BSFA Extraordinary General Meeting Minutes

23rd of February. Held online at 2pm (GMT).

Topic: BSFA EGM

Time: Feb 23, 2025 02:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us05web.zoom.us/j/5577381294?omn=84186667521

Meeting ID: 557 738 1294

THE BSFA Constitution:

https://www.bsfa.co.uk/constitution

Agenda:

1. **Proposal Regarding BSFA Charitable Status.**

Oversight: this is both a pro and a con. As a charity, we will be subject to greater oversight. We will be required to submit a trustees annual report and our accounts each year to the charity commission. We are below the level requiring Independent examination in England & Wales, but will have access to Independent Examination as a model of negative scrutiny to assure our members of the probity of our activities and accounts.

Pros
Directors become Trustees and regular, minuted meetings become mandatory.
Trustees become legally responsible for the actions of the charity.
Our members may, if they feel it necessary, have recourse to the charity commission if they feel the BSFA is not acting as it should/are concerned about actions of any Trustee.
In the event of the BSFA collapsing the Charity Commission can be called in to either close the charity or appoint temporary trustees.
Gift Aid: we can claim 25p for every £1 donated. This could amount to as much as £250 in a year.
We will be able to use Receipts and Payments which is better suited to our activities and will make it much easier for us to recruit treasurers.

Cons
Mission: we will always need to stick to our mission statement. If we want to change this substantially we will have to approach the Charity Commission.
Directors become Trustees and regular, minuted meetings become mandatory.
We cannot make statements supporting a political party (we can discuss political issues relevant to our mission i.e. inequity in the industry, or VAT on ebooks).

Neutrals
We remain a member association.

Notes:
The proposal was discussed in detail by members present. A variety of viewpoints were raised in relation to the BSFA's mission and how this would be affected by a change of status. Matters were also raised in relation to the BSFA's publications and whether this would be affected. It is the belief of the exec that the ongoing activity of the BSFA will not be substantially altered, but will in fact be enhanced.

The Motion Passed without objection.

With the motion passed, the executive team indicated they would undertake the necessary work to create an appropriate constitution, modifying the current BSFA constitution to suit the model needed for a charity status application and looking at developing proceeds that will ensure the association conforms to charity best practice.

2. Draft Process Guidelines for Best Translation Award

   https://docs.google.com/document/d/142thU1YF3Myd-dbQQwrhce-akJ3Zqoo6FM1xvU875ow/edit?usp=sharing

Notes:

There was substantive discussion over the development of the process for this award, with members raising legitimate concerns that need to be considered going forwards. The process was accepted for this year's award and will then be considered again, with a working group established to provide a draft for consideration at AGM 2025. This group will be led by the BSFA Treasurer.

3. Member Ballot. Matters Arising from AGM 2024.

Notes:

This notes the intention to ballot/survey members regarding BSFA Events, looking at what the BSFA's events strategy should be, thereby informing the events team as to where their efforts should be focused. This was considered to be a positive initiative and supported by all members provided the correct GDPR procedures are followed.

Discussion also turned to the BSFA's presence at Glasgow Worldcon 2024, noting the need for a presence (table) at Eastercon and other conventions. The involvement of BSFA individuals on the programme is something to be celebrated and could be made more of during the event, but also can make establishing a 'rota' on the table difficult.

The matter of a possible BSFA Eastercon and Eurocon was mentioned with the Chair indicating that there have been approaches from Visit Wales and the Birmingham and West Midlands Conference Network to bring a Eurocon to the different regions (Wales or the

Midlands). The discussions with Birmingham West Midlands Conference Network have proved to be constructive and substantial. The Chair indicated that the correct processes of both conventions need to be followed. Eastercon requires an expression of interest at Easter in Belfast (Reconnect 2025) and Eurocon requires an expression of interest at Eurocon (Archipelacon 2 in Aland).

The members discussed this matter in detail. The development is considered to be a constructive opportunity for the BSFA. No objections to the suggestion were made.

4. Succession Planning: BSFA Chair at AGM 2025.

Notes:

Agenda item for information and awareness. The current Chair gave a clear indication of the position moving towards the end of his term and indicated that he would be proposing and supporting the nomination/election of BSFA Councilor Stewart Hotston. The Chair indicated he would be 'sticking around' to assist in transition and support the new exec team, particularly with issues around capacity for some individuals after the Covid pandemic and with Long Covid.

5. Any Other Business

Thanks given for the effort and support offered for the developing charity process.

Thanks offered to the Chair for information and continued work.

Next Meeting to be in June.