



**OPEN**

**Board Meeting Summary Report  
Multiple Sclerosis Society Board of Trustees**

Meeting date: Friday 18 September, 10.30am  
Held by videoconference

**Present**

Nick Winser	Chair of the Board of Trustees
Sarah Schol	Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees
Stuart Secker	Treasurer
Jason Atkinson	Trustee
Susan Crane	Trustee
Christine Gibbons	Trustee
Ruth Hasnip	Trustee
Marion King	Trustee
Emily Reves	Trustee
Anne Shinkwin	Trustee
Ceri Smith	Trustee
Polly Williams	Trustee
Catherine Doran	Chair of the Northern Ireland Council
Mary Douglas	Chair of the Scotland Council
David Allen	Vice Chair of the England Council

**Attending**

Nick Moberly	Chief Executive
Vicky Annis	Executive Director of Corporate Services
Ed Holloway	Executive Director of Digital & Services
Emma Whitcombe	Executive Director of Engagement & Income Generation
Penny Coombes	Head of Governance
Mital Patel	Head of Strategy & Impact
Phillip Anderson	Head of Policy & Evidence
Jonathan Blades	Head of Campaigns & External Evidence
Tom Shelston	Head of Marketing
Danielle Walker	Governance Manager (minutes)

**Apologies**

Kathryn Foot	Chair of the Cymru Council
--------------	----------------------------

**1. CEO Update**

- 1.1. Nick Moberly (Chief Executive) introduced the 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 2020 business plan with RAG ratings against objectives and KPIs against delivery of core activities, the quarter 2 management accounts and the summary Risk Register. He confirmed that objectives had been revised to reflect the impact of COVID-19.

- 1.2. The Board recognised that 2020 had been a tough year within the organisation, with the challenges of COVID-19, new premises and people changes. Nick Moberly advised that given these factors, the organisation is in good shape. Productivity is high and people are passionate about our work. Staff feel genuinely proud of the way we have worked together to respond to the needs of the MS community during the pandemic.

## **2. Project Orange Update**

- 2.1. Vicky Annis (Executive Director of Corporate Services) provided an update on the sale of MS National Centre, which was progressing well, and confirmed that plans for moving to a new London office space were developing. The continued need for remote working was discussed and the Board noted their concern about the impact on colleagues that found it difficult to work from home. It was noted that the NI, Cymru and Scotland offices also remained closed and that each nation was operating within the specific COVID-19 guidelines in place.

## **3. Business Plan and Budget**

- 3.1. The Board was asked to review and comment on the draft Business Plan and Budget for 2021 and planning assumptions that the Executive Group had agreed as the basis for plans. The Board would be asked to approve the final business plan and budget at their meeting in December.
- 3.2. The Board discussed the range of factors that would affect plans into 2021 and on through 2022 and 2023, including the £4 million savings that would need to be realised in 2021, assumptions being made about the potential impact of the expected second wave of COVID-19 on our income, and the position with legacy income. Nick Moberly reassured the Board that the final plan would be realistic and take a prudent approach to reflect the ongoing uncertainty, but would also allow the organisation to strategically invest in key areas.

## **4. Draft strategies**

- 4.1. The Board was asked to comment on an early draft of the Digital, Data and Tech Strategy which was being developed to enable us to make the most of digital, data and technology in order to better achieve impact for the MS community. Further discussion and development would take place with input from staff and key stakeholders to refine the strategy and agree a delivery plan and key performance indicators, and a final version would be brought to the Board for approval in December
- 4.2. Phillip Anderson (Head of Policy and Evidence) and Jonathan Blades (Head of Campaigns and External Relations) then provided an overview of the draft Influencing Strategy. The draft strategy had been developed through engagement with people affected by MS, health and care professionals, commissioners, civil servants, and other charities, and would retain our strong national campaigning structure and partnerships, while changing our approach to influencing health services for people with MS. We would develop a service improvement model and support people with MS to advocate for themselves. Further engagement with key stakeholders would take place before the final strategy comes back to the Board for approval in December.

## **5. New Engagement Offer**

- 5.1. Emma Whitcombe (Executive Director of Engagement and Income Generation) provided an update on progress with the development of our new engagement offer.
- 5.2. Phase 1 of the new digital platform would enable members to bookmark information relevant to them, and enable us to share elements we think they'd be interested in.

We'll provide information about their local area, including their local group and activities, and invite them to join our online forum.

## **6. AGM**

- 6.1. The Board recommended the 6 candidates standing for election at the AGM due to take place as an online meeting on Saturday 5 December. Nick Winser (Chair of the Board) informed the Board that he had accepted Rufus Olins' resignation from the Board and the Board agreed that 5 vacancies should be elected to at the AGM.
- 6.2. The Board approved the new Articles of Association that would be put to the members for adoption at the AGM, and the Rules and Standard Operating Procedures that would support the implementation of the new governance model

## **7. Committee updates**

- 7.1. Stuart Secker (Treasurer, Chair of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee) gave an overview of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee meeting on 3 September 2020 and asked the Board to note that the meeting had reviewed the Business Plan and Budget ahead of them being submitted to the Board for discussion today. The committee had also reviewed changes to internal controls due to COVID-19 and increased remote working, and had received an Internal Audit progress report from PwC. The Audit, Risk and Finance Committee recommended the Investment and Banking Policy to the Board for approval. The Board approved the Investment and Banking Policy.
- 7.2. Christine Gibbons (Trustee, Chair of the Governance Committee) gave an overview of the Governance Committee meeting on 3 September 2020 and asked the Board to approve the co-option of Shaun Paskin and Pete Nettle to current vacancies on the England Council. The Board approved the co-options. The Board noted that the Governance Committee had reviewed the Trustee candidates and new governance documents ahead of them being submitted to the Board for approval. The committee had also considered the Charity Commission regulatory alert that arose from their review of safeguarding failings at the RNIB.
- 7.3. Sarah Schol (Vice Chair of the Board) gave an overview of the People Committee meeting on 10 September 2020 which she had chaired in place of Jason Atkinson (Trustee, Chair of the People Committee). The committee had received updates on HR, Volunteering and Internal Communications and Engagement. The committee had also commented on an early draft of the Employee Engagement Strategy.