Summary

The Principal Executive Committee (PEC) met on 17 July 2019. This report contains a summary of the issues discussed.

BDA Indemnity

Peter Ward provided an update on BDA Indemnity, which was launched on 3 June 2019. There was a huge number of individuals seeking indicative quotes, proving the value of the pre-launch promotional activity. It was anticipated that some quotes would be sought by competitors, and others to help inform their decisions at a later stage when their indemnity fell due for renewal. This exploratory activity was factored in, while actual applications and policy sales have been broadly in line with the early forecasts given to the PEC.

We also received reports on staffing for the project, and the performance of constitutional and governance mechanisms. These too have been very satisfactory. All aspects of the launch of BDA Indemnity and the early days of its performance have therefore provided evidence of a solid start to this major initiative.

Political neutrality guidelines

We considered a report from the Audit Committee, following their review of the Association’s political neutrality guidelines.

The Audit Committee considered that the guidelines were still appropriate. These permit both officers and staff to join and support political parties in a private capacity but to ensure they cooperate with the Association to minimise or manage any publicity if, for example, an individual is selected as a candidate for political office. It is anticipated in the guidelines that the greatest difficulty is likely to be posed by senior officers or staff adopting a high profile as an activist or candidate, with the potential to associate partisan views with the BDA itself.

It is possible that individuals might be asked to choose between their political activities and their employment or involvement with the BDA in these circumstances, but each case is considered individually. The only change we considered was necessary was a requirement that matters
relating to senior officers and senior staff should be brought to the PEC for decision. All other individuals to be considered by the Chief Executive.

It should be added that although the BDA permits officers and staff to support and join political causes in a private capacity, it does require everyone to respect the stated values of the Association. This means we will hold individuals accountable for activities or statements that publicly contradict our values, such as our commitment to diversity and equality, and opposition to discrimination.

**BDJ Portfolio**

Stephen Hancocks, Editor in Chief of the British Dental Journal, and James Sleigh of Springer Nature Publishing, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the impressive performance of the BDJ portfolio over the last year, underlining the high global reputation of the BDA’s publications.

This presentation is now an annual fixture and is an important part of the accountable process for the portfolio.

**Reports**

We received a report from the Acting Chief Executive; a report from the President; reports from the BDA in Northern Ireland, Wales, and Scotland; a report from Dave Cottam, the new Chair of the GDPC; a presentation on the green impact tool for dentistry; approval of the consultation document for committees and members on review of the governance structure; agreement that the two year limit on membership for refugee dentists should be removed, and wider consideration of the support provided for dentists who have qualified overseas and those dentists seeking asylum; and agreement to establish a stress and wellbeing helpline for members, including the opportunity of face to face support.

**Mick Armstrong**  
Chair, Principal Executive Committee

**August 2019**