



BOARD MEETING

Saturday 20 January 2024
SUMMARY NOTES

Minutes of the Board meeting 18 November 2023

The minutes from the Board meeting held on 18 November were approved by the Board.

Away Day

Trustees and staff attended an Away Day in January to discuss the next phase of the Fellowship's Strategy. Four priority areas were identified and notably broadly aligned with the four strategic areas (Improving Communications, Outreach and Health & Wellbeing, Finance and People) the Fellowship already has in place as part of the existing strategy. Any new work identified can therefore be included in the current working group structure. The group agreed the key areas of focus will need to be the Fellowship's finances and membership.

A longer-term strategy will now be produced to outline how the Fellowship will move forward over the next ten years. From this, a three-year plan will be identified.

The Board felt the biggest hurdle for Trustees to consider was how the Fellowship should approach funding.

Strategy Update

An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan has been produced and was shared with Trustees ahead of the Board meeting. Trustees had already reviewed the plan. It was approved by the Board and agreed that work on the plan can now begin.

Report from the National Treasurer

As of 30 November 2023, Central Office recorded a deficit of £32K. Meanwhile, the Fellowship had a good year for investments (compared with last year) and is expected to show a £96K surplus by the end of the year.

Concern was raised that, if the spend on strategy work continues at the same pace, and Central Office is still recording a deficit, the medium-term financial prospects for the Fellowship were not good. The Board will need to start considering how the Fellowship is going to manage in the medium-term.

Trustees also raised concern that officers were not making use of the Branch Support Fund. It was agreed it needs to be widely advertised and actively promoted within the branch network.

Board co-options

The Board felt that being able to co-opt an individual onto the Board in order to fill an identified skill gap, was extremely valuable. The Board were reminded of the policy. Any individual being considered for co-option will be interviewed and if they are suitable, they will be asked to join an existing working group.

After a period of time, in which they will hopefully have made a strong contribution to the Fellowship, they can be eased onto the Board.

Chief Executive Officer Operations

- **Longer-term cost savings:** The CEO will review Central Office big cost items and look to see if it can reduce costs further.
- **AGM 2024:** There will be a site visit to the Village Hotel in the West Midlands. This is the preferred hotel option for holding this years' Annual General Meeting (AGM). The date of the AGM is 14 September 2024.
- **Christmas closure:** The Board approved closing the office over the Christmas period from Tuesday 24 December until Monday 6 January 2025.
- **NatWest Banking:** The NatWest mandate is still pending. Discussions will be had about approaching the banking Ombudsman if NatWest do not respond.
- **Heating Grants:** The Board discussed the amount of grant that should be awarded to applicants of the 2023 Heating Grant. Trustees felt, with the cost-of-living crisis and bills high, the Fellowship should pay a higher grant of £250 this year.

Expert Panel and EPU Update

There had been no Expert Panel meeting since 8 November. The next meeting is due to be held on Wednesday 6 March.

The next European Polio Union (EPU) Annual General Meeting will be held in Budapest at the end of May.

Optimal Clinical Pathway

The Optimal Clinical Pathway has already been endorsed by the Neurological Alliance, British Society of Physical Rehabilitation Medicine (BSPRM) and British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists (BAPO) and approved by the Association of British Neurologists (ABN). Other endorsements/approvals are expected by the end of January.

A two-sided A4 summary version of the pathway is also being developed for GPs and other clinicians. The pathway will soon be launched and distributed to Integrated Care Providers (ICPs), Health Boards, media, politicians, clinicians etc.

A small team (including polio survivors) will be formed to produce a template for a Care Plan. Another team will look to re-develop the *Polio Survivors Guide* and the Expert Panel will work on *PPS: A guide to management for health care professionals*.

An interim replacement for Dr Simon Shaw at the Lane Fox Unit at Guys and St Thomas' Hospital, London is now in place and has started to see patients. He is Dr Zuhair Noori, Consultant in Neurorehabilitation Medicine.

Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Next Board meeting

The next Board meeting will be held on Saturday 9 March 2024.