

COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

Call for Nominations

It is coming up to election time again, when we are looking for new members to stand for BSHAA Council. This is an opportunity for you to help influence the future of audiology. Please do reflect on the contribution you could make to your profession

There are seven vacancies for directors willing to serve the membership from January 2022.

We are also seeking to appoint a new Vice President to take-up office in January 2022 the first of 4-years as an officer. During 2022, the newly elected VP will support and work with Raul Garcia-Medina, our current president. From January 2023, they will automatically progress to spend two years as President, the first supported by Raul as Past President, and the second preparing the next VP for the office, with the final year up to December 2025 holding the office of Past President.

Any person who was a fully paid member of the Society at 31st October 2020 is eligible to stand for election as an ordinary Council Member. Those wishing to be considered for election to the post of Vice President must have held two years' continuous membership (i.e. been members at 31st October 2019).

What do Council Members do?

Council is the governing body of your Society where all important decisions are made to ensure that the Society is well managed on behalf of both the members and the profession. Council members are responsible for making sure that all the work that the Society undertakes on behalf of the profession is consistent with our threefold statement of purpose:

- **Care:** We believe in delivering the highest level of care.
- **Support:** We are passionate about supporting our members to achieve this.
- **Advocate** We are the voice of our community and will always be an advocate for the future of our profession.

The smooth working of Council depends on the willingness of members of the Society to stand for election to Council. BSHAA couldn't function without Council Members' voluntary commitment to planning, delivering and overseeing its work, and the time they give to participate in meetings and events.

Throughout the pandemic it has become clearer that professional bodies have an important responsibility to provide strong leadership to guide and support their profession to adapt to the rapidly changing circumstances to ensure the profession continues to serve their public in a safe and effective way for all concerned. As we have emerged from the worst phase of Covid, audiology practice is undoubtedly different. Continued advances in technology and the understanding of the relationship between hearing, cognition and life fulfilment will continue to drive further change. BSHAA needs to be at the driving seat, working with other professions and partner organisations to ensure that the profession continues to provide strong leadership in adoption of new practice whilst maintaining safe and high quality standards of care. As a director of BSHAA, you too can be part of the group supporting your colleagues to be the best they can be.

Offering to stand for Council, or as our next Vice president will place you in an even stronger place to influence the direction your profession takes in these fast-changing times.

As well as influencing these changes affecting the profession as whole, BSHAA must as a priority increase its focus on our relationship with students, their training providers, and those newly entering the profession. To be most effective in this key area of our work and influence, Council needs new members who can play a lead role in strengthening these relationships. We will especially welcome applications from those in early careers, or working in education and academia.

It is especially important that Council reflects the wide diversity of our profession. Currently, women and minority ethnic groups are under-represented, and we have no members who are at the beginning of their careers having recently qualified. Council would therefore welcome more nominations from these groups. We are particularly looking to strengthen the following areas of expertise on Council:

- strong networks, connections and understanding of education and training of new entrants, including those following the new apprenticeship route;
- ability to lead and oversee implementation of key areas of change;
- relevant technology trends and understanding of new technologies;
- influence and policy making, especially those with experience of working in different audiology practice settings.

During their term of office as Council Members, those who are elected take on statutory responsibilities as Directors of the Association and it is important that the Directors bring a wide variety of skills, knowledge and experience from across the profession. This will enable our debate and decision making to be as informed as possible, whether we are seeking to respond to practical matters affecting the profession today, or considering the future needs of members who will be practising in a market environment that will be very different to today's.

As the recognised Professional Body representing audiologists in private practice, BSHAA expects all Council Members to sign a Directors' Code of Conduct to demonstrate their willingness to uphold the highest values of professionalism.

What is expected of the Vice President?

This is a four-year term of office, covering one year as Vice President, two years as President and one as Past President.

In their first year after being appointed, the Vice President is there to support the President as the professional head of the Society and deputise as required. They will also spend this year preparing for their role as President – learning what the role entails and getting to know and be known by the wider network of leaders right across the hearing care sector. They will then spend two years as President. The two key aspects of being President are to lead the Council itself, principally by chairing the Council meetings, and to be seen outside the Society as its main representative, along with the Chief Executive. In the first year as President, they will be supported by the outgoing President who has the official role of Past President, and in their second year, they will be preparing the new Vice President to take over. In their fourth year of office, as Past President, they will be handing over the leadership and supporting the person who has taken over the mantle.

It is essential that anyone standing for election as Vice President has leadership experience at board-level, and can demonstrate to members that they can fulfil their duties in this important role. It is preferable that that experience has been gained on BSHAA Council, so

that they fully understand what is expected of them, have got to know what is important, and are familiar with the movers and shakers across the hearing sector. If a member wishes to stand and does not have direct experience of BSHAA Council, they must provide a supporting statement from a fellow director on a board on which they have served.

Do Council Members get paid?

The work isn't paid, but if you lose income as a result of being a Council Member there is a modest loss of business allowance and of course the Society pays your travel expenses.

How do I find out more and apply?

UK-Engage are an independent company who provide secure and confidential support to manage the election process. BSHAA has appointed them to manage the nomination and the election cycle. All members will receive nomination and voting details directly from them.

Ordinary Council Members: all nominees will also be required to submit a personal profile of no more than 200 words about their career, the context in which they practise (e.g. small independent, national organisation, training organisation, manufacturer), why they wish to stand, and what they feel they can offer the Society (e.g. any special interest in professional development, customer care, membership services, financial accountability etc.).

Vice President: those standing should submit both a qualifying statement and a personal statement, together with details (names and membership numbers) of their six supporters. For the **qualifying statement** they should provide a résumé of their contribution to the audiology profession over the last 5 years. This must include specific evidence of their personal contribution at board level, including a supporting statement from a fellow director, if that experience was not gained at BSHAA Council. A **personal statement**, not exceeding 300 words, should outline why they are seeking to become President of the Society; how they will further the profession if elected; and what they see as the priorities for BSHAA to address over their 4 years in office. Please note that members seeking appointment either as a Council member or as Vice President should apply separately for each office.

All applicants should also send a head-and-shoulders photograph.

What happens next?

Nominations close on the 3rd November. All nominations for Council will be included automatically, provided that they have remained members since the qualifying date. The qualifying statements of those standing for Vice President will be considered by Council to ensure that all candidates have appropriate board experience. If an applicant for Vice President does not satisfy Council that they have sufficient board-level experience for the important role of chairing Council, they will confidentially be given a chance to withdraw. Should they decide to proceed, their entry on the ballot paper will contain an endorsement expressing that they do not have the support of Council.

Personal statements and photographs of all who are standing for election will appear on the members' section of the website and in the election papers issued on 22nd November. The election will be conducted on-line and overseen by UK-Engage. Voting will be open from 1st December and will close on 17th December, and successful candidates will be notified shortly thereafter.