

Meeting of the NBO Management Committee, Birmingham Buddhist Centre, 03.03.2015

Present: Dh. Munisha (Co-Chair), Yann Lovelock (Senior Advisor), Rev. Saido (Treasurer), Jamie Cresswell (Trustee, EBU link), Val Stephenson (Membership), Jo Backus (Co-Chair, Education)

Invited observers: Dh. Satyadasa, Dh. Samacitta, Keith Munnings, Mike Masheder, Ven. Kassapa, Ann Lovelock

1. Welcome and introductions

2. BAM. Modgala and Jamie are the new co-ordinators for this June. The possible new theme of peace issues was suggested but put off until next year, keeping to social and particularly environmental action for 2015. Further suggestions from Keith were that **the month be added to interfaith calendars and that Buddhist hospital chaplains might do a nation-wide event as part**. BAM could also be rolled out via the EBU and **Jamie proposed a publicity flyer to encourage that aim**. The question of organiser expenses was raised; **Saido said** we could afford up to £500 for this and **he would supply claim forms**.

3. Next major NBO event. There had been the suggestion that this might centre on peacemaking, possibly in October. But it was subsequently proposed that it needed to have the character of an NBO relaunch. **Jamie and Modgala would think about it further**, deciding whether it should be inward or outward looking. Themes might be either the value of networking or Buddhist contributions to wellbeing.

4. Future of Chairing arrangements. Since both the present Co-Chairs would like to step down, Val had offered to step in for the rest of the year, seeing her role as co-ordinating rather than leading. Jamie had supplied a document surveying the way forward and officer responsibilities. Val has offered to continue looking after membership until Modgala can take over (in addition to her interfaith role). This will mean that **the Trustees must propose to add Val to their number via a Skype meeting after due notice is given**.

5. Membership (Val): Renewal of subscriptions falls in April. Currently there are 18 organisations and 18 individuals in membership. There has been a delay in implementing new procedures while waiting for a change to CIO status, a prospect that the Charity Commission seems to find increasing difficulty in granting. There will now be a new forward policy and **the need to encourage the large number of ethnic Buddhist organisations to join was mentioned**.

6. Legal structures: A major complication to widening the governing body is the definition of membership of NBO and how representation is to be achieved. Any changes made now can be transferred if and when CIO status is granted. A bicameral approach is discouraged by the Charity Commission and not sanctioned by the present Mem. & Arts. However, NBO could adopt a structure whereby representatives of NBO members become company members and be given the power to nominate and vote for trustee/directors. **Saido, Val and Satyadasa would work on this and report back to the next meeting**.

7. It was agreed that **details of the invited guests should be added to the NBO contacts list. The next meeting will be by Skype. A Doodle will be created to establish a date for an October AGM**.

8. Short reports:

a) Keith on Health Care Chaplaincy and its expanding potential.

b) Jamie on EBU, of which he has been re-elected President. Presently he is working on various forms of outreach: to the Council of Europe; links with other transnational Buddhist groups, principally the International Buddhist Council in India; and the European Council of Religious

Leaders. He also attends various annual meetings, such as of national chairs and of Buddhist teachers (where there are few from the UK at present).

c) Munisha on the website. Yann commented that the section on immigration needs updating, and that his 2007 report ought to be replaced by the one for June 2014. **Yann to send this to Saido.**

d) Jo on Education. Among her activities have been the consultation on the GCSE and A Level qualifications in Buddhism, which has rescued the subject from imminent disappearance; completing the Commission on Religion and Belief questionnaire in consultation with NBO colleagues; attending a NUS meeting on faith and belief. **A short research project on support for Buddhist students is to be followed up.**

e) Modgala on interfaith activity. This came via a written report that surveyed in particular the work of the Inter Faith Network and the proposed changes to its governance structures, which will impact on Buddhist representation there. She had asked Yann to add his perspective and he stated that as well as the great importance of interfaith work at a national level, participation at a local level is of equal importance and needed to be emphasised via NBO.

9. Birmingham Buddhist Centre was thanked for its welcome and the use of its facilities.