

Our statement on the findings and response to the investigation

Last year we launched an independent investigation into claims made anonymously about BACP on social media.

We engaged independent experts to conduct a comprehensive review. Their team had full access to the records and people they requested. A few months ago, they shared their report and recommendations with us. In response to this, we've developed an action plan to address the issues raised.

We have taken time to carefully consider these findings and develop a supporting action plan and we can now share an update with you.

We acknowledge that it has taken longer than initially expected to share this information. However, it's been important to allow the investigators time to complete their work and for us to fully consider the findings and what we needed to do next.

We also wrote to the Charity Commission and Professional Standards Authority to let them know that the independent investigation was underway. We have since reported back to the Commission, which has confirmed that it is satisfied with the findings, and that BACP is taking appropriate internal action. A copy of this statement is being shared directly with the PSA.

The analysis covered financial controls, culture and governance.

Financial controls

The report's conclusions about financial allegations were very clear that there was no evidence of fraud or financial wrong-doing, and no financial loss was identified.

The report concluded that multiple social media comments contained information that lacked "relevant, critical context which typically negates the allegations".

The analysis did highlight opportunities for us to review and improve some of our internal processes. Specifically, our action plan involves reviewing and strengthening the signing-off and auditing of expenses.

This encompasses how we decide and authorise any international travel, including the process of reviewing any exceptional expenditure that falls outside of policy limits, so that our budget is appropriate to our strategy, and that we can clearly identify and communicate the return on investment.

We are also re-confirming that our financial policies stand up to good governance guidance and best practice in our field.

Culture and governance

The report was helpful in pointing out historic issues and routines that were having an impact on a healthy working relationship between the Board and senior staff, highlighting that members of BACP staff had left the organisation due to issues relating to organisational culture.

With new Trustees on board, including appointing a Senior Independent Trustee, and a new CEO and senior leadership team in place, we have already seen improvements in the way we work together.

We're now focusing on practical steps to strengthen relationships, improve communications, and ensure our procedures support both positive collaboration and constructive challenge.

In our plan, we're committing time and space for deliberate, collective reflection so that we're always challenging ourselves to become a more effective governing body.

Alongside our personal commitments as leaders, we want our colleagues to feel safe in sharing their concerns and ideas. We accept our responsibility to foster a positive and inclusive culture and have established new internal practices to accommodate this, including the introduction of a new whistleblowing service.

The future

Above and beyond the detail of the investigation, one thing is clear. We want to work harder to build a stronger relationship with our members, built on mutual trust and respect. As a diverse community of 70,000 practitioners, we won't always agree with each other, or see things the same way. But, we do hear you; we acknowledge the concerns of members and will strive to continue to improve the way we work in line with best practice.

As a Board of Trustees, we and senior leaders will continue to be present across our programme of events and publications. We also understand how the work of our Board may not always be as clear and transparent to anyone who is not around the table. We respect that you want to hear more from us, and more often, and we're committed to sharing more regular updates with you all

There is much work ahead, and this investigation has given us every opportunity to learn from the past, and every reason to be optimistic about our future.

BACP Board of Governors

Cc:

Professional Standards Authority
Charity Commission