



Minutes of the Marlborough Brandt Group Annual General Meeting

Held via Zoom 27/12/2021 at 6pm

1. Welcome and Apologies

Alex Davies (AD) welcomes the members and guests of the Marlborough Brandt Group who are present. The other Trustees James Busby (JB) and David Johnson (DJ) introduced themselves.

Apologies were received from the following members: Barney Rosedale, Angela Hutt, Gordon Hutt, Nick Hunt and Alan Davies. NH and AD gave proxy votes to the Chair.

2. Agreement of Agenda

The agenda was agreed.

3. Approval of Last AGM Minutes

The previous AGM minutes were approved and signed.

4. Chair's Report of 2020 and update on 2021

AD summarised the 2020 annual report and activities of 2021. AD highlighted the grants strategy taken in 2020 as to increase the amount MBG distributed to ensure the long-term viability of our partner charities had been successful and all partner charities were operating again in Gunjur. In all £40,000 of match funding was secured in 2020. During 2021 trips have been put on and then postponed several times with ultimately no MBG volunteers travelling to Gunjur. AD confirmed that grants have been made in 2021 to BEREEL, Disability Africa, WasteAid, Raise Gambia, VIBE students through Gunjur Project and Project Gambia. Discussions are in process with Project Gambia for a new three year grant and with Time for Change Foundation. MBG would also look to continue educational support for VIBE students beyond the VIBE funds should the students want it. [MBG has not had contact with Thriving Through Venture but will look to make contact in the New Year.](#)

a. Charity Commission (CC) Audit report and follow up

AD summarised the feedback from the CC. No issues were flagged to MBG with only requests to carry out stated document reviews in MBG policies and do this in line with CC best practice guidance available online. MBG was praised for its transparency. There were four specific actions from the audit report; three are addressed here at the AGM.

i. **Charity Governing Document.**

No comments were received from members and those at the AGM agreed the document was fit for purpose.

The Trustees would like in 2022 to hold a strategic review of the charity, including the Governing Document as it will be five years since the closure of the MBG office when the last five year strategy was agreed and implemented. It is hoped that this will be a face to face meeting. Steve Atyeo asked, and AD confirmed, that as previous strategic reviews, MBG would invite both UK and Gambian members, volunteers, partner charities, and industry representatives to support the review. This meeting will also act as the 2022 AGM. [JB will pull together a discussion document. With Covid-19 still posing meeting restrictions the review may have to be later in 2022.](#)

ii. **Cash Overseas Policy**

AD outlined that MBG had moved to digital money transfer to The Gambia. MBG does not have a Gambian account but pays direct to TARUD (the only Gambian account paid to).

The updated policy was agreed at the AGM.

[AD to update document on the MBG website.](#)

iii. **Trustee and Volunteers Expenses Policy**

AD outlined the updates made to the Expenses Policy. Specific additions were to improve inclusivity e.g. documents to be produced in brail or in video format. Other changes were to explicitly outline restrictions on spending that MBG has always had in place. This provides against any potential abuse now or in the future. AD confirmed that the document follows and explicitly references CC best practice guidance.

The updated policy was agreed at the AGM.

[AD to update document on the MBG website.](#)

iv. **Review of long term partners**

[AD confirmed that a due diligence check on long term partners, specifically TARUD and Venture Force, will be completed in Q1 of 2022.](#)

v. **Submission back to CC**

[AD will communicate the actions completed and plans to CC and confirm next steps to the other Trustees.](#)

b. **Trustee Membership**

AD highlighted that the Trustee group remained at only three and that this is a risk for the sustainability of the charity. Three approaches were made in 2021 but turned down based on other time commitments. There are some other people who will be approached in the New Year including some in The Gambia. [AD to follow up.](#)

5. Treasurer's Report and signed accounts

Proposer for approval of 2019 accounts: James Busby, seconded: Rosemary Davies, all in favour no abstentions.

The 2020 accounts we approved.

AD confirmed that MBG remains in a stable financial situation and spending in 2021 was back to more normal levels following the increased spending in 2020.

6. Position of Trustees

Re-election (as longest serving Trustee) – Alex Davies (Chair)

AD was duly re-elected as Chair as proposed by David Johnson and seconded Rosemary Davies, all in favour no abstentions.

AD confirmed that another Trustee re-election would happen in the 2022 AGM in line with the MBG Charity Guidance Document.

7. Summary of 2022 activities

AD confirmed that MBG will continue working with our supported charities in Gunjur during 2022. As has been mentioned a five year strategic review is also planned. AD confirmed that there are four St. James's Place trips planned for April 2022 delayed from November 2020. AD also confirmed that St. John's is looking at including the Summer Trip 2023 as part of its formal trip itinerary. While this means a teacher being on the trip which may reduce some of the self discovery of the students, it is in line with common practice in the industry and means that the trip can access St. John's support funds for disadvantaged students. MBG plans to look to work with the school for a match funding approach to provide significantly reduced or free places on the trip.

8. Questions & Any Other Business

No further questions or Any Other Business.

The meeting ends at 6:30PM