MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF BRIGADE COUNCIL

6th September 2025 at 10am

Held by video-conferencing

The meeting was chaired by Very Rev Dr Martin Fair (Co-Chair of Brigade Executive) and was joined by the Chief Executive, members of Executive, Brigade Staff and 139 leaders.

1. WELCOME

Martin Fair (chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced himself to members. It was explained that the papers required for the meeting had been made available in advance via the dedicated webpage.

A total of 125 votes had been registered. These were comprised of 63 ordinary votes, 14 proxy votes and 48 postal votes.

It was explained that Neil MacLennan (Sanctus Media and also a BB leader) would be assisting with the technology. Neil outlined how members could address the meeting, as well as explaining how the voting would work.

2. OPENING WORSHIP & COMMEMORATION

It was explained that The Brigade Chaplain, Rev Stewart Cutler wasn't able to join the meeting in person and had recorded an opening devotion which was played to the meeting. This included the act of commemoration remembering those that have passed away over the past twelve months.

Following this, Martin gave thanks for the life of John Young (former Brigade Vice President and Chair of Executive) and Don West (former staff member) who had died since the recording was made.

3. MESSAGE OF LOYAL GREETINGS TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING

The Chair read the message of loyal greeting sent to His Majesty The King:

"Members of The Boys' Brigade wish to convey to Your Majesty, our Patron, loyal and affectionate greetings on the occasion of our Annual Meeting of the Brigade Council to be held virtually by video conferencing on 6th September 2025.

Throughout the year, thousands of volunteer leaders have continued to give time and energy to support, encourage, and value children and young people from all backgrounds to be the best they can be.

As an organisation we remain focused on delivering our strategy centred on the quality of experience for children and young people and as part of our Building Stronger Initiative have seen an increased profile of our work in communities across the country.

In partnership with Bolton University through the "Your Future" programme we have *provided a series of activity days across the country focused on raising the aspirations of young people.*

Developing strategic partnerships with church denominations and faith partners is also a priority and will be a focus in the year ahead.

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

Jonathan Eales, Chief Executive"

His Majesty graciously replied as follows:

"Please convey my warmest 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 to discuss your focus for the year ahead.

As your Patron, I much appreciate your message of loyal greetings. In return, I send my warmest good wishes to all those who are present for a memorable event.

CHARLES R"

4. ADOPTION OF BRIGADE COUNCIL PROCEDURAL RULES

The Chair reminded the meeting that at the start of each meeting of Brigade Council we are required to adopt the procedural rules that will govern the meeting. It was explained that these remained unchanged from the version adopted last year.

A question was raised about requesting more than one vote. It was explained that the voting arrangements have not changed and that for example if you were attending on behalf of a Company and a Battalion you would have been able to register two votes as in previous years.

The Procedural Rules had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were APPROVED by the meeting on a show of hands.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING OF BRIGADE COUNCIL – 2024

The minutes of the Brigade Council meeting held on 7th September 2024 by video conferencing were APPROVED as a correct record of proceedings on a show of hands.

6. REVIEW OF 2024/25 SESSION

The Chief Executive shared his reflections on the past twelve months and included a video highlighting the achievements and opportunities experienced by young people over the past year. The meeting was reminded that at times of change and instability across the country and wider world The Boys' Brigade has an important contribution to make, this has been true in the past and is as relevant today.

The organisation has continued to benefit from funding from the Department of Culture, Media & Sport via the Uniform Youth Fund in England and Cashback for Communities in Scotland. Following the Chief Executive's presentation Natalie Whipday updated members on the achievements and outputs from the funding.

The Felden Lodge sale completed in November and the staff team based in Hemel Hempstead have settled into the new office at Adeyfield Free Church. The proceeds from the sale and reduction in the cost base have both positively impacted the finances and the Treasurer outlined this further in the presentation of the annual accounts.

An overview was given of the work of the Ministry Team and the focus on building the organisation's presence and profile with denominations and other faith partners. It was noted that two Spaces Groups were up and running and a focus for the year ahead will be on how we support and equip leaders share the Christian Faith with young people.

The five year strategy is now in its final year and the plan is to consult with leaders further before launching a new strategy. The recommendations flowing from the structural review are likely to be a key element of the new strategy and Rod Morrison (external Consultant) gave a presentation on the findings and recommendations directly after the AGM had concluded.

The Chair thanked Jonathan and Natalie for their presentation and for all the work that it represents.

7. PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2024/25

The Chair invited Steve Mann (Treasurer) to present the accounts for the 2024/25 financial year on behalf of the Brigade Executive.

The presentation focussed on:
- Outcome to 31st March 2025
- Balance Sheet and Cash Position
- Reserves
- Prospects for the year ahead

It was explained that the accounts have been approved by the Trustees and our auditors, and copies have been made available in advance of the meeting.

Income was significantly higher at £6.1m compared £2.8m the previous year and was largely due to the sale of Felden Lodge which completed in November 2024.

Capitation income was in line with the budget at £588k, although this was down £145k compared to the previous year and related to the change in Governance arrangements with The Boys' Brigade in Northern Ireland.

The Treasurer commented on the generosity of donors as legacies and donations totalled £420k, which was an increase of £299k compared with the year before.

Supplies sales were down by 42k to £375k and investment income had increased by £85k to £113k following the sale of Felden Lodge.

The gain on the sale of Felden is £3.3m, and this is made up of the proceeds of sale (£5.25m) less the value of Felden shown previously in the accounts and the costs associated with the sale.

Expenditure for the year fell by £457k to £2.3m. This was largely due to lower staff costs and reduced expenditure following the property sale. The level of expenditure relating to grant funding also had an impact.

The surplus at year end was £3,703k, although the Treasurer explained that if you removed the impact of the sale of Felden Lodge and legacies, the surplus would have been £3k. This demonstrates that the day to day income and expenditure is operating on a break-even basis.

The balance sheet is now strong with assets of £8.5m, which includes £1.7m for the value of Carronvale House, £5.1m in the Felden Investment Fund and £544k in general investments. The cash position is also up on last year and as at 31st March was £1.1m due to the receipt of DCMS funding and legacy income.

It was also stated that due to the legacy income the Trustees had been able to increase the monies in the designated funds which would support the delivery of the next strategic plan.

In summary, the Treasurer said that following the sale of Felden Lodge and due to legacy income The Boys' Brigade was operating at a break even position. The increase in investment income would enable investment in the core services provided to members and a budget showing a £5k surplus had been set for the current year, meaning that reserves should not need to be used to fund day to day activity.

The Audited Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025 together with the associated reports were proposed by Steve Mann and seconded by Gareth Hopkins on behalf of the Brigade Executive.

A number of questions were asked by members relating to the accounts, the use of capitation fees, the DCMS funds and the position following the sale of Felden Lodge.

Martin thanked Steve for the presentation and members were invited to vote.
The following votes were cast:

In meeting	For 64	Against 3
Postal	For 48	Against 0
Total	For 112	Against 3

The Accounts were APPROVED by the meeting.

8. TO RE-APPOINT INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

The Chair asked the meeting to re-appoint Whiting and Partners as the independent auditors of The Boys' Brigade until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting and to authorise the Brigade Executive to fix their remuneration.

Proposed by: Steve Mann, Brigade Executive
Seconded by: Gareth Hopkins, Brigade Executive

Members were asked to cast their vote.

In meeting	For 55	Against 12
Postal	For 47	Against 1
Total	For 102	Against 13

The meeting APPROVED the reappointment of Whiting & Partners as independent auditors.

9. CAPITATION FEES FOR 2025/26

The Chair explained that the proposal had been circulated to members prior to the meeting and that the Brigade Executive were proposing that capitation fees for the 2025/26 session be increased by £1 per head.

Proposed Fees for the 2025/26 session:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">/Category</th><th>Fee</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Fee per young person</td><td>£28.00</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Adult fees</td><td>Officers / Leaders</td><td>£28.00</td></tr>
<tr><td>(Second person at the same address)</td><td>£24.00</td></tr>
<tr><td>Battalion & District Officers not on Company roll</td><td>£28.00</td></tr>
<tr><td>Officers / leaders in full time education or training</td><td>£24.00</td></tr>
<tr><td>Helpers</td><td>£22.50</td></tr>
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The fee in respect of an Associate Member is £31.00.

Proposed by: Jaime Ellis, Brigade Executive

Seconded by: Alison Chambers, Brigade Executive

Following questions, members were asked to cast their vote, and the outcome of the voting was as follows:

In meeting	For 44	Against 25
Postal	For 41	Against 7
Total	For 85	Against 30

The meeting APPROVED the capitation fees for the 2025/26 session.

10. TO APPOINT BRIGADE OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2025/26 SESSION AS PROPOSED BY THE BRIGADE EXECUTIVE

The Chair explained that bios for those being nominated had been circulated in prior to the meeting and that those nominated had the full support of the Brigade Executive.

On behalf of the Brigade Executive, Lee Bird proposed the Office Bearers for the 2025/26 session, and this was seconded by Lee Brodie.

President:	Rev Dez Johnston
Vice-Presidents:	Alison Chambers
	Ian Rumbelow
Chaplain:	Rev Stewart Cutler
Treasurer:	Steve Mann

Following the opportunity for questions the following votes were cast:

Dez Johnston	In meeting	For 54	Against 13
	Postal	For 41	Against 7
	Total	For 95	Against 20
Alison Chambers	In meeting	For 49	Against 19
	Postal	For 34	Against 14
	Total	For 83	Against 33
Ian Rumbelow	In meeting	For 50	Against 18
	Postal	For 37	Against 11
	Total	For 87	Against 29
Stewart Cutler	In meeting	For 64	Against 6
	Postal	For 43	Against 5
	Total	For 107	Against 11
Steve Mann	In meeting	For 55	Against 15
	Postal	For 36	Against 12
	Total	For 91	Against 27

Following the vote, the Chair reported that the meeting had APPROVED the Office Bearer appointments for the 2025/26 session.

11. TO CONSIDER A SPECIAL RESOLUTION IN THE NAME OF WEST LOTHIAN BATTALION (requiring a majority of not less than 75% of the votes cast by member entitled to vote at an annual general meeting).

The Chair outlined the motion.
"That, in accordance with Article 46 of The Boys' Brigade's Articles of Association, the Brigade Executive shall ensure that candidates for all Major Awards, namely the King's Badge award (amended from time to time), will always have the option of a hard-copy printed record book at the candidate's discretion."

The motion was proposed by Andrew Dalgleish (Battalion Secretary) and seconded by Greg Robertson (Chaplain) on behalf of West Lothian Battalion.

The rationale for the motion was outlined to members. Concern was expressed that the proposed King's Badge portal relied on immediate access to Wi-fi. It was stated that in a recent BB themed programme it had been quoted that around 14.4 million people in the UK are living in poverty without their basic needs being met, and roughly 1.5 million homes in the UK don't have an Internet Connection.

It was stated that West Lothian is not amongst the most affluent areas in Scotland, and that this could potentially negatively impact the number of young people able to access the award.

After discussion with BBHQ it was felt no firm commitments were able to be made, and the Battalion's view was that if one young person was unable to attain the award, they will have been failed by the organisation.

It was explained that the purpose of the motion was to ensure that all young people have the same accessibility to attaining the Major Awards in the future, and that a motion passed by Brigade Council was the only feasible solution to ensure this going forward.

Questions and comments were invited by members and there was a wide range of views and opinions expressed.

Following the debate, members were invited to vote, and the following votes were recorded.

In meeting	For 50	Against 17
Postal	For 34	Against 9
Total	For 84	Against 26

Having achieved 76.4% of votes cast in favour, the Chair confirmed that the motion had been APPROVED.

12. TO TRANSACT ANY OTHER LAWFUL BUSINESS

No additional items had been raised in advance by members.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution. Closing devotions were led by the President, Dez Johnston (pre-recorded).

Following the AGM Rod Morrison made a presentation on the findings and recommendations of the consultation relating to the organisational structure.