



COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING Saturday 2nd December 2023

In attendance: Claire Louise Vaculik (Chair), Sinead Braiden, Jess Collier, Sophia Cowx, Liliana Montoya De La Cruz, Francesca Norouzi, Catherine Stevens, Simi Warah, Michele Wood.

Officer: Gary Fereday (CEO).

1. Apologies for Absence and Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

a) **Apologies:** Sarah Challenger, Caryl Sibbett.

b) **Conflicts of Interest:** None declared.

The Chair reminded Council members to send their conflict-of-interest forms, if not already submitted, to the Admin Officer.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The Chair noted that the minutes of the last Council meeting on 30 September 2023 had been circulated to Council members and any corrections submitted by email; the minutes had accordingly been approved. The Chair also noted that matters arising would be dealt with under the appropriate agenda item but asked whether there were any other specific matters arising.

The CEO reminded Council members that training for Council members would be available on a Saturday in January and that any Council member interested in attending should complete the Doodle poll so date can be finalised.

In respect of item 8 of the minutes, which related to student advisers / recent graduate representatives for IJAT, the Chair noted that interviews had taken place. She was delighted to report that three outstanding candidates had been appointed for three years they would bring their perspectives to IJAT and Insight and would help to co-ordinate the trainee forum.

3. Chair's Report

The Chair shared an overview of her work from a report that had previously been circulated. She noted the commitments made to members at the last AGM, reporting that the first of these had been met through the trip that she and the CEO had made in late September to meet members from across Scotland. She explained that the next in the series of their visits would be to Northern Ireland in February 2024. A visit to Wales was planned for June 2024. She noted that they had so valued speaking with members in person, with time spent together to hear about members' work, the opportunities they can see and the challenges they're having to manage.

In sharing an update about work on the EDI strategy, The Chair noted that BAAT had received confirmation on 30 November that it had been accepted as a signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy. The proposal to become a signatory was put forward by a SIG and this issue was discussed extensively at previous meetings. The CEO noted the need to ensure that BAAT conformed to the provisions of the MoU, though in fact in many respects BAAT already did so. The Chair further noted that representations had been received from a member unhappy at BAAT's signing of the MoU – this would be discussed later in the agenda, under Item 8: Public Affairs Strategy.

While work on equality, diversity and inclusion would be discussion under that agenda item, the Chair noted that she had attended the launch of the 'Race Is Complicated' toolkit, which was published in October. She said that there would be a CPD resource for members in early 2024 to enable talk them to work on exercises guided by the authors.

The Chair also reported that Daniel Regan would be taking up a role as BAATs EDI Advisor. He presented some of his lived experience of the value of the arts, mental health, and inclusive practice at the Annual Conference last year. The Chair noted that she has shared Council's thanks with Kristina Stamatou for all her work in the role, particularly when the EDI policy and strategy were being developed.

Looking back at the Annual Conference, the Chair noted that the event had been attended by more than 170 people, and the feedback had been positive. This had been a model instance of BAAT drawing on members' passions and interests in planning our shared work – the topic had emerged from a proposal made by members at the 2022 AGM. The 2024 Conference would be about innovation in art therapy. Our Research Officer had helped to produce a survey to gain more understanding of current practice across the UK and what members see as areas of innovation and this had now been circulated to members; she asked Council members to encourage colleagues to reply to the survey. Having been invited to attend an approval event for one of the art therapy trainings, the Chair and CEO went up to Sheffield in November. It was pleasing to hear that interest in training as an art therapist remains high and the Chair and CEO really valued meeting some students. some of the programme team, and practice educators

The Chair said that she and the CEO had been invited to review a draft document about the arts therapies developed by the NHSE Centre for AHP Education and Transformation. Some issues have been raised by all three professional bodies about this, so they will be working together with NHSE to ensure that our professions are appropriately and accurately represented.

The Chair and the CEO had had a successful meeting with Bernie O'Reilly, who had recently joined HCPC as their new Chief Executive. They had shared how BAAT supports members, issues arising in navigating HCPC procedures that impact members, some concerns with process, and reflected on joint BAAT/HCPC workshops delivered and shared projects in the pipeline. He had agreed to join a future event to meet BAAT members.

Finally, the Chair said she wished to thank the staff team for their hard work leading up to the Conference.

In questions to the Chair, ways to encourage as many members as possible to complete the survey was discussed - Council is keen to ensure as many members as possible were engaged. It was noted that there had been reports of the email being treated as spam and this would be investigated.

ACTION: CEO to investigate potential problem with sending survey email.

4. Vice-Chair's Report

There was no report as the Vice Chair has been unwell. The Chair will pass on Council's best wishes.

5. Chief Executive's Report

The CEO gave a brief update on the five agreed priorities for 2023:

1. Developing public affairs – after a long period of focus on internal processes to improve efficiency and better support members, more time and resources were now coming available to further support this activity. The CEO said he would return to this under agenda item 8.
2. Improving member engagement and networking – this was now happening, and there was increased administrative support for member engagement. Response rates to member queries was very good and positive feedback was being received from members.
3. Supporting the development of research and better presenting the evidence base for art therapy – briefing papers were now ready and would shortly appear on the website; a research strategy was in early draft form and would be brought to the February or May Council meeting.
4. Newbriefing had been relaunched as InSight and was now being published quarterly – up from every six months.
5. The review of the Articles of Association had resulted in adoption of new articles at the AGM and work is now starting on any supporting byelaws.

a) Operational Plan

The CEO presented an update on the Operational Plan, which had been circulated before the meeting.

He drew attention to the following points:

- The 'Find a Therapist' function on the website was now almost complete and ready to launch fully in January 2024. Using dropdown options, all Full members would be able to choose whether to place themselves in the public-facing part of the site. The draft text of the short statement that members would need to make in respect of their entry would be circulated to Council members shortly for their feedback. The tone of BAAT's interaction would be supportive and avoid a regulatory approach, which is not in our remit. Having a period during which members could sign up to the public-facing part of the website would mean that the function would launch with a critical mass of members already on the system.
- There was a technical issue for some Forums when they sent emails to some members who used a Gmail account; they were not being delivered since they were being identified as spam. A 'work-around' solution has been provided to Forum coordinators in the interim, while the website developers seek a long-term solution with Google and our email provider.
- The level 6 supervision course had received interest from around 90 members and it is due to start in April 2024. Council was later informed of the launch of two scholarships as part of the EDI Strategy, which aim to support art therapists from under-represented communities to progress in their careers.
- The old training room in the BAAT office was being refurbished and would be available to members to rent as a clinical space at a reduced rate, hopefully from spring 2024.

- Some of the former Google groups were still being used by SIGs; these were out of date and potentially non-GDPR compliant, coordinators will be reminded that they should no longer make use of them for contacting members.

In questions, a member asked how SIGs would be supported to ensure that they did not use the Google groups. The CEO said that the Admin Officer would email coordinators in the new year to remind SIGs they should not use the old groups. It was important for any members contacted in this way not to reply using this format.

Another member, in relation to networking, emphasised the importance of the NHS Leads meeting for developing partnerships. This is currently attended by the CEO and two Council members in their work roles. The CEO emphasised that it was vital to capture information on key targets in the stakeholder mapping, which would be undertaken as part of the public affairs strategy, and to identify Council members who could be lead contacts with stakeholders.

b) Dashboard

The CEO drew attention to the following points:

- The data is now suggesting an upward trend in membership. Not all trainees converted to full membership on completing their course, but all those contacted directly by the Senior Membership Officer had converted, suggesting that some trainees may simply forget to upgrade their membership on finishing their training.
- CPD course bookings had picked up again after a dip over the summer.
- Whether to remain on X (Twitter) was being kept under review; BAAT had joined Threads, a new platform seeking to rival X.
- Member subscriptions continue to provide over 50% of income, but it was important to keep the balance between subscriptions and course income under review.

c) IJAT update

A report for Council had been provided by the Editor-in-Chief. The CEO drew attention to the following:

- Special issue topics had been set out for the next three years.
- The journal was now in the top quartile for citations in journals relating to rehabilitation, which demonstrated that it was increasing its academic standing. This was very good news for the profession.
- In addition, the journal had received an impact factor for the first time ever, a highly prestigious development; among emerging journals, it was placed 7th out of 49 in the Clinical Psychology category. Next year it would be regarded as an established journal.

IJAT was now the pre-eminent art therapy journal. The Chair said that she had invited the Editor in Chief to join the February meeting of Council, (before she hands over to the Editor in Chief Designee in March 2024) so Council can hear an overview of the work and next steps planned for this BAAT publication.

6. Finance

a) Management accounts

Introducing the management accounts, the CEO said CPD course income had recovered and bookings had picked up. BAAT was now back at a break-even position, with both expenditure and income below expectations up to the end of Q3 (end of September). He expected to come in close to budget in 2023, perhaps with a small deficit.

b) Budgets 2024

The CEO said that the budget for 2024 was based on revenue of £655K, and expenditure of £654K – i.e., it was a break-even budget. The figures were based on several assumptions / points:

- Membership was budgeted to remain static, though in fact it would probably increase.
- There would be more CPD courses, leading to increased income from this source.
- The full membership rate would be increased by £11.50 to £185.50, though the additional fee for appearing as a private practitioner or supervisor would now be scrapped as this distinction has been removed. The full membership rate was still some way below the figure needed to keep pace with inflation, compared with its level in 2017. It is worth noting that if it had kept pace with inflation, this fee would now be around £208 (using Bank of England figures).
- While planning was underway for an in-person event, the annual conference was currently budgeted to be online only. This means that once a venue for an in-person conference had been identified, delegate fees would need to be set accordingly.
- The costs of refurbishing the training room had not been included, as no estimates were available yet. Rental fees would need to be set in order to make this cost-neutral.
- Staffing levels would remain static and, in line with comparable membership organisations in the sector, a 5% cost-of-living increase would be awarded in January 2024.

A review of our main suppliers to ensure best value for money was planned. In reply to a question, the CEO confirmed that the cost of debit card transactions was absorbed in the budget as an overhead. These transaction costs were typical of those incurred by similar membership organisations. The Chair noted that the overall cost of debit card payments should be put into the context of the overall annual budget.

The CEO said that BAAT continued to bank with Natwest, though this was being kept under review. They had a very secure online platform and of the ‘high street’ banks were one of the more environmentally conscious ones. There were banks focused on supporting charities but there were potentially problems in making their software interact with BAAT’s platforms. He was open to investigating that option in the future.

A member suggested that BAAT should approach its bank regarding where they invested; the CEO said that BAAT did ask them about their ethical policies.

In answer to a further question, the CEO confirmed that the cost of refurbishing the training room was not yet in the budget; a revised budget would be submitted when the figures were known, but it would be a relatively small amount. The Chair noted how helpful it was to now have budgets to approve, well in advance of the financial year; the CEO thanked the Finance Manager for their work on the budgets.

The budget was approved unanimously by Council, with no abstentions.

7. EDI update

a) Race is Complicated Toolkit

Many Council members had seen the Toolkit and thought this a valuable resource. The Chair said that members may also find the toolkit useful for their own organisations, as there is a section to support organisations to reflect on how inclusive they are currently. The toolkit had been the first project of the Coalition, which had emerged as a result of the BLM movement. The Coalition on Inclusion and Anti-Oppressive Practice was considering continuing its work, taking the coming year to embed and promote the toolkit; the Chair would bring to Council any further developments in connection with this work in due course.

b) EDI advisor

As mentioned earlier, the Chair shared the good news that Daniel Regan had been appointed as our EDI advisor. If BAAT wanted to develop more guidance or review new policies, it could now call on his expertise. While being independent of the organisation, he was familiar with its work, with art therapy, and had previously worked collaboratively with art therapists. Having a named advisor was a very useful resource.

The Chair concluded by saying that it would be important to keep BAAT's EDI Policy and Strategy under review and she welcomed input on how to develop these in the future.

8. Developing a BAAT public affairs strategy

The CEO introduced a paper on a proposed public affairs strategy, further to the paper at the September meeting of Council. He said it was a high-level document, not at this stage listing specific actions. It looked ahead over four years, in order to align with the 2022–2027 Strategic Plan. He emphasised that some of what the document described was already happening; it was important now to focus activity on the identified themes.

The CEO reprised the three areas of potential activity: the capacity of art therapy to change lives; a sustainable career structure for art therapists; engaging in appropriate societal issues (e.g., mental health). Under each heading, more detailed sub-headings were now set out, leading to areas of proposed activity.

In relation to the first theme ('Art therapy changes patients' / clients' lives'), the CEO made the following general comments:

- It was important to capture what BAAT was already doing.
- The evidence base for art therapy's effectiveness was very important and was much wider than a focus on RCTs.
- Material being developed for the programme would also be made available to members (e.g., briefing papers).
- It was vital to recognise the differences in governance and practice across the four nations.
- In identifying areas for campaigning work, it would be necessary to ask where BAAT could most add value and where members could support the work.

In discussion, Council members welcomed the approach and the fact that materials would be available for members to use. The CEO commented that art therapists themselves were the best advocates for the profession. For example, they could contact their local MP ahead of any debates in the Commons on mental health policies. A Council member suggested that this approach could also play an important

role in helping art therapists to access some of the new NHS resources being directed towards psychological therapies.

A Council member suggested that there was work to be done to communicate how art therapy changed people's lives. Some settings can be quite competitive environments, in terms of resources, and this was vital for art therapy to grow. The Chair acknowledged this and commented that art therapy could also point to powerful personal testimonies from patients/ clients. Commissioners were also looking for narratives of how therapies succeeded, not simply randomised trial data; other members agreed that the user voice could be a powerful advocate for art therapy.

The CEO went on to describe the second theme, a sustainable career structure. He drew attention to the need to:

- work closely with all of the university trainings
- understand what is needed for a modern curriculum
- promote interest in art therapy across different communities
- promote the apprenticeship route into the profession
- make the case for art therapy students to get the same access to support that AHPs are given
- address the anomaly regarding training placements and placement tariff
- develop a biennial workforce survey
- work with employers to develop career structures
- acknowledge the work of those in private practice, e.g. through the 'Find a Therapist' function on the website
- reflect the differences between the four nations and develop a resourcing plan which was equitable, bearing in mind the limited resources available
- when resources permitted, hire a public affairs officer to support the rollout of the strategy.

In discussion, a Council member commented on issues with NHS workforce data for the profession, as a minority of art therapists were employed in the NHS. The CEO noted that art drama and music therapists were also not clearly separately identified in the NHS data. Another member commented that some people working as art therapists had other roles or titles, which added further complexity.

One Council member asked whether interns could be employed to support the public affairs programme; the CEO said this could be considered. There was no budget at present to provide for a salaried staff member.

The Chair said that it would be important to 'horizon scan' as part of this work, so that BAAT was aware of policy developments in good time. The CEO then introduced the final theme, 'Engaging in wider society / mental health issues'. He reiterated the importance of BAAT having something distinctive to contribute to debate, and the need where possible to work with other campaigning organisations.

A number of suggestions for additions to the plan were made:

- a reference to working in connection with the climate crisis should refer to the fact that this was 'a developing field' (3.3)
- a reference to the 'ever-shrinking role of art in schools' (3.1)
- a reference to the criminal justice system (Annex 1.4)
- a reference to the PPN (Annex 1).

Council unanimously approved the proposed public affairs strategy, with no abstentions.

In considering the complexity of this strand of work, the Chair reminded Council that issues may affect members differently in different parts of the UK. Also, members may hold very different views on a number of issues. As noted earlier, she had received a letter from a member highlighting concerns and querying whether BAAT should have signed the MoU on Conversion Therapy. The member questioned whether BAAT members broadly were in favour of doing so; noted that the ACP had not signed; that there was a potential issue in regard to exploratory therapy; and that the membership had not been consulted. The member asked Council to pause its decision. The Chair had explained that the initial impetus to sign the MoU had come from a request from a Special Interest Group; and that in fact the decision had already been taken some months ago. The news of BAAT's confirmation as a signatory had in fact, as previously reported earlier in the meeting, very recently been received.

Council members welcomed the Chair's decision to share the letter with Council and the opportunity to return to the discussion about issues that affect homosexual and transgender clients. The following points were made:

- Ways to reflect on when consultation about issues should continue to be considered.
- Issues that BAAT chose to campaign on or speak out about would usually be of the nature that could be supported by most members across the UK.
- The Chair agreed that in the context of the public affairs strategy it was always important to be transparent about how positions had been agreed. The CEO noted that BAAT would have been an outlier if it had not signed up, which would send a statement to the wider psychological professions community. BAAT members are consulted regularly about wider strategy. Council members are elected from the membership and reflect art therapists' concerns and aspirations, importantly also balancing out different views and different needs across the four nations. If an issue was highly controversial, a specific survey might go out, but the decision should properly rest with Council.

The Chair said that it had been a useful discussion and it was important to continue to consider these issues. She said she would use points made by Council members to respond to the member's letter and share the draft for comment, before this was sent on.

9. Professional guidance update

The CEO introduced the paper, which set out a structured process for updating the guidance. If approved, the intention was to timetable reviews over the next 18–24 months. The Chair noted that an additional stage should be added - legal advice might be required in respect of some of the guidance.

With this addition, the process for updating the guidance was approved unanimously by Council, with no abstentions.

The Chair asked for thanks to be passed on to BAAT Professional Advisor, for her work on the paper. She also suggested that an article be placed on the website to inform members of the process being followed; noted that there would be a need for clear version control so that the latest update and the date of next planned review were clearly identified; and said that the guidance should be made to look more attractive.

A member asked about the status of guidelines on supervision; the CEO said that they were being redrafted, and he would ask the Professional Adviser to update the member with more details.

10. Member Awards

The CEO introduced a paper on the proposed awards programme. Three categories were suggested:

- Innovation – celebrating an art therapist or organisation that has developed innovative practice
- Diversity and anti-oppressive practice – recognising an individual or organisation that has made a significant contribution in this field
- Leadership – recognising an art therapist who has developed their role to provide significant leadership to help promote or deliver art therapy.

The first awards could be made at the AGM in June 2024 or the 2024 Conference in November; the timetable for June might be too ambitious. A possible first recipient of a proposed 'Lifetime Achievement Award' was discussed too, which would be awarded by Council

Reflecting on the committee to review nomination, members suggested this be made up of Council members, a SIG or regional group representative, and a service user. One member noted that the Annual Conference would be a better occasion to hand out the awards, especially as the focus of the conference would be Innovation.

The proposal for an award programme was approved unanimously by Council, with no abstentions.

11. Bye-laws for SIGs and Regional Groups

The CEO said that, following the adoption of updated Articles of Association, it was important to ensure that other governance arrangements were up to date. It was therefore proposed to update the Terms of Reference for SIGs and Regional Groups. He drew attention to two points on which Council's views would be particularly welcome:

- Should individual groups decide whether Associate and Trainee members could attend all their meetings alongside full members, or just particular meetings?
- New procedures for establishing a SIG, and one for winding up a group, were included.

The Chair noted that the draft Terms of Reference had previously been consulted on; and that no group would be wound up without first establishing that it had no active members.

A Council member observed that SIPP SIG already did not allow trainees to attend, because referrals were being discussed. Another Council member asked for an example of what other circumstances it would be appropriate not to include trainees, as they bring a fresh perspective. This was considered. Limiting trainees to a certain percentage of places was also suggested, so that not all places were taken up by them. The Chair emphasised the need for bye-laws to have generic application, in order to provide a framework within which individual groups could make appropriate choices for their activity - and the exclusion or inclusion of trainees.

Council unanimously approved, with no abstentions, the proposal that the CEO take forward the agreed wording of the terms of reference with the consultant to produce formal byelaws.

12. Updates

- a) Report from Council SIG Network Coordinator

A report from the coordinator was tabled. In answer to a question raised in the report, the CEO clarified that it was never intended that the cost of (e.g. BSL) interpreters should be met by

individual SIG budget; this information had been shared, but he would confirm this with the coordinator in question again.

b) Council Regional Network Coordinator

The group had not met since the last meeting of Council.

c) Reports from the nations:

- A report had been tabled by BAAT Cymru Wales.
- BAAT NI noted different areas of activity. Some concern was shared that information originally submitted to the HCPC about concerns relating to training provision be appropriately considered.
- The appetite for public affairs work in Scotland was noted. This issue would be considered to ensure we effectively support all four nations, as part of the ongoing work to see how we work across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (supported by our external consultant)

13. Representing BAAT – updates from Council members

Council members reported back on areas of work where they represent BAAT. Some issues had arisen with capacity. The BAAT Educators Forum for HEIs Course Leads have arranged to have some support from BAAT staff to help plan in arranging these. The Chair and another Council member will share attendance at the NHS England AHP Education Reform meetings.

14. Any Other Business

There was no other business.