



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF BRIGADE COUNCIL

held by Video Conferencing
on 5th September 2020

There were present: The Lord Griffiths of Burry Port, President (in the chair) and 110 leaders and guests of the Brigade.

1. WELCOME

The President welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that leaders were joining us online from all corners of the UK and RoI. The President explained that due to the circumstances we are all having to do learn to do lots of things differently, including holding our AGM for the first time by video conferencing.

Members were reminded that all the papers required for the meeting had been made available to download from the website.

A total 93 votes had been registered. These were comprised of 47 ordinary votes and 46 Postal votes.

The Chief Executive outlined how the online voting system would work, and he also explained how to ask a question during the meeting.

2. OPENING WORSHIP & COMMEMORATION

The President invited the Brigade Chaplain, Rev Leigh Maydew to lead the opening devotions and to lead the act of commemoration remembering the lives of those that had died during the year.

The Chaplain made particular mention of Leslie Buttimer, a long serving past member of the Brigade Executive, and Jayne Thorne, a member of the staff team who had passed away in August.

3. MESSAGE OF LOYAL GREETINGS TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN, OUR PATRON

The President read the message of loyal greeting sent to Her Majesty The Queen:

“Members of The Boys’ Brigade wish to convey to Your Majesty, our Patron, loyal and affectionate greetings on the occasion of our Annual General Meeting of the Brigade Council to be held for the first time by video conferencing on 5th September 2020.

Earlier in the year we affirmed our vision that children and young people experience “life to the full”, and this has been our focus as we support members and their families

through these unprecedented times. As we continue to strive to advance Christ's Kingdom, we greatly appreciate your continued interest in our movement.

The Reverend Dr Lord Griffiths of Burry Port, President”

Her Majesty graciously replied as follows:

“Please convey my warm thanks to the members of The Boys’ Brigade for their loyal greetings, sent on the occasion of their Annual Meeting of the Brigade Council which is being held today via video conferencing.

As your Patron, I was interested to learn of the support you have provided to your members, and their families, throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

I much appreciate your thoughtful message, and in return, send my best wishes to all concerned.

ELIZABETH R”

4. ADOPTION OF BRIGADE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Copies of the Standing Orders for Brigade Council had been circulated prior to the meeting. The president highlighted that these were a bespoke set of Standing Orders to take into account that we were holding the meeting virtually for the first time.

The President invited those that had registered to vote during the meeting to adopt the set of standing orders, and to appoint the Brigade Staff as tellers, by using the online voting functionality.

The meeting APPROVED the adoption of the Standing Orders and the appointment of Brigade Staff as tellers.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING OF BRIGADE COUNCIL – Swansea 2019

The minutes of the Brigade Council meeting held in Swansea on 7th September 2019 were APPROVED as a correct record of proceedings.

6. REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The President acknowledged that the past 12 months had been incredibly challenging for everyone, including The Boys’ Brigade.

Rather than produce the usual Annual Review brochure, highlights of the year, including statistical information had been included in the last Gazette. A video was also shown to celebrate the achievements of young people over the past year and to give a flavour of various initiatives and activities.

The CEO gave an update on how the organisation was navigating the Covid-19 Pandemic. He specifically mentioned the launch of the BBatHome resources that had been developed to support leaders engage with young people whilst Companies were unable to meet face-to-face. Thanks were expressed to the staff involved in creating these new resources.

A guidance framework had also been produced to support leaders plan for a return to

face-to-face activity when restrictions allow.

The President thanked the CEO and the wider staff team for all they continued to do to support members during these incredibly challenging times.

7. PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2019-2020

The audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2020 were presented by the Brigade Treasurer, Mr Clifford Bygrave, who proposed that they be received.

The Auditors, Whiting and Partners, had given an unqualified Report on the Accounts and the supporting disclosures and documentation.

The Treasurer reported that the accounts show an overall surplus of £117,576, compared to a deficit of £5,241 for the previous year. The Treasurer explained that the result was mainly due to the high level of legacies and donations received during the year.

The Balance Sheet showed that at 31st March the Brigade had total assets of £4,486,579 which was a slight improvement on the previous year. The deferred income of £377,109 related to the proportion of capitation fees received prior to 31 March for the year to 31st August 2020.

The Treasurer explained that mainly due to the legacy income, we ended the year in a fairly comfortable financial position. However, due to the uncertainties faced due to the Covid-19 pandemic the year ahead will require tight financial management and bold decision making to preserve the activities of the Brigade. Cashflow forecasts are prepared regularly and will need to be monitored carefully over the coming months to ensure adequate cash is available to meet the necessary obligations.

It is not possible to estimate the duration of the pandemic or the severity of the consequences and financial impact on the Brigade. The interim accounts for the first four months of the current year indicate that a surplus has been achieved, due to the Job Retention Scheme receipts and additional one off income from legacies and donations.

The Treasurer recorded his appreciation to Gina Alderson and her team for the dedicated service which they continue to give to the Brigade on a day-to-day basis.

The presentation of the financial statements was seconded by Mr Alistair Burrow, Chair of Brigade Executive, who also paid tribute to the Treasurer for all his leadership and work during this challenging year.

There were no questions raised by members.

The meeting APPROVED the adoption of the Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2020.

8. BRIGADE AUDITORS

The Treasurer proposed on behalf of the Executive that Whiting and Partners be reappointed as auditors of The Boys' Brigade and that the Brigade Executive be authorised to fix their remuneration.

Mr Alistair Burrow, Chair of Brigade Executive, seconded the proposal.

The President invited any questions.

Andrew Bielas-Barnes (10th Southport Company) asked if the Brigade Executive has explored to see if the current Auditors are the most cost effective providers of this service.

The Treasurer explained that in line with our procurement policy a regular tendering process is carried out, where our current providers and other interested parties are asked to tender for this business. A sub-group of the Financial Committee undertakes this exercise on behalf of the Executive.

The motion was APPROVED by the meeting.

9. APPOINTMENT OF BRIGADE OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2020/21 SESSION

On behalf of the Brigade Executive Mr Robert Cunningham proposed the nomination of the following as Brigade Office-Bearers. In doing so he highlighted their experience and specific skills they would bring to the role.

In closing Robert Cunningham said the Brigade is nothing without its volunteers, and expressed gratitude to those willing to take on these roles.

Vice President: Mr David Aubrey Q.C.

Mrs Alison Chambers

Mr Mervyn Murdock

Mr Ian Rumbelow

Chaplain Rev Leigh Maydew

Treasurer: Mr Steve Mann

The nominations were seconded by Mr Drew Buchanan MBE, on behalf of the Brigade Executive.

The President asked if there were any questions.

Robert McLean (5th Hamilton Company) asked if the process for selecting nominations for Brigade Vice-Presidents' could be explained and asked why this was not the same as that used for Regional Committee representatives, where there is an open nomination process.

In response, Alistair Burrow stated that the role of a Vice President was quite different from that of a representative member to a Regional Committee. It was explained that nominations for Vice President had always been selected in this way and often individuals were approached due to a particular skill or experience. It was stated that although the nominations are made by the Brigade Executive, there is some consultation with the Regional Committee prior to a nomination. Following individual votes all the above office-bearers were ELECTED by a large majority in each case.

10. TO TRANSACT ANY OTHER LAWFUL BUSINESS

The President confirmed that no additional matters had been raised by members prior to the meeting.

The President explained that a number of members of Brigade Executive had reached the end of their term of service, and expressed thanks to Vicki Brownlee, Paul Haggan and Stuart Rankin for their contribution to the work of the Executive.

Tribute was also paid to Clifford Bygrave, who is standing down as Treasurer after eleven years in the role. The President thanked Clifford for the expertise that he had brought to the role, and for his dedicated service to the Brigade over such a long period.

It was announced that Clifford Bygrave had accepted the invitation to become an honorary Brigade Vice President.

The President also acknowledged the contribution made by Alistair Burrow who had reached the end of his nine-year term as a Brigade Vice President. It was highlighted that for the past four and half years Alistair has also served as Chair of Brigade Executive.

It was also confirmed that Alistair Burrow had also accepted the invitation to become an honorary Brigade Vice President.

In response, Alistair Burrow thanked the President for his kind words and reminded the meeting that the President too was standing down at the end of the meeting.

The President was thanked for all he had contributed as President over the past nine years and members were delighted to hear that Leslie Griffiths had accepted the invitation to become an honorary Brigade President.

Thanks were expressed by the President to everyone for attending the meeting, and for the hard work of both staff and volunteers, as we support young people and their families through these challenging times.

It was explained that the original plan was to hold Brigade Conference in Northern Ireland next year on 4th September, however, due to the present situation this will be reviewed in the coming months and the outcome communicated to leaders.

The meeting closed in prayer, led by the President.