reasons for this was clear for newer Council members and asked everyone to confirm they have updated and submitted theirs for this Council year. All had except for one, who will send this in within the next few days.</p> <p>One possible conflict was noted by the Chair, who highlighted that Caryl Sibbett would have to leave meeting for item 11 as she had been nominated for an award. Caryl agreed this as a declaration of an interest in that item.</p>	
2.	Minutes of last meeting and matters arising <p>The Chair noted that the minutes of the last Council meeting on 11 May 2024 had been circulated to Council members and following any corrections submitted by email had been approved.</p> <p>Matters arising</p>	

Item 14 – European Federation of Art Therapy (EFAT) Membership

The Chair noted that a previous action had been joining EFAT and asked if this was now completed, as the BAAT logo was not on their website. Liliana attends the European Federation of Art Therapy (EFAT) and had previously agreed to represent BAAT in this forum.

The CEO said that while BAAT has joined as a member, we have not yet seen an invoice from them or seen our logo on their [website](#). The Chair asked for this to be followed up, as it was agreed by Council in February that BAAT would join and it would be helpful for members to be able to see this.

Action: CEO to follow up on progress of membership invoice and our logo on the EFAT website.

CEO

Items 5 – Fake website

The Chair asked about the fake website that had been reported at the meeting in May and if an update could be provided. The CEO shared the news that the rogue website, which had been taken down, is back up again. Separately, several phishing emails are going out to our members pretending to sell tickets to BAAT events or attendee lists. He is following up with BAAT's lawyers and the team continues to alert our members and warn them of the danger. The team are consulting our IT providers and BAAT's website developers for advice and will be taking the steps necessary to copyright the BAAT name and logo.

Item 5c – Culture Health & Wellbeing Alliance

The Chair asked for a volunteer or two to represent BAAT as a Strategic Alliance Members of the Culture Health & Wellbeing Alliance. Liliana volunteered and Michele will also support. A report on any activity from meetings that Council members attend will be shared at the next Council meeting.

Item 10 – Meeting the NHSE Project coordinator

Council had asked for Daniela Pasquini, NHSE Project coordinator, to join the September meeting. The Chair noted that Daniela wasn't able to attend as she was on prearranged annual leave, but will be invited to the December meeting. This will give Council members a chance to get an update from her and ask any questions about the project.

Item 15.1 – Four Nations review

A consultant has been brought on to help develop a comprehensive public affairs plan with the CEO. The Chair and CEO have in the meantime been focused on meeting people in the four nations and this is already helping grow relationships. For example, the Chair and CEO visited Wales in July and visits are planned to Scotland and NI early in the new year. The CEO will restart the work on the governance documentation.

Action: CEO to return to developing the four nations governance documentation with a view to bringing back to Council in early 2025.

CEO

Item 15.2 - SIG network lead report: Membership

The Regional Network Lead had asked on behalf of members if CPD discounts could be transferred to offset the membership subscription fee and checked if this was indeed possible.

Action: CEO to follow up on CPD discounts question.

CEO

The CEO also reported that the Senior Membership Officer is looking at categories and benefits for all members as part of a membership review. This has highlighted that: some long-retired members cannot be both retired and full members and as students graduate, they should become full members. Louise has contacted members individually to move members to the correct membership category.

The team is working to make Categories much clearer in future, and the CEO will update Council on progress and proposals as appropriate to Council for approval.

The question of whether retired members could be group coordinators was raised.

Action: The CEO will review the bylaws and update Council at the next meeting.

CEO

The Chair notes that papers had been shared in advance and would be taken as read.

3. Chair's report – update

The Chair shared an overview of her work

Engagement with members

The Chair noted that she has continued to meet members each month at her drop-in meetings, which enables her to hear directly from members on the issues that concern them. She valued a recent conversation about how members might stay engaged and contribute after retirement. Alongside this, she has been in touch with those who raised queries about BAAT signing up to the MoU on Conversion therapy to better understand their differing perspectives and concerns. She has also engaged with representatives from several HEIs about the challenges being faced in the sector and organisations that are considering starting up an apprenticeship pathway and wanting to think about this process.

She reflected on a meaningful afternoon spent with Joan Woddiss in late summer, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award for 2024. The Chair had been delighted to present her with the final award – an engraved tray. Joan had asked to share with the Council again just how much she values and appreciates this honour.

Reflecting on structures for members' engagement and support more broadly, the Chair reported that she and the CEO had joined a group of members from all four nations to reflect on feedback from the consultant's interviews. The consultant had met members

over several weeks to better understand the history, structures and different practices in place regionally and across each of the four nations of the UK. A follow up roundtable offered a chance to think about how we work across all four nations in a way that is constructive and fair for all.

Supporting members and the development of art therapy across the UK

A visit by the Chair and CEO to Wales in July supported this focus to represent our members across all four nations. There they spent time in Newport with Sarah Challenger and some of the teaching team and students at the University of South Wales art therapy training programme and also met the Welsh Chief Allied Health Professions Advisor, Ruth Crowder, in Cardiff. She was very interested in working more closely with BAAT. The next day was spent in Newtown at the Oriel Davies Gallery with members from across Wales – talking about issues and making art together. More trips are being planned for the year ahead, as members have shared how much they valued having this time together to talk and reflect on our shared work as a community. To get the most out of the visits in terms of our time and resources, the visits will be combined with meetings with the local HEIs and CAHPOs and an in-person member meeting. She noted that we will hopefully visit politicians in future visits too, in order to build and or develop relationships with policy makers.

Council Working Groups

The Chair thanked Council members who had taken part in the smaller working groups set up by Council, which have now met several times to complete different tasks.

Our Annual Conference working group (Sinead, Simi, Sarah, Liliana, Jess, Catherine and Caryl), joined by Prof Diane Waller (our President), met again to review all of the submissions that members had shared, following the call for submissions. The Chair remarked that she was pleased to see the interest, as was one of her aims in taking on the role was to enable greater member participation across the layers of our shared work. She reported that 26 members had submitted ideas for presentations – either 'live' on the day, or for shorter pre-recorded presentations.

Nominations have been put forward for both categories in the new BAAT Awards. The Chair thanked Catherine, Liliana and Simi and Sinead for their work on the awards panel too. This panel had also included Prof Diane Waller, and some external members, Daniel Regan, our EDI Advisor, and Carolyn McDonald, CAHPO for Scotland. Both Daniel and Carolyn shared how much they valued hearing about the work that art therapists have been doing and that it has helped them to better understand our profession and what we can offer service users across the UK. The Chair announced the shortlist for both awards: Inclusion and anti-oppressive practice (Corrina Eastwood, Nicki Power and Professor Susan Hogan) and for Innovation (Caryl Sibbett, Dr Jed Jerwood and Nana Zhvitiashvili).

Stakeholder/ partner engagement and networking

As a professional body BAAT works in collaboration with many other professional bodies, regulators, national networks, and campaigning organisations. Earlier this year, The Chair sat on the recruitment panel for a new Assistant Director – Allied Health Professions at the

National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). Lisa Ledger has now started in post and has already set up an NIHR AHP Research Leaders Stakeholder Group and the Chair will be attending the first meeting to find out more and to get a sense of who might best represent art therapy in this forum.

The Chair recently introduced Dr Jo Watson to our staff team. Jo is a practising occupational therapist, educator and academic, leader in higher education, and senior strategic leader working to support and develop the wider AHP professions. Our team found her perspective very helpful and she has been working with them to develop the foundations for a BAAT research strategy, with some initial stages of this work coming to this Council meeting for reflections and feedback.

The Chair noted that she has also taken part in a range of regular, scheduled meetings with NHS England and HCPC. There are many such groups and we are not as well resourced as some AHPs and will have to choose which committees and activities we prioritise. The Chair asked all Council members to think about how they can help to foster strong ties with these and other groups. The CEO added that if Council members were willing to volunteer on external committees, it would be very welcome. It would also ensure we can maintain a UK-wide perspective, when engaging with external bodies.

The Chair suggested that Council members consider acting as art therapy and BAAT ambassadors in areas that fit well with their skills, experience and existing networks. Working in a more integrated way and building on each other's efforts would enable us to support our community, our profession and the people who need the unique, creative support that art therapy can offer. She added that a clear process for attending meetings and sharing outcomes or learning with the Board would be required to ensure a coherent approach. Council should therefore approve who represents BAAT on such committees.

4. Vice Chair's report

The Vice Chair noted that her report had been shared in advance. She summarized for all present that since stepping into the role after the AGM in June, she has already undertaken some meetings. She met with the team to help answer with members' queries and concerns and has been involved in planning. She added that she will continue as BAAT Council's link to the Special Interest Group Coordinators. The next SIG Coordinators group meetings will now align with Council meetings to enable timely communication.

5. Chief Executive's report

The CEO spoke to the Operational Plan 2024, Dashboard and CEO's Report and brought to Council's attention the following:

The Public Affairs strategy

A public affairs consultant, was commissioned in the summer to help prepare a comprehensive report, which will be used to inform who and how we engage with stakeholders. The report is ambitious and will provide a solid basis for engaging more

effectively with decision makers across the UK. A number of campaigns are ongoing e.g. around hospices, the climate crisis and a stakeholder map is being developed.

Members

Our membership numbers are up again and we can evidence a clear trend of increasing membership. We have benchmarked against other organisations and have one of the highest percentage level of HCPC registrants in membership of any of the AHP professional bodies though the CEO is still ambitious to see numbers rise even further.

He put this down to a new, very attractive website and a good membership offer, and that ours is a tight-knit and well-engaged community. Others commented that anecdotally there is a 'buzz' around BAAT; the website makes communication better between members; BAAT feels much less London centric and more accessible to all.

A calendar of member events is now live and initial feedback from members is very positive.

The contract offered via Parliament Hill providing members' discounts and rewards comes to an end within the next 12 months. Other options are being explored that may be more relevant to our profession and therefore more likely to be taken up, such as National Art Pass and others.

Scotland

The Scottish roundtable event went well, evidenced by enthusiastic AHP Directors who clearly understood the issues we raised and indicated a willingness to support BAAT. Of the 14 health boards in Scotland, around half were present at the meeting. Thanks were given to Sinead for all of her help in arranging this and to Alex Taneus-Miller from BAAT Scotland, who attends network meetings and presented at the roundtable.

Other issues - The CEO noted that more pages will soon be added to the Dashboard to include status reports on EDI commitments, climate change commitments and our progress on specific campaigns.

BAAT awards panel has met and shortlisted – final decisions will be made in September. Joan Woddis, the first ever recipient of the Lifetime Achievement award, was visited by the Chair, CEO and Council member CS to make the presentation.

The level 6 Working with Children Diploma has now been reinstated, with a Spring 2025 start date.

Item 5c IJAT

A briefing had been provided for Council by the new Editor-in-Chief, who has settled in well. Item 12 will look at the governance. The CEO stated that the journal is an important member benefit and that current trends in academic journal publishing and challenges posed by AI will need to be understood and monitored carefully.

Consultations

The CEO and team are developing a process for identifying substantive consultations that may need a Council board response or agreement. Potentially, a future Public Affairs officer could help to maintain that plan.

The Chair highlighted that in addition to meetings and committees mentioned earlier, that there will be consultations that may require Council support or guidance. She thanked the CEO and Senior Membership Officer for the dashboard.

6. Finance

Item 6a – Q2 management accounts

The CEO walked through the highlights of Q2 to the end of June.

He noted that **income** is on target at around £144k. We have seen an increase in membership, but this does not always translate to corresponding increase in income. There has been a slight increase in members opting for Under or Unemployed categories, probably reflecting the current economic situation.

Expenditure was £176k in Q3 against a projected £154, though this overspend can be explained by phasing with more activity in the NHS project in this quarter.

The CEO highlighted a concern about rising IT costs and so will be considering reviewing our IT provision.

A Council member asked if savings had been made by having conference and training events online and if therefore a return to in-person events would have an impact. The CEO confirmed that CPD courses are all online and this does lower costs considerably. He noted that staff are considering running in-person regional events.

In response to a question about the cost of the office space (around £28,000 per year for rent service charges and business rates) the CEO said although the team could work remotely, it is working well as a hybrid team and having an office base directly leads to better staff cohesion. He has explored the idea of renting out part of the office to generate income, though this would take a considerable investment in staff time, redecoration and some building work. Co-working spaces could be a better and more cost-effective alternative and options are being kept under review.

P&L for the quarter is showing a loss, which can again be explained by phasing with membership increases typically occurring after graduation and in January.

Item 6b 2025 Budget

The CEO asked Council to approve the budget for 2025 on an income of £768k and expenditure of £747k leaving a small surplus. The budget had been prepared assuming that there would be a small income from CPD courses; and the establishment of a CYP Diploma.

The Chair noted that a possible conflict of interest would be highlighted here so that this could be held in mind, as the course leader of this CPD course has subsequently been elected by members to serve on Council. It was noted for transparency that the appointment had been made through open recruitment process, which took place before she was nominated for Council. Course leaders are self-employed roles, rather than staff roles.

CS raised a point about the supervision CPD course in NI and how those could be linked in with BAAT. These started in 2013, and are running in person again after the pandemic. This is an integrative supervision course for counsellors and ATs, which maps with BACP supervision competences, and HCPC competencies. The possibility of a such link had first been suggested in 2013; this has not happened.

Action: CEO agreed to meet representatives from NI to talk through this possibility and logistics.

CEO

The CEO noted that the budget assumes annual conference remains an in-person event; that staffing levels remain the same. The budget also allows for a 5% cost of living salary increase for all staff.

The budget also assumes a small membership fee increase, which is still cheaper in real terms (allowing for inflation) than it was 7 years ago when a decision was taken not to increase fees for some years. The CEO explained that some financial catching up was now taking place. No increase is proposed for the Student or Retired categories.

A question was raised about the Overseas membership category, which is more expensive despite all the benefits are accessed online, and whether this could be rationalised. Unemployed and under-employed memberships are done on a trust basis. However, the Senior Membership Officer reviews the membership list and frequently checks with members to understand any discrepancies. The Chair noted that from the discussions Council Members appear to support a move towards a single simplified full membership category.

CEO

Action: CEO to clarify with team any if the issues raised and check the £8.50 increase in one category, which seemed out of line with other increases.

Decision: Members unanimously voted in favour of adopting the proposed 2025 budget. There were no abstentions.

7. Updates from the regions

7a SIG lead – MW who had shared her written report in advance reminded members that she continues as coordinator alongside her role as Vice Chair. A suggestion has been raised to create a podcast or a BAAT film, using inclusive, non-text formats to encourage greater participation in SIG coordination and to raise awareness of art therapy for the general public. Employment of art therapists was discussed by SIG coordinators with concern about job losses being reported, and by contrast news of positive experiences of increasing employment opportunities and jobs gained by art therapists, albeit some under generic titles of 'Mental Health Practitioner'.

7b. Regions lead Sarah raised a concern raised by one regional group that the online forums are not being used. It seems that a WhatsApp group has been created instead of the built-in email function. Sarah will follow up with the Senior Administrative Officer to see if the group in question can be supported see if the email function can be used more effectively. The CEO pointed out that the use of WhatsApp groups may not be GDPR compliant and the Forums had been created with great care to overcome the limitations of groups such as WhatsApp and Google Groups.

Action: CEO to review WhatsApp use and GDPR compliance and email guidance across to Council.

CEO

Michele asked if the coordinators might be able to make a video about their role, as this might encourage others to take up the role and to make most effective use of the Forums. This was thought to be a good idea and staff can support this. Coordinators could also usefully share any activity with the team, so it could be promoted in comms activity such as inclusion in the Bulletin.

Action: CEO to ask staff and they will get in touch with coordinators to follow up about making the videos.

CEO

7c. Scotland – A report on the activity in Scotland had been shared in advance and this was considered by Council. The Chair highlighted the news that Bridget Grant will be stepping down as BAAT Scotland Chair in March 2025. She thanked Bridget for her valuable work over the previous three years.

7d. Wales – Activity in Wales had been shared in advance and Sarah spoke to this report. She has been forging stronger ties with WATAF, a professional network for the arts (art, music drama and dance) and an important group in Wales closely linked with the Welsh Allied Health Professions Committee. The CEO is looking at their ToR and rebuilding relationships. He will be joining their AGM next week to support and tell them about BAAT.

7e Northern Ireland – The report on the activity in NI had been shared in advance too. Caryl raised some of the issues, so these could be considered by Council. She also shared recent news about art therapy in education and a recent tender, which does not include a provision for AT in mainstream schools – only in SEN. She explained that in NI all schools have always had art therapists. There is a TUPE process going on. BACP lead of CYP may be in touch to clarify the position.

Action: CEO to follow up about primary schools in NI where art therapy is being cut and to ascertain how best to respond to this.

8. EDI update

The Chair thanked Catherine for taking on the role of representing BAAT at the Memorandum of Understanding on conversion therapy in the UK meetings.

Catherine had attended the most recent meeting and fed back on how that meeting had reflected how upset members of the MoU coalition still were about the way in which the UKCP had withdrawn its support. However the Chair of the meeting said they were reassured by the support shown for the MoU by the high attendance at this meeting at which many signatories were present.

The meeting discussed the value of the Coalition making a statement about its purpose, as a way of countering some statements made by MPs in the recent debate in parliament, March 2024 about the MoU. The decision was made for a small number of MoU members to draw up a statement, to be shared later with signatories.

Action: Catherine to share any further MoU updates with Council

CS

The Chair noted she would table the EDI policy and strategy at the next, or following Council business meeting, so that progress can be reviewed and the policy or strategy updated if needed.

Action: Chair to add EDI policy and strategy to the agenda for the next Council meeting in December or February.

Chair

9. NHSE project update

The Chair gave some background to how the project has developed. She explained that the project coordinator is taking the project forward at pace. She added that it is a very ambitious project; the outputs are already very impressive, and that Council can read the latest updates on the [NHSE Commission page on the website](#).

The Chair thanked members who have taken part in the project, including Francesca who had recently chaired the Employers Focus Group.

10. Annual conference and BAAT Awards

Annual conference

The CEO confirmed that all speakers and members contributions have now been confirmed and advertised, there are some great sponsors on board and only a few tickets remaining to be sold. There will be 150 attendees this year and next year could be 250 reflecting that we appear to be comfortably back to running an in-person annual conference. Next year, we will consider moving the event out of London, although this often proves to be challenging. It was suggested that we look to see if where attendees at this year's annual conference are located could be established.

Action: CEO to follow up on attendees' location data and take into consideration when reviewing locations for 2025's conference.

CEO

BAAT Awards update [Caryl Sibbett left the room as she had been nominated for an award.]

The Chair thanked Council members for their contribution and the work involved in assessing the shortlists. Liliana, Catherine and Simi agreed that the process had been robust and that while the decision had been tough given the high level of nominees, the categories of criteria were helpful in landing on a final decision which was in the end unanimous. They thanked the Chair for setting out the process and criteria so clearly.

Council members who had not been a part of the panel were asked to approve the decision of the judging panel.

Decision: Council members voted to approve the decision of the panel. The Chair stressed that the decision must be kept secret until the result is announced at the conference in November.

Council also considered the guidance and agreed that this would be updated to avoid any future perceived conflicts of interest. This change will make it clear that serving Council members could not be nominated for an award.

Decision: Council members voted to agree the change to the process in future years, so no sitting Council member can be nominated for an award in future.

11. IJAT bylaw

Council members considered a paper, presented as part of the ongoing review of our governance arrangements. This review aims to ensure transparency and good governance across BAAT work. After some discussion, Council voted on a bylaw that more clearly establishes the relationship between IJAT, its editorial board, and the BAAT Council. The bylaw codifies exiting arrangements and reflects the contractual agreement that BAAT already has with the Journal's publishers, Taylor and Francis.

Decision: Council members voted unanimously to adopt the bylaw.

CEO

Action: The CEO will ensure the bylaw is uploaded to the website.

A question was raised about articles being accepted for publication and the criteria for publishing these, e.g., opinion pieces versus research articles. It was felt that clarity was needed to ensure that the structures/ templates being used were as clear as possible for art therapists who may want to submit; also, that they enable a range of different voices within the art therapy profession to publish.

Chair

Action: Chair will meet with the IJAT editorial board to discuss the three templates, the guidance, and to reflect on these in the light of current practice within the profession.

12. Special Interest Groups Review – for approval

As the meeting agenda had been full and the discussion rich, the Chair asked if Council felt there was sufficient time remaining to consider this paper fully. It was agreed that this topic should be tabled again in December, as it warrants a full discussion and operationally does not need an immediate decision.

Action: The CEO to bring the SIGs Review to the December meeting agenda.

CEO

13. Research Strategy

The CEO requested feedback from Council on a paper, which outlines an initial proposed direction for a BAAT research strategy. Dr Jo Watson (OT and AHP) has contributed to the preparation of the report, so that it is aligned with other guidance from other allied health professions and national research bodies. The document identifies current research work streams; clarifies what we would like to achieve within ten years; and makes initial proposals of how to steer our activities for the next five years.

Council members remarked that it was a very well-prepared report. (Jess Collier was not able to attend the meeting but had shared comments in advance). Council members discussed various aspects of the paper. They liked that the evidence pages were very useful and that more evidence is always very welcome. In answer to a question about the scope of the strategy (which covers ten years), it was noted that research is a slow process – it was therefore encouraging to see the plan had been set out with a ten-year view. It was noted that the Patient Public involvement (PPI) and remuneration section could be made more explicit. There was a suggestion that the document could be made even stronger with a visual view of the ten-year plan, signposting short, medium and long-term goals and by ensuring the strategy considers all four nations.

Council members noted that additional resources may be required if all the measures were to be enacted. It was suggested that the possibility of collaborative research in arts and humanities subjects as well as clinical/healthcare should be considered, as the idea of 'research' can be daunting/excluding. BAAT could also consider producing a template set of evaluation and feedback documents for art therapists working in all sectors to download and use, in addition to the outcome measures used by employers. This approach is used by other modalities, e.g. play therapists. This could help build a picture of who we are working with and how.

Following the review of Council's feedback, staff will develop the policy further. A brief consultation phase will further inform the suggested activities listed in this outline, in order to ensure that art therapists can engage with the research at all levels. A draft strategy providing further detail will then be developed and presented to the Board for their consideration.

CEO

Action: CEO to ensure the research strategy aligns with the four nations work.
CEO to consider resource impact of enacting all the measures.

Council members confirmed they were happy with the direction of travel in developing this draft strategy. The Chair asked all to share by email any further feedback that had not already shared in the room.

All

14. AOB

Liliana reported that she had recently attended a EFAT board meeting, where she learned that EFAT have accepted Brunel's bid to bring their conference to London in

July 2025. The conference's theme will be around Art therapy's role in change and healing. As BAAT is a member of EFAT now, there was some discussion about how BAAT might be able to contribute to the conference. Ideas included discussing our place in Europe, post-Brexit; how other countries could reflect on our journey to regulation and accreditation or if there is learning to take from this for other contexts; and showcasing students at Brunel. The Chair suggested it may need a small working group of 2-3 people to push the ideas forward.

The Chair thanked Liliana for helping to build this bridge with EFAT.

Action: All were asked to come up with ideas for the EFAT Conference and bring these for discussion at the next meeting in December.

All

The Chair noted that roles needed to be formalised for all art therapists who represent BAAT in different meetings, so that it is clearer what the role and responsibilities are, who the BAAT-appointed representative is and how long they are in this role, what the communication pathways are, what feedback needs to be provided and when, and clarity regarding and any accountability.

Action: Council agreed to formalise the roles for representatives, with clearer guidance and structures developed by the CEO for the December meeting. This is for existing and future roles: Catherine (MoU); Caryl (Assembly Group ACAHP); and Liliana (EFAT).

CEO

The Chair thanked everyone for making the journey in today to meet in-person and participating so fully in the discussion and decision-making. She drew the Business Meeting to a close at 1.26pm.