

# **Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Multiple Sclerosis Society**

21 September 2018 10.30am  
MSNC, Rose Room

## **Present**

Nick Winser	Chair
Ruth Hasnip	Vice Chair
Stuart Secker	Treasurer
Jason Atkinson	Trustee
Christine Gibbons	Trustee
Dowshan Humzah	Trustee
Karen Jones	Trustee
Sarah Schol	Trustee
Anne Shinkwin	Trustee
Ceri Smith	Trustee

## **In attendance**

Catherine Doran	Chair, Northern Ireland Council
Mary Douglas	Chair, Scotland Council
Phillip Gamble	Chair, England Council
Huw Roberts	Chair, Cymru Council
Michelle Mitchell	Chief Executive
Patricia Gordon	Country Director of Northern Ireland
Vicky Annis	Executive Director of Finance, Strategy and Impact
Richard Hawtin	Head of Governance
Amber Esposito	Governance Officer (Minute Taker)
Emma Whitcombe	Executive Director of Fundraising (Items 4-6)
Mital Patel	Head of Strategy and Impact (Items 4 and 11)
Genevieve Edwards	Director of External Affairs (Items 5-7)
Susan Kohlhaas	Director of Research (Item 6)
Sorrel Bickley	Head of Biomedical Research (Item 6)
Ed Holloway	Executive Director of Services and Support (Items 10-13)

## **Apologies**

Esther Foreman	Trustee
John Grosvenor	Trustee
Marion King	Trustee

## **1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received as above. Marion King had sent comments on the papers prior to the meeting, and her questions had been answered by email.

The Chair highlighted the fact that it was the Chief Executive's last Board meeting at the

MS Society.

He welcomed Patricia Gordon, who was attending the Board meeting in the context of CEO succession.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **3. Minutes and Matters Arising**

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 7 June 2018.

## **4. Draft Budget and Business Plan**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **5. Public phase of the Stop MS Appeal**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **6. Efficient Clinical Trial Platform**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **7. Membership**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **8. Digital transformation update**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **9. Risk Register**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **10. Deep dive volunteering**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **11. Quarterly performance report and management accounts**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **12. Quarterly Safeguarding Report**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **13. Quarterly Health and Safety Report**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **14. Chair's update**

The Board **noted** the report, and **ratified** the amendment in the Appointments Panel for CEO recruitment outlined in the paper.

## **15. Chief Executive's Update**

The Chief Executive spoke of the recent mobilisation of our community in relation to ocrelizumab with many thousands of people signing a petition to support the call for the drug to be licensed for people with primary progressive MS. The issue is one of price at the moment which would not be an easy issue to address - however the Board were assured that we are making our voices heard very strongly on this. The Chief Executive also touched on the £3m legacy, the generosity of the individual who had left it to us, and advised of the need to strongly think about how we invest this money.

The Chief Executive paid tribute to the Executive Group and the Governance team for their professionalism in this time of transition. She thanked the Board for their counsel, support and wisdom and, most of all, their leadership and commitment to the MS Society. The Chief Executive emphasised that this has made a huge difference to the leadership team.

The Chair of the MS Society responded with his own words of thanks to reflect the Board's extreme gratitude for the Chief Executive's tireless and extraordinary leadership. The multiple projects that are coming together will help the charity to not just move ahead but to leap forward, and this is due to the work that the Chief Executive put into motion. The Chair informed the Board of his view that he could never have wished for anything else in terms of the relationship with her as a chief executive - she had proven herself to be honest, diplomatic and supportive with open, good and frequent communication. The Chair noted that often people in transition slacken off near the end but commented that there had been no signs of this, and this was just one indicator of the Chief Executive's extremely good judgement that she had shown throughout her time at the MS Society. The Chair concluded by stating that the Chief Executive had made a real difference for people with MS.

The Board **noted** the report and expressed their extreme gratitude to the Chief Executive.

## **16. Audit, Risk and Finance Committee Update**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **17. Governance Committee update**

The Board:

- **Noted** the update from the Governance Committee on its meeting of 6 September 2018, including the key issues identified by Chairs of National Councils (Appendix 1).
- **Agreed** to the change outlined at paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 in relation to payments to / remuneration of the Chief Executive.
- **Ratified** the approach taken to the Cymru National Council elections at paragraph 2.2 given the change in circumstances during the election process.

## **18. Forward Look at Future Board Agendas**

**[This item is confidential]**

## **19. Any Other Business**

The Board asked about the development day, and the Head of Governance reminded the Board that the 5 December date was set aside for the Trustee induction only, and not the development day.

The Board meeting closed at **2.10pm** and was followed by a short reflection on the meeting.