

Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Trustees /Management Committee, MS Therapy Centre Lothian on Monday 27th October 2014 in the MS Therapy Centre, 40c Swanfield, Edinburgh

Present: Carole Macartney (Chair), Sheila West, Yvonne Rafferty, Ian Smith, Paul Bartlett, Neil Lucas, Janice Thomson

In attendance: Charlotte McNeill (until Item 4) and Nancy Campbell.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Apologies for absence were received from Cathal Cunningham and Ben Moran.
2. **Register of Interests.** YR confirmed that she had received a revised form from JT.
3. **Capital Expenditure Requirements.** After discussion on the Energy Resources Survey, all the Trustees agreed that we should proceed with the lighting and heating recommendations but not to go ahead with the cavity wall insulation as this was not suitable. It was noted that the estimated costs of the recommended works appeared to be rather conservative. It was also noted that the Centre would be able to continue to function during all the works. Further action regarding obtaining estimates would continue and these would be communicated to trustees by email so that we can get started as soon as possible. **ACTION: CM/NC to discuss expenditure with CC, with a view to getting work underway before the end of the year.**
4. **Welfare Reform/Advocacy.** The Trustees discussed at length our possible role in the provision of an advisory welfare and/or advocacy service as opposed to continuing to direct clients to other, more specialist organisations. It was agreed that more background research and discussions with LCIL and Gateway were required. **No action required at the moment.**
5. **Matters Arising and Minutes of Previous Meeting and AGM.**

The Matters Arising log had been circulated to all trustees. Points to note from discussion as set out below:

a. Dinner Update. NC told the Trustees that the Minto Hotel were not now charging us for the food at the 30th Anniversary Dinner but that they were charging us for the wine provided. The Trustees agreed that we should offer a refund of £15.00 to everyone who attended the Dinner. **ACTION: NC to arrange email to attendees.**

b. Heather Hartman is still in correspondence with HMRC regarding the Gift Aid. It is hoped that this will be resolved in November.

c. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th July 2014 and the draft Minutes of the AGM held on 9th June 2014 were approved by the Trustees. **ACTION: CM to sign July Minutes and the AGM minute to be retained until the next AGM in 2015.**

6. **Management Report.** The Trustees discussed the Management Report. JT suggested we apply to the Orcome Trust Fund in Midlothian and Borders. **ACTION: NC**

Funding applications update was noted. JT reported that funding for KAL was due to end on 31st March 2015 and wondered if the MSTC wished to continue with their involvement. There was a suggestion that we should approach the Neurological Alliance to see if there is funding available. **ACTION: Joanna, JT and NC to prepare a Report on the KAL project for the January Board meeting.**

CM, NC and Gillian Robinson have a meeting on Wednesday with Dr Stewart Donald, an MS Specialist at the Astley Ainslie Hospital.

The Therapy Statistics were also reviewed- thanks to Gareth King for producing these given the short time he has been with us. Concern was noted at the apparent high levels of cancellations of oxygen sessions. Further investigation into this is required to ensure we are capturing data correctly. **ACTION: NC to discuss with GK.**

Thanks to NC and the staff for all their hard work.

7. **Finance Report.** The September accounts were not available for the meeting and in CC's absence, CM spoke to August accounts. Financially, donations are ahead of budget but this is offset by income from fundraising efforts resulting in an overall deficit of approx £16k. However expenditure has been very well controlled. The Trustees discussed this and agreed to maintain the current path for the remainder of the year.
8. **Chair's Report:** CM spoke to the paper. We are still awaiting the finalisation of our revised SLA with NHS Lothian. CM reported that CC is now working to London but does not want to give up his position as Treasurer. However he is limited as to what meetings he will be able to attend. The matter of succession planning for trustees was also raised as we will need to start planning ahead for recruiting possible new trustees. **ACTION: CM** to discuss with CC re his involvement in meetings. Also CM to contact each trustee individually re their future plans. **JT** to approach Royal Bank of Scotland regarding the possibility of new future trustee appointments via their volunteer scheme.

In the meantime, Charlotte McNeill who attended the first part of the Board meeting has applied to be a trustee. She has a background in PR & Communications with SCVO and is keen to be hands-on which will be a help to the staff. Her appointment was agreed in principle subject to references etc being satisfactory. **ACTION: CM to liaise with Charlotte and GK to proceed with the application.**

There is to be a Trustees' Development Meeting at 10am on 29th November 2014 at the Centre. All Trustees are asked to attend if possible. The focus of the meeting is to review the risk assessment matrix for the Centre, which will in turn inform our planning for the coming year. Details of this will be circulated to trustees. **ACTION: CM**

CM reported that there is a new Director for the MS Society, Mark O'Donnell. He has worked with CM before and is keen to meet up later in the year.

9. **Workforce Report.** The Trustees discussed the Workforce Report. With two recent new staff appointments in key roles, the pressure has been on NC. In view of the staff changes, there has been little opportunity to review the role of General Assistant. It was agreed that we would continue with the current staffing model until the end of the year.

Another consideration has been the capacity to undertake the financial administration and bookkeeping in-house. NC has been doing what she can but it is now clear that an interim solution will be required to ensure we keep on top of this aspect of work. The Trustees agreed, in principle, with the proposal that Heather Hartman complete additional work regarding the accounting processes on an interim basis subject to further clarification. **ACTION: NC/CM to meet with HH to clarify roles/responsibilities.** The Decisions to be Ratified were all agreed by all Trustees.

10. **Service Users Group.** Nothing to report. This group is to be re-launched and article in newsletter seeking for members. **ACTION: NC.**
11. **MSNTC Update.** IS reported that:
 - a. Steve Short had resigned as a trustee.
 - b. They have reduced the subscriptions for 2014/15 to £480.

c. New NICE guidelines on MS published in October (replacing those of 2003). For the first time those newly diagnosed should be told about the benefit of exercise, and pointed towards where therapy is available. These will need to be adapted for the Scottish health system but very encouraging.

Also the first 'regional' MSNTC meeting arranged by IS was held in Perth on 10 October, and attended by representatives from Perth, Dundee, Revive (Glasgow) and Lothian.

12. **AOB & date of next meeting.**

a. SW reminded the Trustees that the Coffee Morning would be held on 15th November and asked for donations for tombola, baking, hampers, jams or marmalades. The tickets would be £3. **ACTION: ALL**

b. CM told the Trustees that we intended to hold the Staff & Volunteers' Night out, possibly 12th or 19th January 2015. **ACTION: SW to investigate booking.**

c. It was agreed that the Trustees' meetings in 2015 would be held on 26th January, 27th April, 27th July and 26th October.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9pm.



Signed ..

Chair

Date26.1.15.....