

Minutes of Directors Meeting held at  
11:00 – 1<sup>st</sup> August 2013  
Waterhouse Business Centre, Chelmsford

**Present**

John Reid, Chairperson, **JR**  
Christine Mitchell, Vice Chairperson, User Group, (North) **CM**  
Roy Haycock, Treasurer, **RH**  
Pat Fitzpatrick, Board Secretary, **PF**  
Stuart Holt, User Group (South), **SH**  
Gareth Jones, **GJ**  
Dennis Small, **DS**

**LA Office Staff**

Dave White, Chief Executive Officer, **DW**  
Carly Duffett, Fund Raiser, **CD**

**Apologies**

None

**2. Approval of Minutes from Board Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013**

3 changes were required to the minutes:

- Item 3 - add Meningitis UK to list of Disability Groups
- Item 3 – change details of David Pert's, 'Clearer Solutions' colleague from Gordon to the legend 'colleague'.
- Item 6 - correct spelling of MAAF from MAFF.

Subject to the above amendments the minutes were agreed by all present.

**3. Matters Arising**

Prior to the meeting Tommy McSorley (**TS**) had written to CM resigning from the Board of Trustees. The resignation came as a surprise to the members of the board although it was known that **TS** was not in the best of health. It was felt that perhaps that comments in the last minutes had not been entirely accurate and that this may have lead to his resignation. **JR** will write to **TS** to thank him for all the work that he has undertaken for the society.

**Action – JR** to write to **TS** and thank him for his work for the LA

**DW** explained that the CRB checks had been replaced by a system called Disclosure Barring Service (DBS). **DW** had provided a briefing sheet before the meeting explaining the new system. The new DBS procedure has instigated some significant changes, the main one being that in certain circumstances old and minor convictions and cautions would be removed from the DBS certificate. In addition the certificate was portable for those individuals who choose to register online for this

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aspect of the service. The certificate will be issued to the individual rather than the employer. **DW** confirmed that all new VV checks will have to be undertaken under the new system and that VV's will have to arrange for a new certificate every 2 years.

**DW** stated that before we started undertaking CRB checks the association had 150 Voluntary Visitors (VV's), only 40 of these had completed the CRB checks. **DW** confirmed that he/Richard asked VV's to send in their documents by recorded delivery and the association return their documents by recorded delivery along with any postal costs that the VV had incurred. If a person was not willing to use recorded delivery than we offered a courier service but up till now this had not been required. Money to pay for the checks was paid from a special fund set up to deal solely with the VV scheme.

**RH** asked roughly how much does it cost to undertake the DBS. **DW** said it costs roughly £10.00.

**PF** asked how much it would cost if we had to use a courier service. **DW** said it would be roughly £20/30. If we had to use a courier firm the office would find out the cheapest at the time.

**DW** said that he had investigated attending a SAGE training course and had found that local councils will subsidise the course if you meet the criteria. He found out that the LA qualified for the subsidy. **DW** felt that he needed to go on the course so that he can step in to run the finance when the accountant is unavailable e.g. when he is away or if anything happens. Without the training **DW** has to go through all the paperwork to check any queries rather than immediately going to the item on the database. It was agreed by the board that it was sensible for **DW** to undertake the course if he felt that he could cope with the extra work load that it would entail. He felt that it was in his and the associations interest for him to undertake the course. **DW** has been booked into a course at Southend Campus, South Essex College. The first part of the course will start in September at a cost of £105.00 for 3 hours a day per week over 12 weeks. The second half will cost £265.00 for 3 hours a day per week over 12 weeks and will be started upon the completion of the first part of the course following the exams.

**DW** has now completed the following courses:

- Health & Safety
- First Aid at Work
- Fire Training
- Risk Assessment

However there is a requirement for someone to act as **DW**'s deputy who will need to receive a reduced level of training similar to that of **DW**'s.

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#### **4 Chairperson's Report**

**JR** supplied a comprehensive report prior to the meeting, this can be summarised as:

- Agreed with to **DW** undertake a SAGE training
- **DW** has completed Health & Safety, risk assessment and first aid courses, to enable the office to meet statutory requirements.
- **JR** agreed to sponsor the South Bank university prizes under the aegis of the APLLG. This will cost the LA about £600 a year.
- **JR** committed the LA to sponsoring a conference in Scotland in September this year, the cost of which will come from the advertising budget, (cost £4,000 reduced to £1500). It will involve all senior NHS managers and MSPs and should provide a good platform for the LA.
- **JR** has made contact with the Murray Foundation and hope to meet with them in September when attending the conference in Edinburgh.
- Linsey Hyde's (**LH**) training as a benefits adviser is progressing well and is still on-going.
- **JR** met with Norman Lamb, one of the Health Ministers, who told his senior civil servants that they must involve us in all discussions, over changes to NHS England
- **JR** also met with the Head of Specialised Services, NHS England, who at the meeting agreed with us that the criteria relating to amputees must be fully discussed, open and transparent, and to this end has told those involved to tear up their plans and start afresh with full consultation with the LA and other amputee charities involved in the APLLG. This related to the LA's involvement with NHS England's CSG Complex Disability criteria.
- The LA have also been instrumental in having the DWP restart the consultation process regarding the walking distance involved in the PIP higher rate mobility criteria.
  
- **TMCS and JR** attended the prize giving at Strathclyde University, and this year it looks as though most of the students are remaining in the UK, which can only be good news. When we were there I spoke to the head of the prosthetic training unit at Strathclyde University who agreed to put forward their views on walking distances and how it affects amputees.
- Regarding Personal Independence Payment (PIP) - ATOS and CAPITA are listening to what is being said, and are being very open and receptive, but their remit is to follow the DWP criteria so this is the area we need to concentrate on.

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## **5. Treasurer's Report**

**RH** commented that looking at the profit and loss account from the last financial year we had made a profit of £114,000 overall. This was because we had a legacy and from the legal panel. We could not presume to get in funds like this every year.

**RH** explained what is in the LA accounts.

**RH** made the point that we need to be careful over expenses particularly that it is proposed to undertake outreach work in Scotland which will add to the LA's costs.

**CM** asked if we are spreading ourselves too thinly. Have we got enough money to do all this?

**JR** said that we have members in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. These members deserve the same support as those in other areas. Under the Scottish Charity Commission laws we need to be seen to undertake more work in Scotland.

**CM** commented that we need to show what we are going to use our funds for. Any funding requests that we make must have a definite purpose and be tied to individual projects.

**CM** said that many people are worried about PIP and do not see what the LA is doing about it. **DW** advised that all current information is placed on the website and if any member is concerned they should contact the LA office.

**CM** supported by **SH** asked if we could do a mail shot to all members to ask what they want from the LA.

**DW** said that we need to show that we are helping amputees. He suggested that one idea is that we do not charge for belonging to the association. He pointed out that many disability groups do not charge for membership.

**CM** said that what we need to do is work out our income and expenses. It was agreed that expenses for any trips made to Parliament or dealings with Government Departments on behalf of the LA since April 2013 should be taken out of the Kilimanjaro fund rather than from general funds.

**Action - DW** to arrange for any relevant expenses already taken from the general funds to be reimbursed from the Kilimanjaro fund.

## **6. LA Parliamentary Report**

Meetings attended by JR:

- 10<sup>th</sup> May - patients in collaboration with the Clinical Reference Group (CRG)
- 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> May - De Vere hotel, Crewe, for Centre Managers Conference

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- 7<sup>th</sup> June - meeting with Capita in London re-Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- 10<sup>th</sup> June - meeting with Norman Lamb (Care Minister), Wayne Henderson, Associated Parliamentary Limb Loss Group (APLLG)
- 13<sup>th</sup> June - Joint Committee on Mobility for the Disabled
- 20<sup>th</sup> June - I was asked to speak (no fee) at a Westminster Briefing meeting with Kevin Jones MP (Shadow Minister for the Armed Forces), Brian Chenier (BLESMA) and Fergus Jepson (Preston, DSC).
- 26<sup>th</sup> June - Atos re Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- 28<sup>th</sup> June- meeting with Kate Caston, Head of Specialized Services NHS England, Rachel O'Connor-National Programme of Care Director (Specialized Trauma), Carolyn Young of NHS England, Sam Gallop, Steve McNeice and Wayne Henderson from the APLLG, Nigel Haigh of STEPS and Jo Dixon, National coordinator of REACH.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> July - **SH** Attended the APLLG
- 2<sup>nd</sup> July - **TS** and I presented the prizes at Strathclyde University for the Prosthetic Students.

**SH** attended the APLLG, as representative of LA, where awards were presented to top students of the London Southbank University in Limb technology who also received a small element of prosthetics training. The LA will be taking over the sponsorship of the award as Steve McNeice, one of the chairs of the APLLG, was no longer sponsoring the award. **DW** asked if the LA would be known/recognised sponsoring the award if it had the Associated Parliamentary Limb Loss Group name of it. **JR** confirmed that the LA name would also be on the awards and the LA would get recognition as sponsoring the award.. **DW** felt it was a lot of money if the awards were awarded under another name. **JR** commented that the awards would not cost as much as he originally said as they only cost £20 a time and normally there would be 3 awards, although this year 4 were awarded. Ideally the next awards should be given out in December 2013. Carly is investigating the feasibility of this to coincide with European Amputee Day.

Whilst at the APLLG **SH** mentioned the problems being experienced at Brighton, one prosthetist had left, a trainee had started but appointment times were being affected as the trainee had to be supervised at all times. **SH** mentioned that he had been waiting since the beginning of the year for his legs to be refurbished. Sam Gallop asked **SH** to send him details of the problems he had experienced.

It was agreed that the LA would resurrect the P&O awards that had lapsed 4/5 years ago. P&O awards would be given out at the same time as the London Southbank University awards in the following categories:

- User Group of the year
- Best fundraiser in User Group
- Best fundraiser in LA

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- Outstanding achievement, individual award
- Top Prosthetists
- Top Technician

Nomination forms will be sent to DSC's to be completed by both Management and Patients for the awards.

**DS** asked what the LA gets out of sponsoring these awards. **JR** said that we get publicity and our name known by MP's and the charity gets public recognition.

**Action** – P&O awards to be resurrected. **CD** to be responsible for undertaking this.

### User Groups Report

**GJ** mentioned that he had been in contact with Disability Wales as he felt isolated and without support. **DW** said that he had joined both **GJ** and **DS** in their respective organisations i.e. **GJ** in Disability Wales, **DS** in Disability Ireland.

**SH** is planning a visit to Portsmouth DSU.

**CM** had visited several rehabilitation centres, Sheffield, Nottingham and Derby. She also attended Derby and Nottingham User Group Meetings. **CM** said that in Sheffield a few people wanted to start a new user group but things at the DSU were difficult due to the frequent changes of the centre manager.

**RH** had still been unable to find out why the Manchester User Group was against the LA.

**Action** – **RH** will investigate why the LA is held in low regard by Manchester user group.

### Board Secretary Report

**PF** had produced a secretary's report prior to the meeting, this showed that she had monitored the board and board secretary email addresses and passed on any relevant emails to the appropriate person.

### 7. Media Data

**PF** asked if the new media database 'Agility' had been used. **DW** said that he had used it about 8 times so far. The office staff need training on how to use the application and therefore our subscription had not started. When all the staff are in the office **DW** will arrange the training, hopefully within the next week or so. **DW** mentioned that from the database he could see that the LA had been mentioned approximately 10 times in newspapers and magazines.

**Action** – **DW** to arrange for training for all staff on the 'Agility' media database.

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## **8. Fund Raiser**

**CD**, the new fund raiser, entered the meeting at 14:40. She gave a presentation of the work that she had been doing between the date she started work, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2013, and the following week when she went away on holiday. The presentation included the following items that she had been investigating:

- Community and charity events
- Major events e.g. P&O awards.
- Working with other organisation/charities that she has had dealings with in the past.
- Corporate sponsorship, she was looking into who we have had prior dealings with and will shortly be contacting them
- Investigation smaller funds
- Looking into the possibility of contacting celebrities to canvass their support for the LA.

**SH** suggested that **CD** contact the 'Provincial Grand Lodge of Essex', they may give a grant for a specific project. **SH** also mentioned that 'BEN' the automotive industry charity may be another source of funding.

**CD** said that she was setting up a document with her fund raising ideas and said that she was hoping to make the LA name more familiar to the general public.

**GJ** mentioned to **CD** that he is a member of the 'Pendyrus Male Voice Choir'. There may be some way that we could run a fund raising event with them.

## **9. Business Plan**

The latest version of the Business Plan, LA/10, issued in April 2013 had been distributed to the board prior to the meeting. **PF** had requested changes to sections 1.3 & 1.4, 1.15 – 1.17, 3.3, 3.7, 4.9 and 5.6. **JR** suggested that section 5.1 should be removed in its entirety. **DW** said that he would arrange for the document to be updated. With these changes incorporated the Board agreed the document.

**Action** – **DW** to update the Business Plan as agreed during the meeting.

## **11. AGM**

**JR** suggested that the next AGM should be held in Scotland as this would help to satisfy the Scottish Charity Commission that the association was working in Scotland.

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**CM** suggested that the office contacted the Scottish User Groups to see if enough of their members would attend the AGM to make holding the AGM in Scotland viable. It was agreed that if it was not viable to hold the meeting in Scotland then Cardiff could be an alternative venue.

**DW** will investigate suitable venues in Scotland and find out costings. As a backup he will also look at venues in Cardiff.

If the venue could be arranged in time, the date of the next AGM was proposed as the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

**Action** – **DW** to investigate suitable venues for the AGM.

**GJ** left the meeting at 15:45.

## **12. Communication**

**CM** suggested that a basic A4 sheet should be supplied by the office with details of what had been undertaken over the month. The report should also show financial details.

**Action** – **DW** to arrange for a simple report to be issued every month as per details above.

## **13. Communicating with other disability organizations**

**RH** had supplied an example of a letter, prior to the meeting, to be written to other disability organisations suggesting meeting to discuss issues of common concern. As **JR** had queried the contents of the letter **RH** asked **JR** if he wished him to re-write the letter. **JR** requested that **RH** produce a new letter and to let all Trustees see it before issuing it.

**CM** suggested that only one member of each organisation should be invited. A list of suitable organisations had been produced in the previous board meeting minutes i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013.

It was suggested that, as well as an invitation to the meeting, the email should contain possible agenda items, e.g.

- Disability issues
- PIP
- AOB

**JR** suggested that we should see if we could get someone from the Government to come along to the meeting.

**RH** suggested that we ask an MP to chair the meeting.



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We should try to arrange the meeting under the auspices of the LA to further raise the charities profile.

**Action – RH** to prepare email to invite other disability charities to a meeting. **JR** will try to persuade an MP or minister to attend once venue has been agreed.

#### **14. Stepforward**

There were various issues experienced with the printing of the last StepForward. **DW** has spoken to the new man in charge and gone over the contract with him. **DW** has also arranged a face-to-face meeting with the person who will be putting the magazine together. **DW** suggested that **PF** attend the meeting if she is available. As agreed at the last Board meeting an office report had been sent to the printers but had not be published.

**DW** mentioned that he would like to see some articles in the magazine from user/Support groups. **DW** is currently writing an article dealing with driving issues. **CM** said that she had got an article which could be published.

**Action – DW, RM** and **PF** (if available) to attend a meeting with Stepforward representative to discuss recent issues and the way forward.

**Action – DW** to produce an article for the Stepforward magazine.

**Action – CM** to provide an article for the Stepforward magazine.

#### **15. LA Office Staff, Job Descriptions**

**CM** had sent round the staff Job Descriptions prior to the meeting; these had included an updated CEO Job description which had been changed to include delegation for some of the duties currently undertaken by **DW**. The Board unanimously agreed the Job Descriptions.

#### **16. Office Report**

**DW** had submitted the office report to the Trustees prior to the meeting.

**PF** mentioned that **GJ** has queried why there was no Legal Panel representative for Wales. **DW** said that Linsey Hyde (**LH**) was actively looking into the situation and trying to find a suitable representative for Wales.

**Action – LH** to try to find a legal panel representative for Wales.

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**17. AOB**

**DS** would like the LA to arrange for cards to be printed that could be placed on cars that were parked in disabled parking bays and not showing a blue badge.

**DW** said he would check with a solicitor to see if this is legal.

**JR** asked if the Board were ok with **DW** working from home if the need arose. The Trustees agreed that this would be ok.

**DW** raised a suggestion to purchase a caravan for use by members of the LA. It could either be rented out to members at a subsidised rate or even for free. When a member was not using the caravan it could be rented out to the general public at the going rate.

**SH** suggested that **CD** could see if she could get sponsorship for this.

It was agreed that the next Board meeting should be held on the evening before the AGM.

**Action – DW** to check if it is legal to put notices on cars

**Action – DW** to check into the feasibility of buying a caravan for use by LA members.

**Action – CD** to check if she can obtain sponsorship for a LA caravan

The meeting ended at 16:45