



OPEN

Board Meeting Summary Report Multiple Sclerosis Society Board of Trustees

Meeting date: Monday 11 July 2022, 10.30am
MS Society, Carriage House, 8 City North Place, London, N4 3FU and via video conference

Present Trustees

Professor Sir Paul Curran	Chair of the Board of Trustees
Sarah Schol	Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees
Stuart Secker	Treasurer
Ady Dike	Trustee
Anthony Upshall	Trustee
Bayan Mohajeri	Trustee
Ceri Smith	Trustee
Emily Reves	Trustee
Marion King	Trustee
Mohini Raichura-Brown	Trustee
Polly Williams	Trustee

Council Chairs

Huw Roberts	Chair of the Cymru Council
Dr Kate Laverty	Chair of the Northern Ireland Council

Staff Attending

Nick Moberly	Chief Executive
Vicky Annis	Executive Director - Corporate Services
Dr Sarah Rawlings	Executive Director - Research and External Affairs
Sam Walker	Executive Director - Services and Support
Morna Simpkins	Director of Scotland

1. Opening remarks

1.1. Professor Sir Paul Curran (Chair of the Board of Trustees) welcomed the Board and attendees to the meeting, his first since being appointed.

2. Chief Executive's report

2.1. Nick Moberly (Chief Executive) gave a report on progress that had been made on delivering impact for the MS community since the last Board meeting. The report included a summary of our financial performance in quarter 1 2022, and against key performance indicators for the delivery of core activities.

3. National Councils update

- 3.1. The Board received updates from the National Councils. Morna Simpkins (Director of Scotland and Lead Director for National Councils) spoke of the town hall events planned by the Scotland Council in October, and the social media growth that had been achieved. Huw Roberts (Chair of the Cymru Council) raised a concern about long-term funding for the Pontio project, and spoke of the Council's promotional activities, including their link with Disability Wales. The Trustees approved the co-option of Sian Dorwood to the Cymru Council. Kate Laverty (Chair of the Northern Ireland Council) alerted the Board to an issue with care contracts in Northern Ireland that had led to young people having their care packages downgraded, and being moved into care homes. The Northern Ireland Council had also led the calls for support that had been promised in the wake of the Belfast neurologist recall. Sam Walker (Executive Director of Services and Support) advised that the newly recruited England Council members had started making connections with MS Society staff and MS nurses, and that their meeting had considered the impact of MS on employment and carers.
- 3.2. The Northern Ireland Council had submitted a paper detailing local group concerns to the Head of Volunteering and Community Networks and it was noted that this matter would be discussed at the next round of Council meetings. The Board affirmed the importance of grass roots engagement and connection in delivering impact for our MS community, and the key role of local groups within our support and information offer.

4. Committee reports

- 4.1. Stuart Secker (Treasurer, Chair of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee) gave an overview of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee meeting on 9 June 2022. The committee had reviewed the Management Accounts to 31 March 2022 and had completed their annual reviews of Local Group finances, and of the Assurance Map, which provides an overview of the lines and levels of assurance in place for key areas of performance and operations within the MS Society. The committee had considered the significant investment requests and the revised Scheme of Delegation on today's Board agenda. The committee had considered the Internal Audit progress report and Rathbones (investment managers) had provided an update on the performance of our investment portfolio. The committee had reviewed and approved the updated Restricted Funds Policy and approved the new Financial Crime Policy.
- 4.2. Sarah Schol (Vice Chair of the Board, ex-officio member of the Nominations Committee) gave an overview of the Nominations Committee meeting on 17 May 2022. This meeting had been added to the annual schedule to enable the committee to review this year's Trustee recruitment and election priorities, process and materials. The committee had also reviewed the Board EDI action plan and the Board accepted the committee's recommended updates to the Board EDI statement.
- 4.3. Polly Williams (Trustee, Chair of the People Committee) gave an overview of the People Committee meeting on 28 June 2022. This meeting had been added to the annual schedule to enable the committee to undertake a deep dive into the MS Society's employee, volunteering and EDI strategies and discuss the significant trends, external and internal factors that could have potential impact going forward. The committee had considered the results of the 2021 Volunteer

Survey, and the March 2022 Staff Survey and the committee heard from MS Society volunteers and staff representatives.

5. Significant investment requests

- 5.1. During the 2022 Business Plan and Budget setting process, the Executive Group had indicated their intention to seek Board approval for specific investment requests to transform our impact in a number of key areas.
- 5.2. The Board was asked to approve the first phase of investment into Project Sage. Project Sage would seek to develop joined up systems and data architecture to really understand and maximise the potential of our data, and replace our existing CRM. This investment request had been endorsed by the Board at their March meeting, and had been considered by the newly formed Data, Digital and Technology Advisory Group. It was recommended for approval by the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee. A discussion took place about the business-critical nature of data management and the Board approved the first phase of investment.
- 5.3. The Board was asked to comment on initial proposals to develop a commercially sustainable retail proposition. A discussion took place about the benefits and risks of this venture, the proposed model, and market analysis that had been undertaken.
- 5.4. The Board then discussed and endorsed the Engagement and Income Generation Transformation Case for Support, which set out a major strategic investment in growing our fundraising income, deepening our understanding of the MS community, and extending our reach into that community.

6. Governance matters

- 6.1. The Board approved the revised Scheme of Delegation, which had been updated to reflect the new Terms of Reference in place for National Councils, and also to clarify the position with the level of authority in place for approving settlements.
- 6.2. The Board reviewed the Scheme of Delegation Report, which was a standing item to ensure the Board had oversight of decisions delegated to sub-groups of the Board and taken between Board meetings.
- 6.3. The Board approved the revised Working with Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Industries Policy. The policy had been updated to include a requirement to report on all pharmaceutical donations, instead of only those over £5k, for greater transparency.

7. Strategic deep dive – People living well with MS (Goal)

- 7.1. The Board undertook an in-depth review of the People Living Well with MS goal of our organisational strategy to consider whether the agreed objectives and plans continue to be the best way to address current trends, challenges and opportunities. Heads of MS Helpline; Campaigns & External Relations; and Policy & Evidence joined the meeting, and the discussion covered the current situation and needs of people living with MS, and progress against the outcomes we are trying to achieve:

- People living with MS have improved knowledge, skills and confidence to manage their MS; and improved physical, emotional and financial wellbeing.
- People affected by MS (families, friends and carers) have improved knowledge, skills and confidence in fulfilling their support role, as well as improved emotional, physical and financial wellbeing.
- People living with MS have improved access to high quality treatment, care and support. In particular, health and care professionals working in MS have strong networks that result in driving improvements to care and services for people with MS, and MS services across the UK reflect the needs of people with MS and are based on robust evidence to support people with MS now and in the future.