



OPEN

Board Meeting Summary Report Multiple Sclerosis Society Board of Trustees

Meeting date: Thursday 23 September 2021, 10.30am
MS Society, Carriage House, 8 City North Place, London, N4 3FU

Present

Trustees

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Nick Winser | Chair of the Board of Trustees |
| Sarah Schol | Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees |
| Stuart Secker | Treasurer |
| Shewly Choudhury | Trustee |
| Ady Dike | Trustee |
| Emily Revers | Trustee |
| Anne Shinkwin | Trustee |
| Ceri Smith | Trustee |
| Anthony Upshall | Trustee |
| Polly Williams | Trustee |

Council Chairs

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|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Catherine Doran | Chair of the Northern Ireland Council |
| Mary Douglas | Chair of the Scotland Council |
| Helen Cherry | Vice Chair of the England Council |

Staff Attending

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| Nick Moberly | Chief Executive |
| Vicky Annis | Executive Director - Corporate Services |
| Clare Horwood | Executive Director - Engagement & Income Generation |
| Morna Simpkins | Director of Scotland |

Apologies

| | |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| Marion King | Trustee |
| Kath Foot | Chair of the Cymru/Wales Council |

1. Opening remarks

Nick Winser (Chair of the Board of Trustees) welcomed the Board and attendees to the meeting, the first in-person Board meeting since December 2019, and the first meeting to take place at the new MS Society office in Finsbury Park.

2. Chief Executive's Report

2.1. Nick Moberly (Chief Executive) introduced the 2021 Quarter 2 Progress and Performance Report and invited questions from the Board. The report included an executive summary of our performance in quarter 2, a summary of progress against the 2021 business plan and key performance indicators for the delivery of core activities.

2.2. The Chief Executive's Report also included a briefing on access to neurological services in Northern Ireland, where there was currently a five year waiting list for routine

referrals, raised by Catherine Doran (Chair of the Northern Ireland Council) at the July Board meeting. A discussion was held about the MS Society autumn campaign that would focus on access to services, and the potential of pan-neurology campaigning and other initiatives to amplify our voices.

3. Income Generation Deep Dive and Progress against Budget

- 3.1. A detailed discussion took place, covering income generation progress to date against the 2021 budget; income forecasts for 2022; a review of the current fundraising strategy in light of changes to the external environment, including ongoing pandemic restrictions and economic instability; and a view on potential transformational growth provided by Clare Horwood (Executive Director of Engagement and Income Generation). It was noted that the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee had considered these matters at their last meeting.
- 3.2. The Board considered the need for investment to increase income and supporter numbers. It was noted that growth was expected to come through virtual events, social media and digital fundraising, and that a 'test and learn' approach would be taken to fundraising diversification, within our organisational approach to innovation, change and continuous improvement (ICCI).

4. Business Plan and Budget 2022-24

- 4.1. The Board reviewed the draft Business Plan and Budget 2022-24, and the parameters and assumptions it was based on. It was noted that the final plan would be signed off at the December Board meeting, after scrutiny by the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee. The Board commended the ambition of the transformation and investment planned over the next three years, including continued funding of the Octopus clinical trial platform; development of a new data platform; audience-centred engagement propositions and enhanced digital channels.

5. Strategic Progress and Impact Report

- 5.1. In 2021 the Board had signed-off a Strategic Progress and Impact Framework designed to provide a consolidated view of the desired outcomes and key deliverables we would work towards over the five-year strategic period; the indicators that would be reported to the Board and sub-committees to monitor in-year progress; and how we would assess our overall strategic impact on an annual basis.
- 5.2. The Board reviewed the first Strategic Progress and Impact Report based upon this framework, which would come to the Board annually. The report was commended, and a discussion took place about the importance of metrics that would enable measurement of, and comparison between, the impact of activities designed to deliver a diverse range of benefits for the MS community, from directly delivered services to organisational infrastructure development, and from research to campaigning.

6. Board and Councils Recruitment Update

- 6.1. The Board reviewed plans for recruitment of a new Chair of the Board of Trustees, given that Nick Winser was due to retire in 2022. It was agreed that a sub-group of Trustees would be convened, to be led by Sarah Schol (Vice Chair of the Board), to oversee the recruitment.
- 6.2. It was noted that the summer recruitment round to identify Trustees to be appointed to the Board, and new Council Chairs to be appointed to the England, Northern Ireland and Scotland Councils, had been successfully completed. Candidates for each vacancy had been considered by a panel of Trustees and Council Members, at least one of whom was living with MS. The Trustees approved the appointment of Gemma Talbot as England Council Chair; Kate Laverty as Northern Ireland Council Chair; and Laura Ingram as Scotland Council Chair, to start their roles on 1 January 2022. It was noted that the new

Trustees would be appointed at a general meeting of the legal members (the Trustees and Council Chairs) following the Board meeting.

- 6.3. It was noted that recruitment of a new Cymru/Wales Council Chair and Council Member recruitment for Cymru/Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland Councils would take place throughout October and November, and that successful candidates would be appointed at the Board meeting in December, before starting their roles on 1 January 2022. Recruitment to the England Council would be deferred until 2022.

7. National Councils Update

- 7.1. The Board received reports from the National Councils. The Cymru/Wales Council had received an update on the Wellbeing Wales Project; they were supportive of the proposed changes to Councils; and they had raised a concern about keeping up-to-date with the breadth of new activity taking place throughout the organisation. The England Council had elected Helen Cherry as England Council Vice Chair and they looked forward to working with the newly appointed Council Chair to build capacity within the Council. The Northern Ireland Council had continued to be concerned about access to neurology services and the recent decision to remove pregabalin from the Northern Ireland formulary; they were looking forward to the virtual Living with MS event being planned for October. The Scotland Council had received a presentation on using social media to increase reach and engagement with the MS community throughout Scotland; they had raised a concern about the lack of response they had received when contacting local groups; and they were looking forward to supporting the Stop MS Appeal.

8. Committee Reports

- 8.1. Stuart Secker (Treasurer, Chair of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee) gave an overview of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee meeting on 9 September 2021. The committee had considered a number of items on the Board meeting agenda, including the draft Business Plan and Budget 2022-2025, and the Income Generation Deep Dive and Progress against Budget. The committee had also considered the new organisational approach to innovation, change and continuous improvement (ICCI). They had reviewed the Management Accounts to 31 July 2021, and had undertaken their usual reviews of the Risk Register and progress against internal audit recommendations.
- 8.2. Polly Williams (Trustee, Chair of the People Committee) gave an overview of the People Committee meeting on 9 September 2021. The committee had received the consolidated People Report, which included updates on employee engagement; volunteering; internal communications; and equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI). The committee had noted the results of Volunteering Team research into barriers to volunteering for people of colour and young people, and support for the new Smart Working Policy, which offered colleagues greater flexibility in how they work. The committee had received an update on the implementation plan being developed to deliver the EDI Strategy, and they approved the EDI Policy which sets standards and expected behaviours.

9. Governance Matters

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.