



OPEN

Board Meeting Summary Report Multiple Sclerosis Society Board of Trustees

Meeting date: Thursday 14 December 2023
MS Society, Carriage House, 8 City North Place, London, N4 3FU and via video conference

Present Trustees

Professor Sir Paul Curran	Chair of the MS Society
Sarah Schol	Vice Chair
Nick Keveth	Treasurer
Dr Shewly Choudhury	Trustee
Ady Dike	Trustee
Marion King	Trustee
Bayan Mohajeri	Trustee
Chris Murray	Trustee
Emily Reves	Trustee
David Silver	Trustee
Polly Williams	Trustee

Council Chairs

Helen Cherry	England Council Vice Chair
Laura Ingram	Scotland Council Chair
Dr Kate Laverty	Northern Ireland Council Chair
Susannah Robinson	Wales Council Chair

Staff Attending

Nick Moberly	Chief Executive
Vicky Annis	Executive Director - Corporate Services
Dr Sarah Rawlings	Executive Director - Research & External Affairs
Morna Simpkins	Executive Director - Scotland & Nations
Ed Tait	Executive Director - Engagement & Income Generation
Sam Walker	Executive Director - Services & Support

1. Opening remarks

- 1.1. The Chair of the MS Society welcomed the Board and attendees to the meeting. Thanks were given to Ady Dike and Marion King, who were due to reach the end of their Trustee terms and retire from the Board at the end of December 2023. Thanks were also given to David Galloway, Director for Northern Ireland, who was due to retire in January 2024, and to Sam Walker, Executive Director of Services and Support, who was leaving the MS Society in February 2024.

2. Chief Executive's Report

- 2.1. The 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 3 2023, and against key performance indicators for the delivery of core activities.

3. National Councils Report

- 3.1. The Board received reports from the National Councils. Discussion took place about the information event organised by the Scotland Council, and the contribution made to the launch of the Personal Independent Payment (PIP) campaign launch by the Northern Ireland Council. The Wales and England Councils spoke of the challenge of supporting MS communities with inconsistent access to NHS services. The councils had each reviewed their performance in 2023, and the Board received their plans for 2024.
- 3.2. The Board ratified the appointments of Matthew Ward (England Council Chair), Shaun Paskin (Northern Ireland Council member), Sheena McBriar (Northern Ireland Council member), Sheenagh McVeigh (Northern Ireland Council member) and Victoria Appleton (Scotland Council member).

4. Committee Reports

- 4.1. The Board received a report on the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee (ARFC) meeting of 23 November 2023. The Committee had received the 2023 Q3 Management Accounts, reviewed the investment portfolio, internal and external audit arrangements, and the corporate risk register. The committee had considered the Business Plan and Budget, and Transformation Programme, which were also items on the Board's agenda, and had reviewed their performance in 2023.
- 4.2. The Board received a report on the People Committee meeting of 17 October 2023. The Committee had received a report on progress against the Employee Engagement; Volunteering; and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategies. The committee had considered the pay and benefits review currently in progress and had also reviewed their performance in 2023.
- 4.3. The Board received a report on the Nominations Committee meeting of 28 November 2023. The Committee had considered Trustee and Council recruitment and received an interim voting report on Trustee elections. The Committee had received a report on the Trustee Annual Reviews that had been completed and had set the Board Effectiveness priorities for 2024. The committee had also reviewed their performance in 2023.

5. Business Plan and Budget 2024-2026

- 5.1. The Board approved the Business Plan and Budget 2024-26, which had been considered at their previous meeting, and scrutinised by the ARFC. The Business Plan and Budget sets out our strategic priorities for the next three years, and the income and expenditure budgets expected to support them.

6. Transformation Programme

- 6.1. The Board received a report on progress for the different projects within the Transformation Programme. Phase one of the Services and Support

Transformation was approved, and the Employee Engagement Transformation Case for Support was endorsed.

7. Engaging with NHS Professionals

- 7.1. The Board received the results of a survey of 80 NHS professionals including neurologists, MS nurses, physiotherapists, and occupational therapists, about the role of charities in supporting their patients. Discussion took place about plans to grow our engagement with NHS professionals and encourage them to signpost to MS Society services.

8. Governance Matters

- 8.1. The review of the Board's committee structure was concluded and the Board appointed Nick Keveth (Chair), David Silver (Trustee member) and Josie Hutchings (Independent member) to the Audit and Risk Committee. Polly Williams (Chair), Sarah Schol (Vice Chair of the Board, ex officio member), Emily Reves (Trustee member), Laura Ingram (Council Chair member) and Susannah Robinson (Council Chair member) were appointed to the Nominations and Remuneration Committee. Chris Murray (Chair), Nick Keveth (Treasurer, ex officio member), Bayan Mohajeri (Trustee member) and Dr Shewly Choudhury (Trustee member) were appointed to the Strategic Implementation and Finance Committee.
- 8.2. The Board received a presentation on trustee responsibilities and developments within governance by charity lawyers BDB Pitmans LLP.
- 8.3. 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.

9. Strategic Deep Dive - Influencing

- 9.1. The Board undertook an in-depth review of our influencing work to consider whether the agreed objectives and plans continue to be the best way to address current trends, challenges, and opportunities. The key issues we are working to address were noted as: equitable and timely access to diagnosis, treatments and care; welfare benefits and financial support; mental health support; support for carers; access to community services (e.g. rehabilitation); employment support; and connection (isolation and loneliness). Discussion focused on how we prioritise our influencing work, and planning for the General Election in 2024.