



UNAPPROVED Minutes of the Brass Bands England **Annual General Meeting 2021/22**

Held online on Zoom
Tuesday 18 October 2022 at 6.00pm

Attendees:

Mike Kilroy, Marie Bedford, Mike Walsh, Rosie Banham, Sarah Baumann, Jess Wilson, Steve Earley, Len Hampson, Nick Wilson, Richard Windle, William Haw, Stuart Young, Tim Williams, A Scott Meikle, Alex Parker, Paul Beaumont, Nigel Stevens, Saphran Ali, Shirley Woodward, Paul Richards, David Thornton, Bev Shepherd.

BBE Chair Mike Kilroy welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Matthew Sanders (Cold Ash Brass)
Gary Walczak (Trustee)
Jenny Wood (Dobcross Youth Band)
Jane Stewart (LGB Brass)
Kenny Crookston (BBE)

2. To accept the minutes of the previous AGM

The minutes of the BBE AGM held on 25 September 2021 were accepted.

Proposer: Shirley Woodward
Secunder: David Thornton

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. To receive the Report of the Management Committee and the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022:

Chairperson's Report: Mike Kilroy

Brass Bands England is a charitable, membership organisation, which (at the end of March 2022) represents around 470 organisations, comprising 568 brass bands and containing approximately 17,000 individuals. The number of members (Bands, other organisations and individuals) continues to grow steadily.

The Financial Year 2021 – 2022 continued to see brass bands impacted negatively due to COVID, but we also started to see life return to some sort of normality at the back end of 2021 and into the early part of 2022. During this pandemic, BBE has seen a substantial rise in membership, increased strategic partnerships, greater recognition in Government departments and in consequence has



seen a broader acceptance of its value and relevance, not only in the Brass Band Sector, but in the wider arts and cultural landscape.

During the past year BBE has supported brass bands to become more robust and sustainable and to be recognised as a critically important part of this country's cultural scene.

This fits well with BBE's primary aim of supporting brass bands to become better in every aspect and to be better appreciated by others outside of our immediate cultural sphere. The 'Better Banding for All' slogan represents the key aim for this organisation. The Board of Trustees and BBE staff will continue to work tirelessly to achieve this important objective.

It is worth remembering that BBE is charged with supporting every facet of the brass band sector. This includes every performer, volunteer, association, event organiser, commercial organisation, press, media or audience member. BBE exists to serve all of these and more. However, membership of BBE is a requirement to access all the excellent benefits that BBE can provide. There are however issues of national importance that will be taken up from time to time by BBE for the benefit of the entire sector.

BBE's core strategic aim is to become the organisation that can provide an independent and impartial voice representing and supporting brass bands, stakeholders and major events organisers across the Brass Band Sector landscape. As BBE grows in influence, relevance and capacity, and confidence and trust, this strategic aim, which has never been more pertinent and necessary, is now within reach.

Arts Council England

BBE's relationship with ACE is excellent and during this past year BBE has enjoyed the benefit of Cultural Relief Funding (CRF), with our ACE relationship manager attending most Trustee Board meetings. Having our Relationship Manager as a proactive member of the BBE team has paid huge dividends over the past few years. This close working relationship with our 'critical friend' is greatly valued by BBE. BBE is very grateful for Arts Council England's continued backing in both financial investment and practical support.

The support that Arts Council England (ACE) gives to the Charity, has facilitated Brass Bands England's recent growth in membership and activities. This has been achieved by investing in an excellent and dedicated team of paid staff. The Board of Trustees would once again like to congratulate Kenny Crookston and his wonderful team for their commitment and unbending focus on supporting the brass band community at every level.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees continue to support the operational team in their work and have made significant progress in the specialist Subgroups that were created in early 2020. These groups and their remits will be reviewed at the next BBE strategy visioning 'away day' early in 2023.



1. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** (Chair: Julie Hogarth)
2. **Innovation in Education** (Chair: Dr David Thornton)
3. **Utilisation of Digital Technology and IT integration** (Chair: Paul Beaumont)
4. **Major Events including EBBF 2022** (Chair: Nigel Stevens)
5. **Remuneration Working Group** (Chair: Mike Walsh)
6. **BBE Standards and Constitution** In order that BBE Board is in the right shape to govern through the next ACE funding period April 2023 – March 2027, work has begun on reviewing BBE's constitution, policies, code of conduct, the Board of trustees make up and the required skills, recruitment and election processes. This new working group is led by Paul Richards.

A new working group is to be formed focussing on **Youth Development**. This will support the work of the Brass Foundations Team and the Safeguarding work undertaken by Sam Fisher. We'll discuss this in more detail a little later in the meeting.

At the AGM in 2021, following a vote by BBE members, Paul Richards was elected as a trustee. Paul brings an enormous amount of commercial and 3rd sector experience to the board along with a lifetime's involvement in the Brass Band sector. Unfortunately, this saw long standing Trustee Max Stannard leave the board. The board would like to acknowledge and thank Max for his excellent contribution to BBE over the past few years.

In Conclusion

This year has seen significant progress made by BBE. The trustees are delighted with, and extremely proud of, the organisation's continued growth over the 2020-21 period. This year represents the most prolific year in the history of the organisation (Outstripping last year's incredible performance), delivering outstanding substantial benefits to the brass band community on a truly national basis. The exceptional progress made over the past year particularly in the face of the COVID 19 Pandemic sees the brass band sector at the leading edge of many areas within the arts and culture arena.

The brass band community should take great pride in the fact that the brass band sector is at the forefront in so many ways. The Staff and Trustees of BBE sincerely hope that more people and organisations will engage with us now, and in the coming years, to help us to achieve 'Better Banding for All'.

Mike explained that unfortunately CEO Kenny Crookston was unable to join because he had recently contracted Covid-19 and get-well wishes were expressed.



CEO Report: Kenny Crookston read out in his absence by Sarah Baumann

Despite some considerable challenges, 2021-22 has been another period of significant activity and growth for Brass Bands England. The period covered by this report doesn't include the 2022 European Brass Band Festival, but this hugely successful event nevertheless consumed vast amounts of staff and trustee time and resources since it was rescheduled in December 2020 to be held a mere 16 months later in Birmingham, rather than in Gateshead in 2024 as previously intended.

Membership

In terms of BBE's growth, there is no more significant measure than that of our membership. In 2021-22 it increased by 11.1% from 423 to 470 organisations. For context, at the outbreak of Covid-19 that figure stood at 392 and we budgeted on a 10% drop over the following 12 months, as bands faced the inevitable challenges that the pandemic would bring. When the current staff team began to come together in April 2018 it was 181, in a nation thought to be home to well over 1,000 brass bands (accurate figures aren't known to exist!). Clearly there is still much work to be done in attracting those organisations that haven't yet been convinced of the benefits of membership, but an increase of 159% in the four years of Arts Council England funded activity is very successful by any standards.

The increase to 100 individual members, 66 of whom have joined through BBE's partnership with the Brass Band Conductors' Association, is a rise of 22. This is an area of potential future growth, although it should be noted that approximately 17,000 individuals already qualify for many of the benefits of membership through their banding organisations, and we encourage them all to investigate the many benefits on offer, including discounted insurance from our partners NewMoon, Making Music UK and BBIS.

Staff

Over the past year the staff team has grown further, while our specialist freelance group has continued to provide very high-quality brass education to a growing number of enthusiastic young musicians. In October 2021, we saw the retirement of long-serving administration officer Carole Salter and we would like to pay tribute to the tremendous contribution Carole made to BBE over the 11 years she worked in our Barnsley office.

During 2021-22 BBE also appointed a new Fundraising Manager, Pam Johnson, through funding provided by the Backstage Trust, for which we are very grateful. Pam's appointment provides us with in-house funding expertise but, more importantly, presents opportunities for member bands to use our new funding and project management services. Also involved in providing these services is new Projects Officer, Jess Wilson, who is also working closely with Marketing Manager, Clair Donnelly, in servicing BBE's agreement with the Brass in Concert organising team to co-manage delivery of the 2022 Championship at Sage Gateshead.

The appointments of Victoria Howarth, Chelsea Parkinson, Eleanor McKenzie and Chloe Dyson-Asher have provided greater robustness in areas of Finance, Administration, Archives and Marketing



respectively. Much of our expansion (the staff and freelance team reached 19 members during the year) has been made possible by funding from the DCMS's Culture Recovery Fund and we are grateful to Arts Council England for recognising our work and that of some of our leading bands and events in making substantial awards during the past 12 months. The Garfield Weston Foundation, The Foyle Foundation and The Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust have also contributed significantly to our operation, and we would like to thank these bodies for their generosity.

A significant amount of the senior staff's work throughout the year has been in formulating BBE's application to Arts Council England for NPO funding (to be renamed IPSO – Investment Principles Support Organisations) for the period from 2023-26. This was due to be submitted by mid-May 2022, with the outcome expected in late October. To maintain the current level of service offered to members and the wider brass band community, an uplift in the current £210,000 per annum would be required, although contingency plans will be in place if this is not achieved.

COVID-19 advice, guidance and resources

The COVID-19 Pandemic has provided significant challenges for everyone, but during 2021-22 BBE continued to provide COVID specific advice for the entire brass band sector, while we are aware that much of the wider musical community also appreciated this information, which was highly praised and appreciated. Thankfully, recent months have seen restrictions diminish considerably, but BBE will continue to monitor the situation closely as new COVID variants emerge.

Safeguarding, BandSafe and Child Performance Licensing (CPL)

BBE's highly acclaimed BandSafe programme continued to be delivered online and during the year 394 members were trained in safeguarding. As our National BOPA (now covering both England and Wales) has been extended to cover musical groups outside of brass banding, BBE has entered an arrangement to provide training and Child Performance Licensing to members of the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), and this offer will soon be extended to the members of Making Music UK.

Brass Foundations Project

Brass Foundations is Brass Bands England's education programme, launched in 2021 and led by an outstanding team of five experienced Youth Development Brass Specialists, managed by Education and Development Manager, Sarah Baumann. The team members are:

- **Paul Fisher (Buckinghamshire)**
- **Sheila Allen (Leicestershire)**
- **Paul McLaughlin (Gloucestershire)**
- **Deirdre Waller-Box (London)**
- **Helen Minshall (Lancashire)**

During 2021-22, the team has delivered 144 education sessions to 20 different Music Education Hubs (MEH) across England, with 4,150 participants indicating a remarkable 100% enthusiasm for



brass playing having taken part. Proms in the Playground has again played a vital role in the programme's outreach and in connecting with community bands. BBE continues to search for future opportunities to connect with MEH's and for funding to extend this flagship education programme into other parts of the country.

National Youth Brass Band Championships

The 2022 Youth Champs took place at Corby Business Academy on the weekend of 26-27 March, with BBE's delivery led by Partnership and Relationship Development Manager, Alex Parker, and supported by a new sponsorship agreement with Besson. A total of 28 bands performed over the weekend, but with a number hit by last-minute Covid issues, numbers were lower than originally expected. A substantial review of the event's structure (and qualification processes for the European Youth Brass Band Contest) has since taken place and it is hoped that these will contribute to a better attendance at the 2023 Youth Champs, among other wider-ranging benefits to lifelong banding.

Training and Development

Our Artistic Development, Player Development and Band Governance training sessions have continued to engage well with our community, with 81 events, webinars and drop-in sessions attracting 1,955 attendees. These have formed an important part of our membership offer since 2018 and we are currently reviewing the future delivery of these key elements as we prepare for a new round of Arts Council England funding from 2023-26.

Brass Band Archive

Over 50% of the collection of 9,000 sets of music, acquired in 2018, have now been transferred to the Archive's new home at Heritage Quay, The University of Huddersfield, plus all the historical artefacts. Work continues to complete the transfer and BBE is grateful to the tireless team of volunteers who have contributed their time and expertise. Funding is a constant issue, but several significant applications are in process, including to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Crowdfunder appeal 'Brass Bands at Christmas'

Following the success of the 2020 Crowdfunder, November 2021 saw the launch of the 'Brass Bands at Christmas' appeal, which was supported by television and radio presenter Angelica Bell. During this appeal, over £50,000 was raised for bands through the partnership with Crowdfunder, which we see as a very important and lucrative opportunity to help all brass bands to both connect with their own communities and thrive financially.

In Conclusion

2021-22 has been a year of intense activity for the entire BBE staff and trustee team, who have all made considerable sacrifices in preparing for the biggest event in the organisation's history. In contrast, 2022-23 is expected to be a year of consolidation as we await the outcome of the ACE IPSO application (and take some well-deserved holidays!). I am satisfied that all aspects of our operation



have been carried out to a high standard over the past 12 months and I continue to be both thrilled and honoured to be able to manage an outstanding team dedicated to creating better banding for the entire BBE membership.

Mike Kilroy added that the outcome of the ACE IPSO funding application would be found out in the week commencing 24th October.

Treasurer's Report: Marie Bedford

This has been an interesting and challenging year for BBE as it continues to grow and develop, and as we explore the banding landscape post pandemic as everything has started to open up again within our communities. We are a developing business experiencing all the challenges and complexities that come with a charity growing at a rapid pace. This report is about the accounts up to 31 March 2022, though I will also be referring to the future.

It is to be noted that the delivery of the European Brass Band Festival Event in Birmingham at the end of April 2022 was largely managed through a separate company 'BBE Events Ltd' whose year-end is 30 September. Any surpluses are donated back to BBE. The outcome of that event is not reflected in this set of accounts for BBE although some costs borne by BBE up to 31 March are included.

The accounts show a very healthy surplus generated for 21/22 year of £65k. This is a one-off situation for 2 reasons and will smooth out over the next financial year:

- We needed to cash flow fund the European Contest and therefore always planned a larger surplus this year to help support that.
- We also identified that the 22/23 budget would be very tight so we held back on some of our spending plans whilst we reviewed and prioritised those plans.

A very healthy Balance Sheet has been maintained.

The Board annually reviews the required reserves for BBE to ensure financial stability as a going concern, as we continue to grow. These are absolute Reserves which will maintain the business during challenging times and also help support planned future investment. The levels set are based on advice from the Charities Commission as well as a review of our current spending patterns. In March the Board agreed, in line with our growth, to increase our Reserves Plan from £93k to £160k over the next 5 years, maintaining annual reviews.

Looking at 22/23 and beyond, the planned surplus for the current financial year is £13,800 to allow for the planned increase in our reserves over 5 years.

The Europeans Contest was a resounding success, and the huge financial concerns and risks were skilfully managed, especially when it was achieved in just 16 months. The delivery of the event made a £10,000 loss overall, between the 2 companies, which was within the acceptable limit that the BBE Board were happy to support at the outset.

The VAT status of BBE is still a situation that is being monitored and managed. We do not yet need to register for VAT but are likely to within the next year. To assist with this management, other



Unit 12. Maple Estate. Stocks Lane. Barnsley. South Yorkshire. S75 2BL
Tel: 01226 771015. Email: natoffice@brassbandsengland.co.uk Website:
WWW.brassbandsengland.co.uk

similar events to the Europeans are being managed through BBE Events Ltd, such as the Youth Championships. BBE will have a Partially Exempt VAT status when it does need to register, like most charities which adds complexity to the business. At the point that BBE does have to become VAT registered, prices of many of our products will increase, though all of this will be paid to HMRC rather than be a benefit to BBE or our members.

BBE have not increased their product prices for a number of years as part of our support to our banding membership and only plan to do so only as and when required.

The effectiveness of maintaining 2 companies in the future is also being monitored. The continued project delivery to support our banding community remains our purpose.

Mike Kilroy invited people to ask any questions they liked, and said he was keen to get as many people involved as possible.

Marie Bedford was thanked for her report and Mike Kilroy announced that Marie has taken the difficult decision to step down from her role as BBE Treasurer after guiding BBE to the brilliant position we are in now through her fantastic expertise, which has probably taken more time than expected. She has been a joy to work with; professional and challenging in the right way. She was thanked and presented with flowers as a token of BBE’s appreciation.

Marie thanked everyone and the BBE team for their support. It had been a difficult decision and an absolute pleasure to work with the BBE team. She said she wouldn’t be too far away if help was required.

We are fortunate that Trustee Paul Beaumont who has an excellent record in corporate business and finance is taking over the role of BBE Treasurer.

5. Appointment of Trustees

Mike Kilroy handed over to Trustee Mike Walsh to take the meeting through the appointment of trustees:

Four existing trustees were due for re-election at the end of their 3-year term: Mr Paul Beaumont, Ms Julie Hoggarth, Mr Mike Kilroy, and Mr David Thornton.

One proxy vote has been received in the period up to 72 hours before the meeting which named the chair as their proxy.

One member had named Nigel Stevens as their proxy

The total votes were as follows:

| Total Votes: | For | Against | Abstained |
|------------------------------|------------|----------------|------------------|
| Management Report & Accounts | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Julie Hoggarth | 11 | 0 | 1 |
| Paul Beaumont | 11 | 0 | 1 |
| David Thornton | 11 | 0 | 1 |
| Mike Kilroy | 10 | 0 | 2 |



Given that Mike Kilroy was re-elected, Mike Walsh handed back to him.

7. Any Other Business

Mike Kilroy announced that we have a new working group focussing on Youth Development. This is more important than ever given BBE's Brass Foundations and Safeguarding work, which has been so successful. The Board felt that it was particularly important, especially given the Arts Council funding application, and needed someone who has relevant experience to guide the team. It was looking for someone already working in the youth education sector at primary and secondary level and someone working in an area of particular interest such as inner-city environments. The Board is really pleased to have appointed Saphran Ali, who has been co-opted as a new trustee, and who has worked with the team and Sarah before, who was keen to get him on board, with his passion and enthusiasm. Saphran was asked him to introduce himself.

Saphran thanked BBE for inviting him to the trustees. His expertise lies in brass education, as a peripatetic brass teacher at Services for Education in Birmingham, which is one of the largest hubs in the country, where he teaches all ages and abilities. He is a euphonium player with Langley Band, which runs a community band as well as the main band. Saphran is excited to be offering his expertise with his passion for 'better banding for all' especially 'for all'. With his background, if he had not been in the right place at the right time, he would not have had the opportunity to join youth bands and compete, which has changed his life. He said there are people and young people who don't always get this opportunity, which is something we can do more to tap into. Saphran has met with Paul Fisher from Brass Foundations and is keen to offer expertise and help to get more people doing banding and loving it as much as the rest of us.

Questions

There were no questions.

Mike said he was keen to get people more involved, with more inquisitiveness, opinions and ideas. This organisation is for everyone, working with children, youth bands, elite and community bands and other organisations as well. It is important that other people engage with it fully.

8. Close of Business

The meeting closed at 6.47pm.