

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD MONDAY 9TH JUNE 2014 AT 6.00PM AT 40C SWANFIELD, EDINBURGH, EH6 5RX

Present: Sheila West, Ian Smith, Janice Thomson, Cathal Cunningham, Fiona Burns, Sheila Tully, Doug Tully, Neil Lucas, Ben Moran, Hafrun Taylor, Alex Tweedly

Apologies: Jill Gorgowska, Christine Howden, Adam Carson, Pat Brady, Charlee Brady, Alex Blackie, Jane Blackie, Norma Burns, Sharon Young, Paul Gillam, Billy McKay, Barbara Paterson, Nancy Smith, Bruce Laidlaw, Joyce Hendry, Carole Macartney

In Attendance: Rudy Bleau, Cliff Davies, Ms Clare Bryan (Guest Speaker) all MS Society Scotland, Nancy Campbell

1. Welcome to all from Sheila West. Sheila gave apologies from Carole who is unfortunately unwell. Sheila introduced our Guest Speaker, Ms Clare Bryan, Head of Operations, MS Society Scotland.

2. Clare gave an overview of the MS Society in 2014. MSS has 230 staff in the UK with 23 working in the Scottish area. Clare has a team of 8 persons, 4 Area Development Officers and 3 Service Development Officers. There are 283 UK Branches with 31 in Scotland. All branches rely entirely on Volunteer commitment and as a result each Branch has its own strengths and styles. Glasgow North has opened an outreach with MS Revive in Easterhouse, Glasgow; Ayrshire and Arran has a strong counselling base; Lothian is pursuing a sailing interest. In 2013 the annual budget of the MSS was £23 million with £2 million spent in Scotland.

MSS is 60 years old and has a new 5 year strategy being driven by a new Chief Executive, Michelle Mitchell. MSS recognised it has to work in partnership as a way forward and learn to collaborate with other related organisations. A large consultation exercise is underway through Facebook to assess most important outcomes for people with MS. Top five priorities will go to the Board of Trustees in June and form the new strategy to be voted on by all members at the 2014 AGM in September.

Following the presentation Clare answered questions on the following topics:

Research: The recent collaboration led by the James Lind Alliance which worked with MSNTC, MS Trust and MSRC and MSS to establish top 10 MSS Research Priorities. These show a clear interest in self-management, disease modifying drugs and therapies for pain and fatigue with desire for treatments to improve mobility and cognition. MSS currently has 66 active projects and has spent £4.6 million on research since 1953.

Welfare and Benefits: The changing environment is leading to shrinking state and need for MSS to be a louder voice in campaigns such as Treat Me Right highlighting Lottery of Care. All people living with MS are encouraged to join the Voices for Change Forum. Speak with Head Office at Ratho on 0131 335 4050 or check out the MSS website and find out next meeting dates. This will help to bridge the gap between MS Strategy and the community.

Sheila thanked Clare for her thorough presentation.

3. Minute of the Annual General Meeting held 3rd June 2013 and Extraordinary General Meeting held 11th November 2013: There were no questions from the floor. Both sets of minutes were proposed by Sheila West and seconded by Neil Lucas.

4. Matters Arising: Sheila explained changes in financial management. This had arisen from shortcomings noted in the Feasibility Review and on advice of auditors. The charity now retains the services of Heather Hartman (formerly the auditor with Whitelaw Wells), Charity Figures, to carry out monthly income and expenditure reviews for the Board as well as the annual accounts. As we are a small charity, we are able to comply with the charity regulations through independent examination of the accounts and Whitelaw Wells has completed this for 2013.

5. Annual Report and future plans for 2013: Main focus was on developing the strategy of the organisation.

Oxygen therapy timetable has been extended and introductory sessions arranged for Friday afternoons to cope with demand from new service users.

Evaluation of Services has shown over 100 new service users. Overall the evaluation has been very positive and it is hoped that this report will serve as good evidence in future funding bids.

Development of Physio Service to provide an outreach service and establish closer connections with NHS and QMU.

Building on Achievements DVD prepared of typical oxygen session. Internal upgrade to the Centre and improved environment. Extended ramp installed to assist access to building. Improved ties with QMU, Thistle Foundation and Lothian-wide MS Branch. Malcolm Chisholm (MSP) has agreed to be the 1st ever Patron of the charity in this our 30th year.

Current Challenges There are new challenges facing service users following welfare reforms. There is a growing apparent need for support for Care givers. Strategic plan recognised need for development of access to counselling services/talking therapies. 30 Years on and we are stronger than ever. 30th Anniversary Dinner at Minto Hotel, Edinburgh- Tickets £40.00.

Sheila Tully acknowledged change within the Centre with many new users for the service and recognised that this increased revenue was a good thing.

6. Approval of Annual Accounts: Cathal Cunningham gave a short summary of the accounts. The overall financial picture has improved on 2012. The revised Objectives and Activities reflect the changes approved at the EGM on 11.11.13. 2013 spend was increased by the KICC Active Lothian project which had a small underspend in-year. This will be remedied during the next financial year as the project terminates in March 2015. Accounts were proposed for acceptance by Ben Moran and seconded by Janice Thomson.

7. Appointment of Trustees: The appointment of Cathal Cunningham as Treasurer was proposed by Ben Moran and seconded by Janice Thomson. The re-election of Carole Macartney, Sheila West, Neil Lucas and Janice Thomson was proposed by Hafrun Taylor and seconded by Alex Tweedly.

8. There was no other competent business. Those present thanked Carole, Nancy and the small staff team for the excellent work done on a weekly basis. The meeting closed at 7.15pm.



Signed.....

Date.....22.6.15.....