

## President's Blog -27th January 2020

So, Blog Number 4

How can January be nearly over? It is the fastest January I've ever known. I was just looking at my rehearsal schedule for The Hound of the Baskervilles only to realise that curtain up is next Thursday, but I had been thinking 30th Jan is ages away but oh no next week! Yikes, only 3 more rehearsals between now as I write and opening night. I guess juggling the day job and the BAA Presidency is keeping me busy and focused and a month that usually drags on as we wait for pay day is suddenly here.

BAA Board met on Monday 20th – our first “proper” Board meeting since I took Presidency. We welcomed Laura Finegold as our new Board Director who will shadow Pubs & Comms, as Susannah Goggins shadows Claire for conference. This is all part of our succession planning along with Sam Lear shadowing Kath Lewis on SQC as Kath takes the reigns as VP.

We will be looking for new Board Directors too preconference 2020 and in particular to take the baton from Barbara Gregg who does a sterling job as our Treasure. We'll bring more news of Board opportunities through the year, but it is never too early to declare your interest.

At Board we tidied up our action log and heard from all Board Directors on their areas of focus, debated any other business items amongst which was the Staffs CCG consultation on the prioritisation of Hearing Loss services. They are looking at a possible reduction in services for people with "mild" hearing loss similar to North Staffs, to achieve a cost saving. The Alliance have already responded to this and Board have committed BAA's support and we will, as previously, send a letter explaining to Staffs CCG the negative consequences of such an action. In the meantime Heather Dowber, our membership and people networker as I like to refer to her will reach out to the Staffs team to understand more from their perspective.

We also spent time discussing our annual plan and the output from the workforce survey completed by 75 Heads of Service at the back end of last year. Dr Tim Wilding has diligently spent time collating the data and analysing it for us at Board level so we can define what actions we need to pursue. Whilst Tim was unable to be at Board, he kindly prepared a report and recorded a presentation of his interpretation. We will bring more detail of the outputs of this work, but it is fair to say that it perhaps raised more questions than it answered. Whilst there was inconsistency in the way responses were sent (hampering analysis) the overriding fact is that vacancy levels are still high.

On that workforce note, I am very pleased to inform you that the Deputy CSO Angela Douglas has agreed to speak at our Heads of Service meeting on the 26th March. Angela will share news of the CSO strategy on the NHS England People plan and careers/education in Healthcare Science. I met with Adrian Carragher in Scotland this month and have a meeting arranged with John Day in Wales early February to understand more about the needs and services in these countries. Along with Barbara's input on Northern Ireland we hope to bring you a Heads of Services event with national relevance. After the forthcoming Board Exec, I hope to finalise the agenda, venue and open registration. For now, please save the diary date Thursday 26th March 2020.

I am also organising a Past Presidents meeting in February where I hope to bring together these great leaders in audiology to discuss the areas of focus and pressures on Audiology in the UK and help give some clarity to the way forward for BAA.

So, as we move towards the end of this month and more hours of daylight, I wish you well and ask for your support and to engage with BAA at Board level or via your Regional Rep.

Remember you can email me directly: [president@baaudiology.org](mailto:president@baaudiology.org)