



Jason Coward
National Chair
Haig House
199 Borough High Street
London SE1 1AA

Andrea Forder
Governance Support Officer
T 020 053 7059
aforder@britishlegion.org.uk
www.britishlegion.org.uk

**CHAIR'S BRIEFING
SUMMARY OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
19 September 2024**

Dear County Chairs,

This is a briefing on the key decisions and discussions that took place at the Board of Trustees meeting on 19 September 2024 which I hope you find informative.

Director General's Report – Mark Atkinson

Mark reflected on the fitting memorial service held for Sir Clive Johnstone thanking those colleagues for their contributions to the event. Sir Clive's widow will be invited to attend the Festival of Remembrance in November. A recruitment campaign for two new permanent Executive Directors was well underway for Chief Financial Officer and ED of Digital, Data and Technology.

Work continues to progress on the development of organisational strategy and mapping an approach to stakeholder engagement. Core outputs will be delivered on the first phase of the programme at the end of 2024. The value of RBL Clubs and how RBL can support them will form part of the strategy work.

Appointment of RBL National President and President of PoppyScotland

The Board approved the appointment of Vice Admiral (Rtd) Paul Bennett as the next National President of RBL and ratified the re-appointment of Rear Admiral (Rtd) Mark Beverstock as President of PoppyScotland.

Finance Report and Budget 2024/25

The Board noted the Finance Report which showed improvement against the previously forecasted figures for the period. Expenditure was being managed more effectively and income is holding up well.

The Board approved the budget for 2025/26 and an indicative budget for 2026/27 noting that the cost and benefit of the strategy work would impact on future years.

The Board approved the provision to award a grant to PoppyScotland to cover their budgeted operating deficit. This mechanism will allow their investment portfolio to be invested for growth and achieve greater returns than is currently the case.

Patron: His Majesty the King

Registered address: Royal British Legion, Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1AA | rbl.org.uk
aforder@britishlegion.org.uk
Registered charity number: 219279

Remembrance Position

The Board noted a single Remembrance reference document that was presented, which will be adopted by the whole organisation. There was no policy change, but the intention of the paper would be to ensure that the Charity is internally aligned.

Closure of Afghan Support

The Board noted the closure of this programme of support for Afghans with a UK Defence Connection. The programme, which was launched in 2021 will now cease on 31 October 2024 and it was considered that RBL had met its original goal to work in a complementary fashion with statutory provision to help these families resettle in the UK.

Care Home Efficiency Review (CHER) Update

The Board noted the update which provided progress on the CHER Programme, the aim of which is to reduce a net deficit on the running of RBL's care homes to a sustainable level to be agreed by the Board. Further updates on this will be brought back to Board in December.

Trustees Reappointment

The Board approved the reappointment of Patsy Wilkinson for a further three years until 1 December 2027.

Farewells

I informed the Board that the Rev Scott Brown CBE, National Chaplain would be standing down due to personal reasons and that the Bishop of London would support until a replacement was found. I reflected that he will be deeply missed and recorded his thanks for the work he had done whilst undertaking this significant role.

The Board noted Jon Wittmann, had come to the end of his final and third term as a co-opted member of the Finance Committee and Investment Sub Committee having made insightful contributions over the last nine years.

The Board noted Steve Barnett's departure and thanked him for his considerable efforts in post as Director of Care Services and Recovery.

The Board noted Janet Talman's departure and thanked her for her leadership as Executive Director of Membership.

Let me take this opportunity to wish you and your members and volunteers all the best for these critical weeks of the 2024 Poppy Appeal and for this year's Remembrancetide.

As ever, please come back to me with any questions.

Yours sincerely,



Jason Coward
NATIONAL CHAIR

Patron: His Majesty the King

Registered address: Royal British Legion, Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1AA | rbl.org.uk

aforder@britishlegion.org.uk

Registered charity number: 219279