



## **Minutes of Council Business Meeting**

**Saturday, 7 December 2024**

**Present:** Claire Louise Vaculik (Chair), Michèle Wood (Vice-Chair), Sinead Braiden, Sarah Challenger, Jacqui McKoy-Lewens, Liliana Montoya De La Cruz, Catherine Stevens,

**In attendance:** Gary Fereday (CEO), Debbie Noel (minutes), Daniela Pasquini (Item 7)

**Apologies:** Jess Collier, Francesca Norouzi, Caryl Sibbett, Simi Warah.

### **Item**

#### **1 Apologies and of Conflicts of Interest**

Apologies had been received from Francesca Norouzi, Simi Warah, Jess Collier and Caryl Sibbett. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and asked for Council members to declare any conflicts. None were declared.

#### **2 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**

The Chair noted that the minutes of the last Council meeting on 21 September 2024 had been circulated to Council members prior to the meeting for corrections and had been approved. She asked if there were any matters arising and requested updates on some issues and actions.

### **Matters arising**

#### **Item 2 – Matters arising from the May meeting**

Having reviewed the bye-laws, the CEO confirmed that retired Members (if Full Members) are permitted to be group coordinators. They bring knowledge and experience that is valued. However Retired member status expires after two years (as they can no longer remain HCPC registered) and would no longer be eligible to act as coordinators at this point. Council discussed the 2 year-year period, agreed it felt right but would keep under review.

Having spoken with staff, the CEO confirmed that it was possible to offer SIG/Regional coordinators a discount on their BAAT membership fee in place of the current £25 discount on CPD courses. There are some groups with multiple coordinators and the limit of 3 coordinators per group would need to be adhered to. The increase in Associate Member category (that was out of line with other increases) would be brought into line with others.

### **Item 7b – Regions**

Regarding WhatsApp use, the CEO explained that a GDPR specialist confirmed that the use of WhatsApp is problematic as a communication tool with GDPR implications and advised against its use. Guidance will be developed alongside revised 'how to' instructions and a short film for coordinators to help them make best use of the forums.

### **Item 6b & 7e – Northern Ireland**

The CEO had met with Caryl Sibbett, and Clare Boyd (BAAT NI Chair) to review various Northern Ireland issues including: the possibility of a BAAT link to the supervision CPD course; primary schools where art therapy is being cut and raising with Ministers of Education and Health, and the NI Mental Health Champion, and the situation at Ulster University.

### **Item 11 – IJAT Byelaw**

The Chair reported that she had met the IJAT Editorial-in-Chief to discuss submissions to IJAT, the three templates and guidance, and to reflect on these in the light of current practice within the profession. It had become clear that it would be a challenge to expand the number of templates in the short term, as the impact on associate editors and peer reviewers would be considerable.

## **3 Chair's report**

The Chair shared an overview of her areas of focus and activities that she'd undertaken since the last meeting.

### **Celebrating the 2024 Annual Conference and 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Chair reflected on the Annual Conference and noted that it had been a joy to be able to spend the day together with members in-person at the Wellcome Collection. Also, to be able to celebrate BAAT's 60th anniversary together. She thanked the conference working group and the staff team, who had worked together so well in their different roles to bring the event to life. She particularly noted the contribution made by Amy Collins, Events Officer, who ensured that our first in-person event in four years was a great success. She also acknowledged the inspiring lectures by art therapists and artist, Jason Wilsher-Mills, and congratulated the two recipients of the Annual Awards for 2024.

### **Supporting members**

Regular Chair drop-in meetings have continued each month. From these, and wider discussions, she is aware how challenging the past year has been for many of our members – with changes in contracts, organisational restructuring, and fewer opportunities for work in some regions. Arrangements are currently being made for the Chair and CEO visits to Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales in 2025. The Chair noted that these opportunities to speak with members are valuable and that she looks forward to the discussions. In the coming year, the Chair, CEO and others will also be working with members to build relationships to ensure that awareness of our profession grows. This will include representation to the new UK Government and devolved administrations and responding to consultations. The Chair and CEO are keen for this strand of work to grow and develop, particularly now that the work of ensuring the operational infrastructure is in place to provide a firm foundation for the organisation.

## **Stakeholder and partner engagement and shared work**

The Chair's attendance at regular, scheduled meetings with partners and stakeholders has continued. She remarked that there are many challenges on the horizon and that it seems clear that we will need to work in new ways if we are to meet the needs in our communities. She noted too that it is becoming clear that additional staff support for some areas of work is needed. She highlighted the excellent work being done on the NHSE commission and thanked Daniela and Josiah for their work on this.

As a profession has much to be proud of as we look back over this past year. We have come a long way as BAAT has grown and developed, working as a team of staff and volunteers to achieve many of our aspirations. She thanked staff, volunteers and all of our art therapist members, who are working so hard to support people across their communities.

## **4 Vice Chair's report**

The Vice Chair shared an overview of her work, noting that she had greatly enjoyed actively participating in the Annual Conference in welcoming visitors, including our keynote speaker Dr Lynn Kapitan, chairing an afternoon parallel session and participating in the closing plenary panel discussions.

She has represented BAAT with some of our partners, including at the National Institute for Health Research Allied Health Professions Stakeholder Group for Research Leaders Programme led by Dr Lisa Ledger, the new Assistant Director of the Allied Health Professions. Dr Ledger outlined NIHR's mission is to embed AHP research leadership capacity and capability more widely within the workforce through developing programmes of training accessible to all AHP professionals.

The Vice Chair is also the SIG Network Lead; she noted that this key strand of work would be covered later in the meeting.

## **5 Chief Executive's report**

The CEO gave an overview of the five high-level objectives for this year: developing the public affairs strategy which is taking shape; the launch of Find an Art Therapist, which is going well with 500 members using it (members are finding work through the search function); developing the research and evidence strategy, which is in progress; the NHSE project that is progressing well; and the delivery of the first in person conference since covid, on which the feedback has been tremendous.

[Caryl Sibbett joined the meeting as her power had returned, after a power cut during storm Darragh.]

### **5a. Operational plan update**

The CEO took Council through the main points of the operational plan update.

- Engagement and use of forums is improving, with increasing traffic on the platform. However, this is still a little patchy. Ways to support members were discussed, including

improved guidance and a short film that are being developed to encourage the coordinators use the forums more fully.

- The calendar of member events continues to receive positive feedback. SIGs, Regions and individual members are starting to post their events.
- The annual conference was successfully held at the Wellcome Collection. The event sold out with very positive feedback from delegates and speakers. Preparations for 2025 are underway.
- The BAAT awards (Lifetime Achievement, Innovation, and Equality and Diversity) process worked well, with some learning and improvement to be developed. The awards will continue in 2025.
- Recruitment for the 2025 Supervision level 6 Diploma is underway. The Working with Children level 6 Diploma has now been developed and recruitment started.
- e-learning modules are being developed in response to Council request that we look at how we diversify the training and CPD business model. Two e-learning modules are being developed to trial: a clinical module on Mentalisation and a non-clinical module on producing AIRs
- Four nations governance arrangements are now being reviewed. See agenda item 12.

He highlighted that finances remain tight and team is looking to contain costs wherever possible, including options of updating current office space to make it more effective, moving office, or to virtual office. The cost effectiveness of our IT provision is being considered.

The CEO noted that the Operational Plan for 2025 would be brought to the February meeting.

## **5b. Dashboard**

The Chair noted again how helpful the Dashboard was for Council's work and thanked Louise Nazir, Senior Membership Officer, for her work on this; other members agreed. The CEO then took Council through the Dashboard, highlighting successes such as: the continued rise of membership levels; the ongoing increase in the use of Find an Art Therapist tool; and an increased number of events set for next year. Social media presence is good, the Bulletin remains very well read and IJAT is still very strong. Enquiries are at usual levels with the team now adept at handling enquiries seamlessly.

He explained that commitments towards the Climate Crisis are being reviewed and confirmed that the organisation is now compliant with Disability Confident Scheme and looking to go to next level.

The team have been reflecting on use of X/Twitter. Journal metrics still rely on X, which is the one remaining driver for remaining on the platform. The use of BlueSky is being explored.

He noted that InSight would benefit from more members submitting articles.

## **5c. IJAT report**

A report on IJAT activity was provided in the Dashboard and as a separate report; the Chair suggested that these might usefully be consolidated. As she attends IJAT Board meetings, the Chair updated Council about a recent meeting, including plans for a Special Issue around art therapy in remote communities. She thanked the Editorial Board, who are all volunteers, and

noted there is a solid team of editors in place, from all around the world, making the journal truly international.

#### **5d. Public Affairs**

Work to promote the profession in end-of-life care and hospices is starting and the CEO looking to engage with the Creative Response SIG / Michele Wood. Hospices CEOs are being contacted, and an InSight article being prepared, which, alongside some work with Hospice UK, is coalescing into a solid campaign.

Four nations work with all countries continues: The CEO and Sarah Challenger are working more closely with WATAF; the CEO has been asked if he might support WATAF review how they are currently operating and supporting the arts therapies in Wales.

Sinead Braiden noted the positive impact of the Scotland meeting conceived and organised by BAAT, with AHP Director across Scotland. She shared that an AHP Director reported having a much fuller understanding of an art therapist's role and how art therapists can be incorporated. In addition, the work with NESS and other projects has come out of the meeting, it's a promising campaign. Sinead thanked the CEO and the Chair for the meeting.

The CEO recapped his earlier summary of the developments in NI. Caryl added that the work has been very valuable, and that it is helpful that BAAT was part of the campaign alongside BACP to promote art therapy in primary schools again. She thanked him for his expertise and remarked that she believes that he is the only BAAT CEO to have visited, lobbied, and joined meetings in NI.

The CEO will meet the CEO of the Centre for Mental Health this week to discuss their mentally healthy nations campaign and the importance of creativity as part of this; also, to explore other possible areas of joint work.

Liliana Montoya de la Cruz and Michele Wood will be supporting the Culture Health and Wellbeing Alliance and making links with them.

#### **5e. Consultations**

The CEO noted that feedback regarding BAATs submission to the Government's Change NHS consultation had been well received.

He noted for the HCPC Standards in Education and Training consultation is expected in the second half of 2025.

He reminded Council of the AHPF public health strategy that had recently been updated. BAAT is currently a signatory.

**Action:** Council members to let CEO know if they have any concerns about remaining a signatory to the Allied Health Professions Federation Public Health Strategy.

#### **5f. Conference**

The CEO sought feedback from Council on this year's Annual conference from those who had attended in November. From the discussions it was clear that all felt that the conference had been a great success; the format and setting worked well, speakers were well received and the organisation seamless.

The CEO requested asked for an in-principal decision to repeat the conference in a similar format in November 2025.

**Action:** Council agreed to repeat the format. CEO to take this back to team and start to prepare for 2025

The Chair reminded Council that elected members will be needed on the working group for 2025. She noted that Jacqui McKoy-Lewens, Sinead Braiden and Simi Warah had already expressed an interest in playing a part in the working group, which will work on theme title and potential keynote speakers early in the new year.

**Action:** Council members to indicate interest in joining the Annual Conference 2025 working group.

## 6 NHS England project update

The Chair introduced Daniela Pasquini who project manages the NHSE commission and thanked her for joining on a Saturday. For the benefit of those not heavily involved in the project, Daniela gave Council an overview of the project's aims: Raising the profile of the professions; co-designing a modern and inclusive curricula; and the development fo a career framework. She highlighted some of the other tangible outputs for art, music and drama that include: a competition called Cultivating Creativity for schools; small bursaries for training and research; films and animations such as "What is Art therapy?" and one showcasing the service-user voice. All the outputs will sit on each of the three (art, drama and music therapy) websites. Promoting all of them will be of benefit to all three organisations. These will be shared from the end of the project which wraps up at the end of March 2025.

Council members and the CEO recognised the challenges presented with partnership working and praised Daniela for her collaborative approach and coordination skills. They were encouraged to see the three professions working in this way together and several members noted that they would like to see it continue long after the project ends. A Council member noted that a link with ACAB and their education work in NI would be useful.

## 7 Finance and Risk

### 6a. Management Accounts

The CEO presented the Q3 management accounts. He noted that revenue for Q3 was more than budgeted, primarily due to better than predicted income from our CPD courses. Expenditure in Q3 is showing an overspend of £43,717.54 primarily due to spend on the NHS England Commission that was not in original budget. It is not currently of concern as it is an issue of timing of expenditure but will be monitored carefully. BAAT is seeing increasing IT costs and is currently reviewing the IT provision.

The profit and loss account shows a turnover for Q3 of £171,989.74 with a loss of £27,243.25. However, £179,166.67 of income from the NHS Commission was recognised in Q1 and so the end-year position should see this balance.

#### **6b. 2025 Revised Budget**

A revised revenue and expenditure budgets for 2025 had been prepared because of changes to two budget lines, namely, the increase in employers' National Insurance recently announced by the Government; and a revised prediction showing more accurate costs for the 2025 annual conference, based on costs of the successful delivery of the 2024 conference. For transparency and clearer understanding of the financial situation, Council was asked to consider the revised budgets. The CEO noted that there are inevitable unknowns with the income forecast as new events and courses are being measured on an ongoing basis.

Members raised some questions, including about the office premises and whether a room could be used to rent out to therapists or used for in-person courses to generate income. The CEO explained this had been considered but the room is used by staff for meetings and the costs of upgrading the room were quite high, but situation was being kept under review.

This led to a discussion about the merits of online versus in-person events. A Council member shared that her health board is now running in house supervision training; she wondered if this might have an impact on the supervision training offered by BAAT.

[Jacqui McKoy-Lewens offered her apologies as she had to leave the meeting.]

#### **6c. Risk register**

The Risk Register had been shared in advance. Time prevented a full review of the Risk Register, so this will be brought back.

**Action:** Risk Register be brought to the February meeting.

### **8 Updates from SIGs, Regions and Countries.**

#### **8a. Update from the SIG network coordinator**

Michele Wood explained the valuable work that has been done in linking up coordinators. She felt she is now 'bridging' between staff, Council and members. Michele has contacted 20 of the 22 SIGs and for those unable to attend these evening meetings she has arranged suitable times to meet individually. There was sense that SIGs were starting to feel engaged with BAAT. One concern raised by SIGs was that BAAT courses over two days can be difficult to attend – cost and part timers losing work to attend. She also reported that she had recently met with members of the staff team to discuss SIG queries and activities. The meeting was a very useful way to share knowledge and work on problem solving and all agreed that regular quarterly meetings would be helpful.

#### **8b. Update from Regional network coordinator**

Sarah Challenger shared that she has been very pleased with the friendly support she has received from the BAAT office team. She noted that there was still some confusion in some Regions around expenses for travel and what could be covered by BAAT.

**Action:** CEO will follow up with finance to establish if more clarity around expenses is needed

She requested some help to explain the WhatsApp guidance to coordinators, as some seem to use this to communicate rather than the forums. The CEO noted that website changes are planned to make the forums more attractive to users.

**Action:** CEO will ensure SIG/Region coordinators are aware of BAAT's position on WhatsApp use.

### **8c. Scotland**

A report on the activity in Scotland, prepared by Bridget Grant, Chair, for BAAT Scotland. This had been shared in advance and was considered by Council. Sinead Braden spoke to some points on the report and the good work that is happening there, including the BAAT meeting with Scottish AHP Directors, and BAAT beginning to engage with NHS Education for Scotland. The Chair noted that Alex Taneus-Miller is now active in the Scottish Government Psychological Therapies Care and Practice Forum

### **8d. Northern Ireland**

A summary of activity in Northern Ireland had been shared in advance. The Chair noted it is inspiring to see active work on lobbying and consultations. Caryl Sibbett noted more support would be needed around raising awareness as art therapy is being marginalised in primary schools. Opportunities for lobbying in the New Year are coming up, and she commended BAAT NI for seizing those. She thanked BAAT Council and the CEO for transforming BAAT in a positive way to allow this work in Northern Ireland to take place.

### **8e. Wales**

Sarah Challenger had shared a report of work in Wales in advance. She spoke to this, noting that WATAF has been busy and trying to reestablish itself – she welcomed support from the BAAT CEO to advise here. She shared the positive news that HIEW has put in pathfinder contracts for art therapists in the NHS, 2-3 in each health board. The Chair suggested one of the people in those posts might like to write an article for InSight, to raise awareness of the positive impact of this sort of support for a smaller profession.

## **9 Updates from Council representatives on external committees**

Feedback was shared with Council from those who represent BAAT with external partners.

Catherine Stevens has now received an update about the MOU on Conversion Therapy which explains that The Alliance Party of Northern Ireland have launched a public consultation on a Private Members' Bill – Banning Conversion Practices in Northern Ireland – which MoU signatories may wish to respond to.



**Action:** Catherine Stevens will bring this to the next Council meeting in Feb, where Council can decide whether as a signatory of the MoU BAAT would like to respond to this public consultation. The closing date for submissions to the consultation is 20th March.

Liliana Montoya de la Cruz shared that a callout for papers for the European Federation of Art Therapy Conference has been made with a deadline of mid-January. Council discussed the risk of competition with BAAT's own conference in November with regards to attendance and/or content but agreed the events could complement each other and offer an opportunity for BAAT as the professional body in the host country.

**Action:** Lilana Montoya de la Cruz, the Chair and CEO to meet to propose a submission for February's meeting.

### **Governance for Council representatives on external committees**

As part of the ongoing process of improving BAAT's governance, the CEO has developed a transparent process for representative selection, clarity of remit, and a simple reporting mechanism to ensure the organisation is kept up to date. He added that it can be replicated across the four nations. Council discussed the nuances in the context of their own roles and agreed that greater clarity was helpful.

**Decision:** Council members approved of the roles already in place on the condition that there an acknowledgement of some complexity with some of the roles.

**Decision:** Council members voted to adopt the new process outlining Council representatives' roles on external committees.

**Action:** Council members to confirm their roles by email to the Chair.

It was as agreed that it would be useful to share the process and list of who represents BAAT on the website

**Action:** CEO to ensure the process and list is added to website

## **10 Special Interest Groups Review**

Council had received proposals to form new Special Interest Groups: Parent-Infant; Diabetes; Fostering/adoption and PIP; Inpatient settings; LGBTQ+; and Psychological Education; Eating disorders. Council noted that the groups would need to follow the full process for new SIGs. The proposed Inpatient Settings group was discussed in detail - its proposed remit was very ambitious and crossed over into many areas of existing work. The CEO updated Council that he had spoken to the member who had proposed the SIG; she was happy to review its remit to ensure it was manageable that complemented BAATs wider work.

**Decision:** On the condition that the remit was clarified, and formal criteria have been met (a coordinator found), Council voted to approve the new Inpatient Settings group.

**Decision:** Council approved the merging the following into one group: Environmental Art Therapy; Environmental Eco Arts Therapy; Nature-based/outdoor art therapy; and Environmental/ Green/Sustainable practices.

**Action:** Michele Wood will meet members proposing these different groups to discuss Council's decision.

Caryl Sibbett said she would be keen to link in with this eco group, as there is a long history of eco-practice in NI.

Council agreed the need to close any inactive SIGs if no response is forthcoming from existing members.

**Decision:** Council voted to close the Art Therapy Outlooks on Later Life (ATOLL) unless members could restart it within a short timeframe.

**Action:** CEO will follow up with the staff team about feedback from Council regarding the SIGs.

#### 11 Professional guidance scoping paper

BAAT's Professional Adviser had requested feedback from Council on establishing a process for writing new guidance or updating existing guidance on, clinical and associated non-clinical issues to members. Council members agreed it was helpful to see progress and agreed the direction of travel seemed right.

#### 12 Four Nations governance

The CEO updated Council on his development of new, common structures to ensure a more equitable approach across the four nations and better support for members across the UK. He outlined the current situation with shared features and differences in terminology and ways of working between the existing groups in BAAT Scotland, BAAT Cymru Wales and BAAT Northern Ireland.

**Action:** The CEO will bring draft terms of reference to the next Council meeting for review and feedback. This will then go out to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland committees for feedback too, prior to final drafting and adoption at the May Council meeting.

#### 13 Member benefits (Parliament Hill)

The CEO asked for Council's feedback on the little-used member benefits contract with Parliament Hill when it comes to an end in April 2025. He recommended that the contract was not renewed. The staff team is exploring other possible discounts (at no cost to BAAT) focusing on discounts on relating to art therapy, art, and the business of being an art therapist. The recent discount on the Art Pass scheme, which was announced at the annual conference was the first of these new benefits.

**Decision:** Council members voted unanimously not to renew the current contract with Parliament Hill when it comes to an end in April 2025.

14     **AOB**

**2027-2032 Strategy development timeline**

The Chair noted that the current strategy will end shortly after the end of her term of office. This will need to be reviewed and revised in the coming year, in order to support the transition and ensure continuity in shared work across the community.

**Action:** CEO to draw up a process and timeline to review the strategic plan.

**Board vacancy - consider coopting a council member**

The Chair reflected on the need to bring in outside expertise to support skills gaps. Sarah Challenger noted that when she steps down after her term, there will be a gap regarding Wales.

**Action:** Council to consider coopting a member onto the board and email the Chair and CEO with thoughts and suggestions.

**HCPC tribunal re climate activism case**

A member has raised an issue about providing witness testimonies for BAAT members going through a HCPC tribunal hearing.

**Action:** CEO to attend to the issue; then bring recommendations for a policy to Council in February.

The Chair thanked everyone for coming and for participating so fully in the discussion and decision-making.