



## Branch Management Committee Meeting

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022  
(Meeting via ZOOM)

### DRAFT MINUTES

#### Attendees

Adam Saxty	MWeldI CEng	Southern Counties	(Vice Chair)
Alan Shand	AWeldI	Eastern Counties	
Alan Smith	MWeldI CEng	North Scottish	
Don Atkinson	TechWeldI Eng Tech	Teesside	
Hugh McPhillips	MWeldI IEng	South Western	
Ian Fraser	AWeldI	North Western	
John Chance	AWeldI	Highlands and Islands	
Mark Roughsedge	MWeldI	Sheffield	
Martin Boyd	MWeldI CEng	East Midlands	
Miles Goodwin	TechWeldI Eng Tech	South Wales	
Peter Mullen	TechWeldI EngTech	West Midlands	
Ray Sheldon	MWeldI IEng	London	
Stephen McCullough	MWeldI CEng	Northern Ireland	(Chair)
Claire Kimpton	MWeldI CEng	Professional Board Chair	
Catherine Leahy	AWeldI	Younger Member Chair	
Lois Appleyard	AWeldI	The Welding Institute	
Kate Day	AWeldI	The Welding Institute (Secretariat)	

#### Apologies

Alan Denney	FWeldI CEng	Technical Group Chair
Colin Galbraith	AWeldI	Northumbria
Peter Boothby	FWeldI CEng	Northumbria
Iain MacLeod	SenMWeldI CEng	Scottish Branch
John Hill		The Welding Institute (Director)

**Please Note: Merseyside, Manchester, Leeds and Kent were not represented and are not operational**

#### 1 Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Alan Smith who was deputising for North Scottish Branch, and noted apologies as above.

#### 2 Meeting protocols, confidentiality and security

Lois Appleyard outlined the current online meeting protocols (i.e. participants to remain muted, no recording, safe environment for all) and noted that all participants should have signed and should abide by The Welding Institute's Confidentiality Agreement.

### 3 Remembering Matt Inglis

The meeting observed a minutes silence to remember Matt Inglis, a member of this committee and previous Council and Professional Board member. Matt gave many years of service to The Welding Institute and Scottish Branch in particular. Members have been invited to sign an electronic card which will be forwarded to his family to mark their recent loss.

### 4 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Branch Management Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2022

#### 4.1 Corrections

It was noted that Julian French, the new Chair for TG1 - Structures and Infrastructure works for Messrs Sandberg, Consulting Engineers and not Sandvik. Correction to be made to paragraph 10 of the previous minutes

It was noted that paragraph numbering is out of order after Paragraph 11

**ACTION:** Corrected minutes to be forwarded to the Chair for signature.

#### 4.2 Matters Arising

##### 4.2.1 Closed

Minutes forwarded to Chair for signature

- i. Revised Terms of Reference have been approved by email and circulated to Branches
- ii. Chair and Vice Chair have been approved by Professional Board by email
- iii. Branches and PAG to continue to offer online meetings, especially for Overseas members and others who cannot access meetings face to face.
- iv. PAG to respond to the YMC re complimentary Associate members
- v. London Branch to forward comments on complimentary memberships for wider circulation
- vi. Item to be included in the next Members Bulletin re recordings and slides that are now available
- vii. Professional Board are to be invited to consider recommendations for engagement in overseas areas. Update:- Working Group has been formed - see Agenda Item 7
- viii. Branch Programme Master Plan to be added to the members' area of the website
- ix. Circulate YMC report with minutes.

##### 4.2.2 Ongoing

- i A review of membership benefits (including the diary) is to be undertaken to support existing members and attract new ones has been added to PAG Business Plan 2022

##### **Ongoing**

**Update:-** Lois Appleyard explained that Membership now has a new Director (John Hill) who will be reviewing and implementing a new strategy for growing membership which will require a review of the whole membership package, including all benefits. Lois explained that the minimum order for the dairies was 1000 of which only 130 were requested by members, Branches made some of use of the dairies as a promotional tool but there was still significant waste.

- ii Minutes of Branch Management Committee to be added to the website  
**Update-**In progress as part of re-design of Members Portal - see item 8.
- iii Subject to the agreement of Professional Board, a revised process for delivering Branch Grants to be drafted with Branch Treasurers for implementation in April 2022  
**Update:** Changes were agreed in principal - See Agenda Item 4
- iv PAG to continue to liaise with TWI IT over implementation of Office 365 and Branch emails **Ongoing**  
**Update:-**Lois Appleyard acknowledged that this issue has been ongoing for over 2 years now and will be raised at Professional Board on the 24th March. It is also now on

the TWI Risk Register as part of wider matters relating to GDPR. Email addresses have been created for all Branches but the implementation is waiting on TWI to roll out Office 365. Adam Saxty reported a loss of contact with members in Southern Counties Branch and whilst the branch has a Linked In account, its numbers are small. Adam asked if other non-TWI options could be explored to facilitate communication between Branch Members. Southern Counties have purchased their own Office 365 Licence to create their own email account details of which have been shared with Branch Members and added to the Branch page on the website.

Hugh McPhillips and Miles Goodwin echoed Adams concerns explaining that is very difficult to develop the hubs around the South West and to run events without being able to contact members directly.

Martin Boyd reflected that the continued failure to deliver by TWI is having a very negative impact on Branches, members and their relationship with The Welding Institute/TWI

Stephen McCullough and Claire Kimpton both recognised and endorsed the concerns raised and will re-visit this at Professional Board on behalf of Branches.

**ACTION:** Non-TWI options to be considered for branch communication.

**ACTION:-** Issue to be raised again with TWI at Professional Board

- v Any Branch who would like a branded Welding Institute Linked In account should contact PAG **Ongoing**

**Update:-** Several Branches now have a Linked In account and they are still available if required. Don Atkinson pointed out that the Institute Linked In accounts have less followers than members individual accounts. Teesside Committee are using their personal Linked In accounts which have a larger following to promote Branch activities.

- vi A working group is to be formed to review and update the Manual. Proposals to be brought to the next BMC meeting in April 2022 - See Agenda item 8

### 3 **Future BMC meetings**

The Chair invited feedback from members on the format and location of future meetings. All agreed that online meetings offered significant, time, environmental and costs savings but at the expense of networking opportunities, vital to the health and development of the Institute. It was agreed that the Branch Management Committee should try to meet in person once a year. In order to off-set the cost of face to face meetings it was suggested that the meeting be accompanied by a technical talk and/or a site visit in the morning with a social dinner the preceding evening. It was noted that a Hybrid meeting format should remain available for those who can't travel.

**ACTION:** Autumn will be arranged at TWI Sheffield or NAMRC Sheffield with a tour of the facilities in the morning

### 4 **Branch Grants and Funding**

Members of the Committee reviewed the proposed changes to Branch Grants noting that a £5000 maximum threshold for the Number One accounts would be more realistic than the £2000 proposed in the paper.

Martin Boyd queried the payment of Branch Grants over the previous 2 years. In 2020, Grants were delayed due to staff changes and the move to home working Notional grants were paid to all those Branches actively offering online meetings. In 2021, all Branches were invited to bid for Grants but in light of the lack of expenditure due to Covid, no grants were requested.

**ACTION:** PAG to confirm the details of Grant payments to East Midlands Branch.

Members of East Midlands Branch have queried how membership subscriptions are used Claire Kimpton said this has been raised at Professional Board and a Budget Report will be going to Professional Board on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

It was suggested that Branch Treasurers should be involved in this discussion to help deliver a workable solution. Mark Roughsedge and Ray Sheldon (both Branch Treasurers) volunteered to join a working Group to progress this

**ACTION:** Grants paper to be revised (as above) and distributed to Branch Treasurers.

**ACTION:** Branch Treasurers Working group to report back to the next meeting.

#### 5 **Branch Programme and events**

Members discussed opportunities for further support on branch events. The online events have been very well received and the majority of Branches will be continuing to offer both face to face, online and hybrid meetings. All agreed that Good Practise Guidance would be helpful including advice on the purchase of equipment. It was noted that London Branch had invested £500 in media equipment to facilitate hybrid meetings. It was suggested that there might be discounts available given the number of Branches who might be interested in this.

**ACTION:** Guidance note from London Branch on equipment for hybrid meetings to be circulated with the minutes

**ACTION:** TWI IT to clarify if any discounts might be available and whether TWI could make IT purchases on behalf of Branches and to aid auditing

#### 6 **Discussion Paper - CPD**

Eastern Counties Branch tabled a paper on CPD and the opportunity to engage TWI more in Branch activities in order to gain CPD. The paper outlines opportunities for staff as speakers and through networking. The paper proposed all TWI staff should have something in their individual annual appraisals about contributing to Branch events to gain CPD.

Lois asked if this was a specific issue for TWI Cambridge or potentially a wider opportunity for all Branches to gain more support from local industrial members. Alan Shand Offered to discuss the idea with the new Director of Membership, John Hill.

**ACTION:** PAG to put Alan Shand in touch with John Hill to discuss CPD opportunities available via Branches.

#### 7 **Overseas Membership Update**

Members considered an update from the Overseas Membership Working Group. All agreed that Overseas Groups will have similar challenges to those based in the UK. UK Branches were supportive of the need to share knowledge and experience between all branches and members recognising regional differences. Hugh McPhillips suggested working with Rotary International may be another avenue for making connections. Hugh also suggested making use of some of the recorded webinars in the webinar archive. Alan Smith offered support from North Scottish Branch who have some good connections in Perth, Western Australia.

#### 8 **Branch Manual and Branch Resources**

Members considered a report outlining opportunities to update the Branch Manual and website resources for Branches. All recognised the need to have easily accessible, readable and updateable information for Branches and acknowledged that the work on the website and Manual would need to progress in tandem. It was noted that the proposed new sections were appropriate other than 'Heritage' which was better placed on the website as a resource. Revisions will need to be completed in stages but to a tight deadline to ensure the whole project does not impact on the smooth running of Branches. Members were invited to join a reference Group to help progress and 'sign' off each stage of the work. Adam Saxty volunteered to contribute to this group.

**ACTION:** Project Plan and group of volunteers to be established in order to progress these revisions by the next meeting.

9 **Branch reports**

Branch reports were circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair invited members to comment on the reports tabled. Ray Sheldon gave a verbal update from London Branch (written report to be circulated with the minutes). Hugh McPhillips outlined the local sub-groups that are emerging in the South West and highlighted the newly created South Western Branch Committee position for Women's' Representative.

8 **Report on Technical Groups activities**

Alan Denney (Technical Group Co-Coordinator) was unable to attend the meeting in person. His report was noted by members with thanks

9 **Report from Younger Members Committee**

Catherine Leahy (Chair) presented a report on behalf of the Younger Members Committee. Of particular note is the Apprentice of the Year Award which is being developed along the same lines as Northumbria Branch's Apprentice Award. Other Branches run similar competitions. It is proposed to recognise all the Branch Award winners with one national award winner in August/September. The YMC are currently looking for sponsors for this award.

**ACTION:** Don Atkinson to share information on the Teesside Branch Apprentice Award with the YMC

Branch YMC representatives do a significant amount of work with schools and colleges to support STEM activities, Regional YMC representatives are having difficulty in progressing this work as they are having to use personal email addresses. Branch email addresses would overcome the safeguarding concerns associated with private email addresses and the YMC requests and quick resolution to the Branch email address problem - See paragraph 2.2.2(iv)

10 **Report on Membership Statistics and Branch Associate memberships**

The report was noted

11 **Revised Terms of Reference**

The adoption of the revised Terms of Reference was noted

12 **Branch Discount Codes**

Branches were reminded of new Branch discount codes for Associate Membership for 2022

13 **Any Other Business**

- i. Claire Kimpton gave a brief update on the new Institute Journal, *Welding Matters'* the first issue of which will be published later this spring. Claire emphasised the need for content and feedback from readers. Claire confirmed there will be a section called, 'Ask the Expert' for which the Editorial Board needs questions. Kate Day noted there are Branch correspondents and PAG will actively encourage their contributions for the journal as we go forward.
- ii. Ray Sheldon gave an update on the work he is doing with former Kent Branch Chair, Norman Baldwin, to provide support for members in Kent as part of London Branches activities.
- iii. Alan Shand asked when conference facilities might be available for Branch meetings at TWI Cambridge. Lois Appleyard confirmed that the Granta Conference Centre is now closed and there are currently no large meeting rooms available at TWI Cambridge for the next 12 months.

- iv. Hugh McPhillips reminded members that registration is now open for the WorldSkills competition 2022 and encouraged Branch representatives to promote this to their local colleges. With over 75,000 attendees, this a good event to showcase our skills and expertise.
- v. Kate Day reminded members that for the next round of Loyal Service Award Nominations, Branches can consider posthumous nominations for members who have recently died.

**Date of next meeting:- 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022 Sheffield**