

Minutes of the Board meeting of Action against Medical Accidents Held on 12th July 2022

Present: Jocelyn Cornwell (JC) Chair, Janine Collier (JCol), Bill Kilvington (BK), Nigel Holland (NH), Caroline Browne (CB), Mary Smith (MS), *Mike Andersson (MA), *Maggie Davies (MD) *Attended via Teams

In attendance: Peter Walsh (PW), Lisa O'Dwyer (LOD)

Apologies received: Amrat Khorana (AK)

1. Declarations of Interest

The Chair asked if any trustees had new conflicts of interest to declare since the last meeting. There were none.

2. Minutes of Board meeting held 29th March 2022

- The minutes were agreed as an accurate record. The actions schedule was noted. Matters arising:
- It was noted that a MS Teams group has been set up for trustees to discuss issues between meetings etc.
- JC had discussed the Senior Independent Director role with both CB and MA, and CB had agreed to take on this role and, at the same time, resign as Chair of the Quality and Outcomes Committee.
- **Action C039:** JC to invite trustees to volunteer for the role of QOC Chair.
- It was AGREED that a chart giving details of trustee appointment dates etc would be included in the papers for each meeting.
Action C040: PW/VN
- It was clarified that feedback on meetings was intended to be sought from participants in the meeting and fed back to the Chair of the meeting concerned.

2. Chair's Update

JC reported that a selection panel comprising of herself, CB, JCol and Dorit Braun (one of our beneficiaries) was being supported by Nathan Bacon with regard to selecting a new CEO. The first round of interviews had been held and 3 candidates had been selected for a second interview. Candidates were also meeting staff who would give feedback to the panel. The second interviews were being held on 18th July 2022 from which it was hoped an appointment would be made.

3. CEO report

The report was noted. PW drew attention to the work that had been done on the Ockenden Independent Senior Advocates, with 20 signatories to a joint letter. The previous week, a very successful fundraising dinner was held in Cambridge hosted by Tees Solicitors, which was expected to raise £5,000.

The list of meetings attended by trustees was amended to include AK attending the Curry Nights in Leeds and Manchester.

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4. 40th Anniversary Events

The arrangements for the big Gala event on December 2nd were noted. There are a limited number of free places available for trustees or staff who are not 'on duty' on the evening. Trustees were invited to put themselves forward for a free place at the event. MS, CB and MD requested a free place. BK wished to purchase a place at the £80 'cost' rate.

C041: PW to notify Ed Maycock of required places and ask AK and staff

There was discussion as to whether defendant solicitor firms should be invited to buy tickets at the event. It was agreed that they should.

C042: PW to check with Ed Maycock that defendants are included in marketing

It was felt that closer engagement with defendants' solicitors should be explored. PW and LOD to discuss and report back.

C043: PW/LOD

The proposals for an event on 13th December, including a farewell for the current CEO, were agreed. It was felt that catering should be modest: wine/beer/soft drinks and canapes.

It was agreed that PW liaise with Fieldfisher re the arrangements and draw up a list of people to invite, to include: ex-trustees and staff; existing staff, trustees and patrons; key people with whom AvMA works.

C044: PW

5. Policies

The policies had been circulated with a request for comments before the meeting. The Chair had responded, and the comments incorporated.

The updated Complaints Policy & Procedure was approved.

CB raised a number of issues with regard to the Anti-Harassment/Bullying/Victimisation Policy. It was agreed CB send comments to PW and a revised policy be brought back to the Board.

C045: CB

It was agreed to seek advice from Croner about the Redundancy Policy and bring back to the Board.

C046: PW

There was discussion about the process of updating policies. It was agreed that the review date for policies going forward should be staggered so that too many don't become due for review at once. It was felt that HR-related policies should be reviewed annually due to changes in legislation etc.

It was felt that policies needed to make clear who was responsible for ensuring policies are updated/reviewed. MA offered to draft a 'policy on policies' to help ensure consistency of approach. BK offered to help with this.

C047: MA/BK

6. Finance

NH had spoken to Sayer Vincent as part of the audit planning process. and confirmed that in his opinion, the focus and approach of the audit adopted for y/e 31/3/21 was appropriate for the y/e 31/3/22 audit. Looking forward , if and when revenues start to decline as a result of changed economic circumstances in future years , then a greater focus on revenue fraud detection would then become appropriate .

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As regards inflation , NR has incorporated prudent assumptions in the 10 year plan .

Despite a more challenging period for the investment portfolios in very volatile markets , NH maintains his confidence in our managers , Castlefield. The committee minutes were noted.

The draft revised terms of references for the Finance & Investment Committee were AGREED.

The Finance Manager's report was noted. The graph was welcomed but NR was asked to check that the figures on the left axis were correct.

C048: NR

The management accounts and paper on identified recurring income/savings for 2023/24 were noted.

7. Income Generation Working Group

MS presented the notes of last meeting and opportunities register. It was noted that the current focus was on looking for opportunities to boost recurring income from conferences and events. The research opportunity referred to in the notes was more of a policy opportunity than an income one and would be referred to the QOC.

8. IT & Digital Working Group

MA reported that the CRM project was going well overall but that the timetable had slipped significantly. This is not unusual with significant IT projects. This was due to pressure/commitments of departments. As a consequence of support for Seneca being withdrawn, there was a risk that problems could arise with Seneca before the CRM is fully operative. It was agreed that PW discuss contingency plans about this with the project team/relevant managers.

C049: PW

It was noted that there would be considerable amounts of work for the Medico-Legal department in particular, in implementing the CRM.

The Iplc finance software project was on hold and would be reviewed in time for a report to the September Board meeting.

C050: IT&DWG

9. Quality & Outcomes Committee

CB presented the committee minutes and invited any questions. It was noted that the committee was keeping an eye on the quality risks in the register.

10. Fixed Recoverable Costs

The reports were noted and felt to be informative, clear and strong. It was confirmed that AvMA should continue to take a strong line on pointing out the consequences of reforms that can reduce access to justice for our beneficiaries.

It was felt that the use of human story case studies was essential to get our message across. It was important to make the connection between these policies and 'second harm' caused to beneficiaries. Consideration should be given to using lobbying consultants if the cost was not prohibitive.

It was noted that the Government are due to respond to the Health & Social Care Committee report on litigation and to the fixed costs consultation shortly, and that other 'reforms' may be forthcoming.

11. Risk Register

It had not been possible for MA and PW to meet to discuss further development of the register due to MA's illness. They would report to the next meeting.

The following changes were agreed to the Risk Register:

- R005 (Fundraising) – change likelihood to 'medium' due to no fundraising officer yet in place and overall to 'high'
- R013 (Seneca) – change likelihood to 'medium' and overall to 'high'
- R018 (Change of CEO) – change likelihood to 'medium', impact to 'high' and overall to 'high' and 'owner' to Board

ACTION C051: PW to update register

12. People Report

The People Report was noted. It was noted that there was nervousness amongst staff about the extra workload in implementing and being trained on the new CRM.

LOD reported that a senior caseworker who had been on maternity leave has now handed in her notice for personal reasons. LOD to discuss with PW how best to replace.

C052: LOD/PW

13. Operational Plan & Departmental Reports

The Plan and reports were noted. Managers were encouraged to make reports shorter if they could.

C053: PW

It was requested that the Operational Plan used icons rather than coloured text to denote status of objectives.

C054: PW

14. Any other business

- CB would be stepping down as Chair of QOC as she has taken on the role of Senior Independent Director but would remain as a member of QOC.
- It was requested that meetings of various committees be spaced out more to lessen the time trustees spend on AvMA in any one week. Chairs of committees/groups to consider in setting meeting dates.

C055: Chairs of committees/working groups

- Recruitment of additional trustees would be discussed at the next meeting and trustees asked to consider skills/experience we should look for.

C056: JC

15. Date of next meetings

- 27th September 2022
- 13th December 2022 (includes AGM, followed by 40th anniversary/CEO farewell reception)

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Council Meeting Actions Schedule

	Date Agreed	Agenda Item #	Issue	Description	Person responsible	Date for completion	Progress/Completed
C001	29.9.20	10	AvMA Website	Proceed with procurement work and develop a financial business case to Board for approval before entering into website development contract.	JS/NB	Spring 2022	Delayed until CRM project advanced
C021	7.12.21	9	Risk Management	Discuss with consultant whether Equality Diversity & Inclusion should be seen as a risk	PW/AK	Will be part of report Oct' '22	
C025	29.3.22	2	Meetings	Discuss possible amendments to list of meetings	PW/JC	June 22	
C026	29.3.22	3	Governance	Draft special resolution for changes to constitution	PW	November '22	
C027	29.3.22	3	Governance	Identify candidate to take up post of SID	JC	June '22	complete
C034	29.3.22	6	Finance	Work on revised 10 year plan and present to board	PW/NR/FIC	September 2022	
C035	29.3.22	9	Risk Register	Discuss possible future improvements to register	MA/PW	June/July 2022	
C039	12.7.22	2	QOC Chair	Invite trustees to apply for role	JC		complete
C040	12.7.22	2	Dates of Appointment	To be included in the Board papers going forward	PW/VN	Sep 22	
C041	12.7.22	4	40 th Anniversary Gala	Advise Ed Maycock of required places and ask AK and staff	PW		complete
C042	12.7.22	4	40 th Anniversary Gala	Check with EM that defendants are included in marketing	PW		complete
C043	12.7.22	4	40 th Anniversary Gala	Explore further cooperation with defendants	PW/LOD		
C044	12.7.22	4	PW leaving event	Liaise with Fieldfisher re arrangements and compile a list of invitees	PW	ongoing	
C045	12.7.22	5	Policies	CB send comments on Anti-Harassment Policy to PW and PW bring back to Board	CB / PW	Sep 22	complete
C046	12.7.22	5	Policies	Seek advice from Croner re Redundancy Policy and bring to Board	PW		
C047	12.7.22	5	Policies	Create 'policy on policies'	MA/BK		
C048	12.7.22	6	Finance	Check figures on left axis of graph are correct	NR		Complete
C049	12.7.22	8	CRM	Discuss contingency plan with project team and relevant managers	PW		Complete
C050	12.7.22	8	Iplicit	Review IPLICIT project and report to Board	IT & DWG	Sep 22	Complete
C051	12.7.22	11	Risk Register	Update register as noted	PW	Sep 22	Complete
C052	12.7.22	12	Staffing	Discuss how best to replace caseworker who has resigned	LOD/PW		Complete
C053	12.7.22	13	Departmental Reports	Ask managers to shorten departmental reports	PW		Complete
C054	12.7.22	13	Operational Plan	Replace coloured text with icons	PW	Sep 22	Complete
C055	12.7.22	14	Committee Meeting Dates	Chairs to consider weekly hours when setting meeting dates	Chairs		

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C056	12.7.22	14	Trustee Recruitment	Trustees to consider skills/experience required of new trustees	JC	Sep 22	
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