

Governance Plan July 2020

The need

The need to improve some elements of BSBI's governance and our structure was raised during consultations held with members and committees, starting in back in 2017. Additionally, as we worked together, supported by consultants, to develop our new Strategy it became apparent that some changes would be needed to successfully deliver our plans and to adopt best practice where appropriate. This includes on how we organise and manage ourselves, the processes and procedures we use and how we take decisions.

Trustees are responsible for the proper governance of the Society and with the support of consultants at Cass, have developed a series of governance improvements that will rolled-out over the next few years. These come under the following main headings:

- Organisational purpose
- Leadership
- Integrity
- Decision making, risk and control
- Board effectiveness
- Diversity
- Openness and accountability

There are many improvements we could make, some large and some quite minor, and trustees have prioritised them according to need and broken them down into manageable chunks, so we don't overload ourselves.

What will happen

The following are improvements that will be made this year (i.e. before April 2021):

- Rationalise the organisational structure of BSBI. Be clear about the different roles and responsibilities of the main players; differentiate between those with governance responsibilities and those without; be clear about the boundaries. The new structure can be found in appendix 1 below.
- Integrate the skills, expertise and insights currently brought by Council into the Country and operational Committee structure to streamline and accelerate decision making and clarify accountabilities.
- Reduce the number of operational committees to three (reflecting the three new strategic goals) plus the four country committees, and differentiate between these and governance committees of the Board (see appendix 1); all to have consistent terms of reference (being clear about their authority to act) and a designated staff member; clear boundaries to be drawn between Board and staff, Board and committees, committees and staff; clear communications protocols between each committee (reporting on actions; circulating draft minutes within x days of the meeting); clear communications protocols between the wider volunteer force and staff/Board – be clear on how staff will take forward ideas from volunteers etc.
- Clarify other roles such as the President (a spokesperson role) and other Honorary officers.
- Make clear who does what/where to go for what, where to send ideas - signposting etc. via a range of communication approaches, to all the membership.

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- Consider having Co-Chairs of the committees during the transition phase so as to settle in the new governance approach and share the load.
- Create a governance handbook with role descriptions, all terms of reference and processes in one place.
- Review staff structure and governance periodically.
- Have trustees 'buddy' specialist areas of work, get to know these in more depth and attend the committee meetings to show both their interest, but also to develop knowledge.

Appendix 1

New BSBI Structure

