

Brigade Council – 3rd September 2005 – Londonderry

The following notes have been prepared as a guide to the proceedings and decisions of Council:

The Revd Dr J Fell, Minister of Ebrington Presbyterian Church, conducted the opening service.

The Brigade President, Mr J Neil OBE, read a message of loyal greeting that had been sent to our Patron, Her Majesty The Queen on behalf of Council. Council stood to receive her reply.

Copies of the Standing Orders for the procedures at meetings of Brigade Council, previously circulated were accepted

Members of Council were welcomed to Londonderry by The High Sheriff of the County Borough of Londonderry, Mr I Young OBE, and Mr Errol Johnston, Chair, Council Organising Committee. The Brigade President replied and welcomed members and guests. He conveyed greetings, which had been received from The Girls' Brigade, England & Wales and The Girls' Brigade N Ireland. Members of the Brigade who had died in the past year were remembered.

The voting strength at Council was as follows: 83 Ordinary votes, 12 proxy votes, 31 postal votes. Total: 126.

Minutes of Council held in 2004 in Leicester, which had been circulated, were proposed and accepted.

Mr John Young, MBE, Brigade Vice-President, presented the Annual Report and new style Annual Review for the session 2004-5. Several matters in the report were highlighted: Training Developments, new Publicity initiatives, Programme Review, Training Centres, National Competitions, Youth Participation, work around the regions, Firm Foundations, Crossover and the review of the Brigade Constitution. He paid tribute to the work of HQ staff and the Brigade Secretary who had travelled widely to BB areas during the year. A statement was given, on behalf of the Brigade Executive on 'Girls in The Boys' Brigade' by The Revd Dr R Reid, Brigade Executive. Explanation was given why more consideration has to be given to the subject, which affects the regulations. Therefore, with the agreement of the proposers of the motion, the matter will be deferred to Council 2006.

Mr John Williams, Brigade Treasurer, presented the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2005 and highlighted a number of items. It was pleasing to note that the financial input to the Brigade's business and development plan was to maintain supply profits, improve the contribution from training centres and reduce costs and all of these targeted areas have been satisfactorily achieved. There was an Operating Surplus of £42,358 compared with last year's Deficit of £34,705. Training Centres had improved financial results and were £40,000 up on last year. Some items in general administration were down in cost, i.e. staff and legal and professional costs whereas postages and printing and committee costs are up, which becomes a target area for improvement in 2006. Pension Fund shortfall was reduced to £821,000 compared to £1,054,000 last year.

Mr Williams spoke of Company Contributions for the session 2005-6. A recent consultation indicated that generally companies would prefer to have a lower company contribution and for the balance to be made up of a per capita fee rather than a group of bandings. This would create a better position for smaller companies. Therefore, the company registration fee for 2005/6 will be £80 with a per capita charge of £7.50. Maximum contribution of £1,000. Officers' and other fees are unchanged. Financial objectives for 2005/6 include improved fund raising opportunities and investment performance, reviews of committee and travel costs and the Supplies Operations as well as operating good financial management and controls overall. Brigade Council received the Accounts.

Constitutional motion in the name of the Brigade Executive was proposed by Mr N Batty, Brigade Vice President and seconded by Mr M Elliot, Chair, England Regional Committee. (Details are in the Council Programme Booklet, voting papers and the April Gazette). After a debate a card vote was taken:

Ordinary votes For	76	Ordinary votes Against	0
Proxy votes For	11	Proxy votes Against	0
Postal votes For	30	Postal Proxies Against	1
Total votes For	118	Total votes Against	0
(two-thirds majority vote required).		The motion was carried	

Constitutional motion in the name of the Brigade Executive was proposed by Mr C Row, Brigade Vice President and seconded by Mr J Winchester, Chair, Wales Regional Committee. (Details are contained in the Council Programme Booklet, voting papers and the April Gazette).

Ordinary votes For	75	Ordinary votes Against	2
Proxy votes For	11	Proxy votes Against	0
Postal votes For	31	Postal Proxies Against	0
Total votes For	116	Total votes Against	3
		The motion was carried	

(two-thirds majority vote required).

Other Competent Business – None reported.

On Saturday afternoon delegates met together for a video presentation on ‘The Way Forward’ by the Brigade Secretary, followed by group discussions to consider how to make the most of the diversity of the Brigade. Council re-assembled for a plenary session.

Brigade President

Mr John Young MBE paid tribute to Mr John Neil OBE, who was retiring as Brigade President. Mr Neil was presented with a camcorder, which had been donated by BB members. Mr Young announced that the Brigade Executive had unanimously agreed that Mr Neil should become an Honorary President of The Boys’ Brigade. Mr Neil responded and expressed thanks for the honour of becoming a Brigade Honorary President and to the many who, during his visits, received Nan and himself with such warmth and shared their BB experiences, which resulted in a memorable period of presidential involvements. His prayer was for continuing blessing on all that was done for boys and young people in the BB and to provide support and encouragement to the new President, The Very Reverend Professor Alan Main, TD MA STM PhD.

Mr John Winchester, member of Brigade Executive and Council organising committee for 2006, gave a video presentation by way of an invitation to Council 2006, which will take place in Cardiff, Wales.

Council closed with worship led by The Revd S McGuffin, Minister of Londonderry Methodist City Mission.

Brigade Council
3 September 2005