



# British Fire Services Association

Admin Office: 31 The Croft, Elsenham, Essex, CM22 6LU

Tel: 0774 558 5082 - Email: [generalsecretary@bfsa.org.uk](mailto:generalsecretary@bfsa.org.uk) [www.bfsa.org.uk](http://www.bfsa.org.uk)

## Minutes of Governing Council Meeting held on **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025** Meeting held via Zoom Video Conferencing.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 18.30 hrs.

Present: Paul Basson (PB) Chair; Graham Hill-Howgate (GenSec); Matt Stokes (MS); Seamus Higgins (SH); Frank Turner (FT); Geoff McSweeney (GMcS); Dick Lovelace (RL); Chris Veitch (CV); Dave Lown (DL); George Halstead, MWF (GH).

Apologies from: Thomas Woodhouse; Vernon Fisher.

The minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024 were agreed.

### Matters Arising:

- Gen Sec gave an update on the various action points.

The Chairman reported that he has been out on a few visits to represent the Association. He is still concerned over the number of members in Groups that are still aware of their association membership and we need to try and improve this situation. To that end he commented on the work done by Mark Handley on the Facebook Group page and requested a certificate of appreciation. **Action: Gen Sec.** It is also good that we will be represented at the Emergency Services Show again.

The General Secretary's reported on the current financial situation of the Association.

On the membership renewals, we lost 17 Personal Members but, in this week, have gained 3 new members. The renewal process for Group Members is still being held open in an effort to retain a couple of the larger Group Members.

Our stand at the ESS for this year will be a 3-sided open stand. Therefore, a redesign of the stand has been necessary.

Gen Sec stated that currently all recurring expenses are on his personal bank card. To better deal with such matters, it was agreed to resubmit a Debit Card request on the BFSa bank account **Action: Gen Sec**

The Gen Sec gave an update on the closure of the M&G Charibond accounts. It was agreed to transfer the Association's holdings to the new M&G specialist charity fund. **Action: Gen Sec.**

### Honours & Awards Nominations.

Fellowship awards were agreed for; Matt Stokes and Seamus Higgins. Proposed by C. Veitch.

Honorary Life Membership awards were agreed for: Geoff McSweeney and Roy Goodey.

MS presented a proposal for a Commendation medal to be issued to Colin Wells, a non-BFSa member. This is in respect of his actions at a Livery Dinner in the City of London where he recognised a choking person and rendered life saving first aid. This was agreed and presentation details to be determined.  
**Action: MS & Gen Sec.**

The process of awarding Fellowship was discussed, and the following update was agreed.  
“A member of the Association with thirty years membership may on application, be awarded the membership grade of Fellow. Such application will be subject to a one-off registration fee of Twenty Pounds in addition to the normal annual membership subscription”

A report was given by FT on behalf of the London & South East District. He detailed the upcoming visit to Grunheide at which the District members attending will be guests at the First Grunheide Annual Fire Brigade Ball.

It was also suggested that the District's annual dinner become an Association event, hosted by the District. This would add to the national events calendar and hopefully open up attendance. This offer was accepted by the Governing Council.

A comprehensive update on the Members Welfare Fund was given by its Secretary, George Halstead. The fund has received a substantial donation by way of a legacy which has helped to boost the fund investments.

The MWF has had the annual review of funds in consultation with the fund managers and now has a Barclays Charity Investment account.

FT congratulated GH on his work for the MWF.

AOB.

1. CV said that on behalf of the BFSA he along with Ron Murray had attended the Braidwood Memorial event in Edinburgh last year. He also commented on possible visit opportunities to the SFRS new TC in Glasgow.
2. DL reported that he had been made aware that the previous General Secretary, Derrick Crouch was now receiving palliative care for terminal cancer. He was asked to convey our best wishes to Marion and Derrick.
3. Gen Sec reported on the deaths of; Trevor Harrison, past President of South East District and of Adrian Bathers, past President & Chairman of North Wales District.
4. PB said that he and the Gen Sec had received invitations to Surrey FRS annual awards evening for this year.

Dates of next 2025 meeting to be arranged in September (after the ESS)

The meeting closed at 19:40 hrs

The Chairman thanked all for being present at the meeting.