Minutes

ACTION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF
ACTION AGAINST MEDICAL ACCIDENTS

held on 31 January 2012
at Irwin Mitchell Solicitors

Present:	Rita Lewis	- Chair
	Malcolm Alexander	- Vice-Chair
	Barbara Ross	- Treasurer
	Celia Davies	
	Philip Dolan	
	Jean Robinson	
	Hilary Scott	
In attendance:	Peter Walsh	- Chief Executive and Company Secretary
	Hugh Williams	- Deputy Chief Executive
	Tony Rowell	- Finance Manager
	Philip Walker	- Fundraising Manager

1 **Apologies:**

Ann Alexander, Vincent Kika.

2 **Minutes of the Meeting held 25 October 2011:**

The draft minutes were amended as follows:

Item 4 second paragraph second sentence. Change to "Malcolm suggested that an assessment of the possible reputational risk of AvMA being too closely associated with lawyers to the detriment of other stakeholders be conducted".

Item 6 delete last sentence.

The minutes were then AGREED as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

It was AGREED that for the website version the monetary figures would be redacted.

<u>Matters Arising</u>

Item 4. Peter explained that the expected judicial review of the Ombudsman did not go ahead because AvMA's client did not respond in time to meet the deadline.

Initial

3 **Notes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 18 January 2012:**

These were noted. It was clarified that the feasibility study of developing legal advice within AvMA concerned the feasibility of AvMA developing a legal unit capable of conducting certain legal work itself such as public law/judicial review work and possibly NHS redress scheme/small claims work.

4 **Financial Matters:**

Management Accounts

Tony tabled a narrative report (attached). It was noted that whilst corporate sponsorship and donations were significantly below budget, the estimated outturn for the end of year was £5,600 better than budgeted (a deficit of £45,476 as opposed to £51,115). It was noted that this was based on an anticipated £20,000 donation which had been pledged by a law firm and £17,000 of late payments relating to the annual conference. Peter agreed to look into why so much was still outstanding. **PW**

Delegated Authorities

The proposed delegated authorities policy was AGREED with the following change: Under 6.1 "Acquisition and disposal of leasehold property of up to 10 years" to be designated to the Board of Trustees (not Chief Executive).

Season Ticket Loan Scheme

The proposal to offer staff an interest free loan for travel season tickets was discussed and AGREED in principle. It was noted that there was minimal cost to the charity, if any, and could be significant benefits in terms of attracting and retaining staff. Tony to finalise operational detail and get Peter/Hugh to sign off. **TR**

Independent Financial Advisers

Barbara reported that three companies had been interviewed, each with different strengths and weaknesses. Each estimated that it should be possible to achieve a return of inflation plus 3% over a five year investment period. It was AGREED that as there was a possibility of recruiting a trustee with significant financial/investment experience that the appointment of an IFA could be delayed to allow for more thorough consideration, possibly involving the new trustee (if appointed).

5 **Risk Register:**

The risk register was noted. Peter stressed that there was extreme uncertainty as regards the future of clinical negligence litigation and therefore a very significant risk of losing large amounts of our income from solicitors from next year on. It was AGREED to ask Ann Alexander to explain the context of this at a future meeting. **PW/AA**

The charity's approach to risk management was discussed. It was AGREED:

- The forthcoming review/strategy meeting to include a detailed look at major risks.
- Try to be more sophisticated in describing risk and likelihood in the risk register.
- Get departments to assess risks to their own departmental objectives and include in their reports.
- Management team/CEO to assess major risks to be escalated to risk register.
- Carry out risk assessment of each new policy decision, or decision to allocate resources.

6 **Trustee Recruitment Policy:**

The draft policy was discussed and it was AGREED that it be redrafted in light of the discussion. Key changes:

- Make more clear that a planned recruitment exercise was the normal approach and one-off recruitment exceptional.
- Review of trustees' skills and experience to be done annually as part of the annual planning exercise, and include consideration of whether recruitment of new trustees necessary.
- References preferably from an organisation the applicant has worked for/with, but character references acceptable if these not available.

Barbara explained that a recently retired man with extensive financial/ investment experience had been put in contact and was interested in becoming a trustee. It was AGREED that due to the charity's current need

	for these attributes consideration of the potential trustee be expedited. It was AGREED Rita, Malcolm and Peter interview the candidate on 8th February and report back to trustees with a recommendation if appropriate. It was AGREED to advertise for new trustees using a range of methods. Rita asked that all trustees give consideration as to the progression of trustees to offices of chair etc.	
7	**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan:** This was noted. It was AGREED to add trustee recruitment to the actions. Monitoring data for the financial year to 31st March 2012 would be available at next meeting.	**PW**
8	**Departmental Annual Objectives Report:** These were noted. With regard to the Inquest project, Malcolm suggested that consideration be given to publishing a report on rule 43 letters and outcomes and that information on rule 43 letters be shared with LINks (in future Healthwatch) so that they could follow up locally. PW to raise with Lisa O'Dwyer.	**PW**
9	**CEO and DCEO Report:** The report was noted.	
10	**Date of next Meeting:** It was AGREED to use the next meeting as an opportunity to review the charity's strategic plan in the light of so many changes/opportunities/ threats. Peter to arrange staff review first and report to Council meeting. It was AGREED to change the date of the next Council/review meeting to 16th April. To start earlier in day to allow time.	

…….
Chair

Initial