



Minutes of the Marlborough Brandt Group Annual General Meeting

Held via Zoom 24/10/2022 at 6:30pm

1. Welcome and Apologies

Alex Davies (AD) (Chair) welcomes the members and guests of the Marlborough Brandt Group who are present. The other Trustee present, James Busby (JB) introduced himself. David Johnson (DJ) messaged his apologies at the start of the meeting.

Apologies were received from the following members:

Pauline Berryman, Steve Atyeo, Alan Davies, Ray Jones, Robin Notton, Anne Notton, Anita Bew and Nick Hunt,

Other Apologies from Tom Tuckwood at Venture Force NH and AD gave proxy votes to the Chair.

2. Agreement of Agenda

The agenda was agreed, all in favour no abstentions.

3. Approval of Last AGM Minutes

The previous AGM minutes were approved, all in favour no abstentions, and signed.

Update on actions –

Completed:

AD is back in touch with TTV and are looking to ways of working together.

AD – Cash overseas policy was put on the MBG website following the last AGM:

<https://www.mbg.org/about-mbg/publications>

AD – Updated volunteer and Trustees Expenses Policy was put on the MBG website following the last AGM: <https://www.mbg.org/about-mbg/publications>

AD – Review of Venture Force relationship complete

AD – conformation has been passed to Charity Commission and AD can confirm that the audit has been closed.

Outstanding:

JB / AD – Strategic review still needed – delayed due to ongoing impact of covid at in the first half of the year.

AD – Review of TARUD strategic relationship ongoing – Director has been off ill and we are entering into final year of longer term funding support. Trustees concluded that a site visit in Gunjur is needed for this review.

AD – Trustee membership recruitment is ongoing.

4. Chair's Report of 2021 and update on 2022

AD summarised the 2021 annual report and activities of 2022. A moment's pause was held in memory of Kate Maurice and our thoughts are with DR Nick and all the family. 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 but one partner charities were operating again in Gunjur. We have not heard from Time for Change Foundation this year, which was only a two years old before the pandemic. AD confirmed that grants we back to normal in 2022 with an additional £10,000 granted from St. James's Place for the TARUD health project. AD confirmed that grants have been made in 2022 to BEREEL, Disability Africa, WasteAid, Raise Gambia, VIBE students through Gunjur Project and Project Gambia. We are also back in discussion with Thriving through Venture about 2023 trips and Raise Gambia has developed its summer school programme. Disability Africa has made significant progress in its Gunjur building roof replacement and [AD aims to be in Gunjur to see it during 2023 and to review the funds to TAURD and consider new grant support.](#)

AD picked out the success of MBG over the past 4 years since the difficult decision to close the office. MBG has supported a total of £291,000 in grants to Gunjur, £126,000 of which is match funding MBG has secured. Operational costs for that delivery were £12,400 or 7% of income or 4% of total funds supported to Gunjur. [AD said MBG is looking to further reduce costs going forward using a cheaper charity insurance provider.](#)

JB updated the AGM on Venture Force and trips from St John's and another school. James Busby will be in Gunjur in the summer with a school group run by Venture Force and a St John's summer trip is also well underway for 2023 as well. JB will be there as film and photographer for new images and video for MBG and Venture Force. MBG has subsidised two places on the summer trip supporting students who would not otherwise be able to afford such an experience to take part. MBG also subsidises all places by £100 to support affordability and pays for around half the community project. The targeted support for students has been made possible by St. John's taking on the trip as a formal part of their itinerary, helping to secure the longevity of the trips with the school. AD confirmed Venture Force remains an excellent partner allowing culture focused student trips to Gunjur. It is noted that should Venture Force close or stop providing trips this would be a challenge for MBG but other providers are available and the experience in the charity remains very high.

Question from Angela Hutt – any possibility of a return to home stays and return visits? AD confirmed that with H&S rules as they are now, since the last MBG run trip in 2016, it is not possible to deliver student home stays, though it is possible with adult trips. MBG continues to use the Gunjur Community Centre rather than local lodges so the group is based in the heart of the village and the Gunjur Community Link support students to buddy up with family compounds in Gunjur.

Massey Touray (Kombo Sillah Association Bristol Trustee) suggested MBG consider older generation for return trips. [AD confirmed that this will be considered in a strategy review of MBG aimed for in 2023.](#)

a. Trustee Membership

AD introduced Max Gajadharsingh to the meeting as a proposed new MBG Trustee. Max introduced himself as living near Marlborough and a chance meeting with A Gunjurian living in the US had led to him meeting MBG members in Marlborough and looking to become involved in the link.

AD highlighted that the Trustee group remained at only four (subject to voting) and that this is a risk for the sustainability of the charity. [AD will continue to approach potential new Trustees.](#)

5. Treasurer's Report and signed accounts

Proposer for approval of 2021 accounts: James Busby, seconded: Rosemary Davies, all in favour no abstentions.

The 2021 accounts we approved.

AD confirmed that MBG remains in a stable financial situation and spending in 2022 and has necessary funds for existing commitments and strategy.

6. Position of Trustees

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

AD was duly re-elected as Chair as proposed by Angela Hutt and seconded Masireh Tourey / Nick Hunt, all in favour no abstentions.

AD confirmed that another Trustee re-election would happen in the 2023 AGM in line with the MBG Charity Guidance Document.

Max Gajadharsingh proposed as a new trustee – proposed by James Busby, seconded by Gordon Hutt, all in favour no abstentions.

7. Summary of 2023 activities

AD confirmed that MBG will continue working with our supported charities in Gunjur during 2023. As has been mentioned, a five year strategic review is also planned. AD said that we remain in conversation with St. James's Place on potential adult trips. We look forward to the St. John's 2023 trip. MBG looks forward to working again with Thriving Through Venture on potential student trips.

8. Questions & Any Other Business

Massey Touray said that the Kombo Sillah Association would be happy to support the student trips with training. [AD thanked her and confirmed MBG would cover any costs.](#) Massey also said that KSA young people would like to be included in student trips. [AD confirmed that this would be looked into this for future trips.](#)

The meeting ends at 7:10PM