

**Minutes – BHS Board of Trustees**  
**Thursday, 7 December 2023**

<b>Meeting</b>	Board Meeting
<b>Date</b>	Thursday, 7 December 2023
<b>Time</b>	10:00 – 14:00
<b>Venue</b>	Blended/Board Room, BHS HQ, Abbey Park, Stareton, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2XZ

Minute	Agenda Item & Discussion
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1. **Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Thursday, 21 September 2023**  
 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2023 were agreed to be a true reflection by the Trustees.
2. **Matters Arising from the Board meeting held on Thursday, 21 September 2023**  
 The matters arising from the meeting held on 21 September 2023 were noted as complete.  
  
 An update from the working group to attract new trustees was provided. It was noted that the overall interview and selection processes for trustee elections are good and sound, with no requirement for any changes at this time. Predominantly the focus of the group will be on the job descriptions, how to attract new trustees, and raising the profile of the Board of Trustees, making them more visible.
3. **Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Thursday, 2 November 2023**  
 The minutes of the meeting and workshop held on 2 November 2023 were agreed to be a true reflection by the Trustees. There were not any matters arising to review.
4. **Abridged Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Thursday, 21 September 2023**  
 The abridged minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2023 were approved for publication on the BHS website.
5. **Conflicts of Interest**  
 There were not any new conflicts of interest to declare.
6. **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy**  
 The full strategy was distributed to the Trustees in advance of this meeting for review and comment. Following due consideration and discussion, the Board of Trustees approved the EDI strategy.
7. **Volunteer Strategy**  
 The full strategy was distributed to the Trustees in advance of this meeting for review and comment. Following due consideration and discussion, the Board of Trustees approved the Volunteer strategy.
8. **Equine Grass Sickness**  
 The Trustees received a report on how the funding provided by the BHS was transformational in the Foundation's research via the biobank. The Trustees noted that it was useful to see how as supporting organisation the BHS has had an impact by providing funding.
9. **Advisory Group Ratification**  
Review of Terms of Reference – BHS Approved Centre Advisory Group  
 The Approved Centre team have proposed amendments which have originated from discussions in the group around modernising and refreshing the terms of reference which were last reviewed in 2018. The Trustees approved the revised Terms of Reference for the Approved Centre Advisory Group.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Change of Language

The difference between Equity and Equality had been discussed by the EDI Advisory Group. The group had subsequently recommended that the Advisory Group's title, the title of the strategy and BS's specialist trustee title should be amended to read: **Equity**, Diversity, and Inclusion. The Trustees agreed.

**10. Chief Executive's Report**

The regular quarterly update report was distributed in advance of the meeting, in addition to the 2023 Highlights & 2024 Areas of Focus summary report. The Chief Executive presented a summary of each document in the meeting, including:

- How the Trustees' investment of surplus revenue each year to designated funds has impacted the Society.
  - Over the past four years, the charities membership has grown by c.14,000. In 2023 membership grew by 3,500, despite concern regarding the cost of living crisis.
  - Foundationally important investment in support of the critical role that riding schools play for participation has seen 45 new Approved Centres join the scheme in 2023, with a further 38 in the pipeline for approval at the beginning of 2024.
  - Investment by the Board in Changing Lives Through Horses (CLTH) has been transformational for the programme in terms of growth, allowing c.1,000 young people to access the provision in the 2022/23 academic year.
  - British Riding Clubs (BRC), with support from the Technology department have implemented a new platform for 350 riding clubs and circa 27,000 members.
  - Investment in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion has enabled the Society to develop an EDI strategy which is now ready for implementation, under guidance from the Advisory Group.
  - 2024 will see the start of programme implementation of the digital transformation. This work will set the charity up for revenue diversification and enable us to stop communicating in a 'one size fits all' approach, with Audience Insight work closely integrated.

**11. Facilities, Environment, Health, and Safety**

There was a slight increase in reported incidents and accidents due to falls at assessments. Patterns have been investigated, including whether they're happening at certain centres. The accidents and incidents are general falls, not major incidents.

**12. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Safeguarding**

The team have been working with the BEF on new content for the Safeguarding Officers' course. They have also been spending time to update all safeguarding documents.

**13. Information Security**

Training sessions on data protection for Regional Committee Members have been delivered, with good feedback received. The roll out of volunteer email addresses has continued.

**14. Project & Programme Report**

An overview of progress against the current project and programmes was given, a full report on which was distributed in the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting that took place on 23 November 2023.

**15. Enterprise Risk Management Report (ERMR)**

The COO introduced the ERMR and advised there were no significant changes, but all references to timelines and action plans had been updated.

The Board noted the updated ERMR.

**16. Report from the Finance Committee Meeting that took place on 23 November 2023**

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The Chair of the Finance Committee provided an overview of the Finance Committee meeting that took place on 23 November 2023. KS noted that the 2023 results, actual vs forecast were very strong, and that the 2024 budget is complete.

The Finance Committee Chair said that considering the complexity of the transformation underway in the background at the BHS, the Executive Team should be congratulated on keeping the business burning strong and bright as well as initiating and promoting substantial change.

**17. Management Accounts and Forecast**

Monthly forecasting has taken place for the last five to six months, narrowing down to the end of year number. The Q3 accounts with the forecast alongside which were distributed in advance of the meeting indicate a forecast surplus for the year of £677,000.

The 2024 budget was presented with a recommended unrestricted surplus.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees noted that the Finance Committee had held a detailed discussion on the proposed budget for 2024, and ultimately felt it is a very good, ambitious budget that will allow the Society to continue to have an impact. Therefore, the recommendation is to approve it. The Board approved the proposed budget for 2024.

**18. Designated Fund Proposals**

A 100% review of all funds has been carried out in preparation for year end and in light of the forecast surplus. This has included identification of funds that are now inactive or due for retirement (undesignation), mapping of 2024 activity and top up requirements, and identification of new proposals. The Board of Trustees approved the designated fund proposals.

**19. Any Other Business**

**a) Safety Advisory Committee**

The Specialist Safety Trustee noted that she had been delighted to attend a meeting of the Safety Advisory Committee that took place on 13 October 2023, and hear about the amount of work going on with promoting road safety. In particular, they had been very impressed to see the push for downloads of the Horse 1 app and the focus on the January 2022 changes to the Highway Code.

**b) Investors in People**

There was a short discussion regarding Investors in People accreditation. It was noted that as part of the EDI strategy the BHS would be pursuing Inclusive Employers accreditation, but the Team would be open to a conversation with Investors in People also.