

Minutes

		ACTION
	<p style="text-align: center;">MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF ACTION AGAINST MEDICAL ACCIDENTS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">held on 28 January 2014 at Freedman House</p>	
	<p>Present: Rita Lewis - Chair Malcolm Alexander - Vice-Chair Barbara Ross - Treasurer Michael Bishop Angela Brown Celia Davies Philip Dolan Aideen O'Neill Rachael Vasmer</p> <p>In attendance: Peter Walsh - Chief Executive and Company Secretary Hugh Williams - Deputy Chief Executive Tony Rowell - Finance Manager</p>	
	<p>1 Apologies:</p> <p>Ray Greenwood, Vincent Kika, Hilary Scott</p> <p>2 Appointment of Trustee:</p> <p>The recommendation of the vice-chair and chair to appoint Suzanne Shale as a trustee (subject to receipt of references etc.) was considered and APPROVED.</p> <p>There remain a few other applicants who will be interviewed over the coming weeks and recommendations made to the April meeting where appropriate.</p> <p>3 Review of the Strategic Plan:</p> <p>A draft plan based on discussions so far with trustees and staff, updating the existing three year plan, was used as the starting point for discussion. Trustees AGREED that the mission, vision and values remained valid, reflecting their vision of the kind of charity they want AvMA to remain. It was</p>	
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AGREED to put more emphasis on the importance of independence; working in partnership with others; and valuing the work of health professionals who demonstrate good practice in the next draft. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis was reviewed, and some additions identified to be included in the new draft. It was felt the review of progress on objectives in the existing plan should give more emphasis to the impressive achievements with campaigning – particularly over the Duty of Candour.

Other suggestions for the next draft of the plan included:

- Being clearer about ‘big picture’/‘political’ or policy changes which AvMA wants to work for.
- Including ‘campaigning’ as a core activity with its own cost-centre, and including campaigns/policy objectives in the series of planned reviews.
- Assessing ‘competition’ and exploring co-operation/partnership where possible and appropriate.
- Exploring mediation as an area to develop.
- Exploring the possibility of re-establishing the Patients for Patient Safety project or similar.

The financial projection section of the draft plan was tabled and discussed. It was noted that there was a significant risk, due to the uncertain future for clinical negligence solicitors, that income could drop dramatically over the next three years resulting in a drop on AvMA’s reserves to under £1 million. Whilst on the one hand there was some frustration expressed regarding “getting on and spending” the legacy money, there was agreement that priority should be given to reducing the rate of depletion of reserves. It was AGREED that the aim of the strategy should be to maintain existing budgeted levels of activity and staff establishment at least, whilst developing ways of reducing the annual deficit. It was AGREED that achieving capital growth was not an objective, and that increases in the value of long term investments of £1 million should be realised when it becomes necessary to maintain existing levels of activity.

It was AGREED that new objectives involving new/increased expenditure would need to be costed and have a business case assessed.

The series of ‘deep dive reviews’ into service activity areas would identify priorities which may improve efficiency, income or maintain income, or require investment.

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	<p>If the financial performance over the next year does change significantly for the worse, it will be necessary to draw up contingency plans based on agreed priorities.</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 October 2013:</p> <p>The minutes were AGREED and signed by the chair as an accurate record.</p> <p>Matters Arising: Philip Dolan reported that Scottish Government had still not made a decision about the proposed 'no-fault' compensation scheme. It was noted that the Clwyd/Hart review of complaints had been published. It voiced support for Duty of Candour. Healthwatch England were leading on a project to promote patients' rights to complain – AvMA would be involved.</p>	
5	<p>Notes of Executive Committee meeting held on 14 January 2014:</p> <p>These were noted. Barbara felt that the conclusion of the discussion of investments and the possible removal of investments in Veola was less definite. It was AGREED to discuss this later on the agenda. Peter pointed out that the projected deficit for 2013-14 should have read £113,218.</p>	
6	<p>Finance:</p> <p>The report was noted. It was noted that the projected deficit by end of the financial year had increased by £87,977 to £113,218. This was mainly because of under-performance in the conference department due to lack of sponsorship and take up of webinars and a major drop in anticipated income from fundraising. The situation had worsened due to much reduced income from the choir event and failure of the 'Big Give' system this year. Peter reported that Phil had worked on a budget for next year in which he is confident of raising over £10,000 over direct expenditure and with potential for a further £20,000. Fundraising would be a priority for the forthcoming activity reviews. The need for better risk assessment of activities and cautious budgeting was stressed.</p> <p>There was discussion of the departmental breakdown within the management accounts. This was still a relatively new process for AvMA and needed to be fine-tuned to show a more accurate reflection of "indirect costs" for departments. It was noted that the indirect costs apportioned to conferences were unrealistically high, and there was no department for "campaigns/policy/research" which took up a lot of Peter's time. Work would be done on this with the new Finance Manager.</p>	<p>PW/HW</p> <p>PW</p>
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	<p>It was AGREED to circulate trustees with last financial year's figures to compare with this year's projections.</p> <p>Michael advised that Veola had large charity funds which should be explored for opportunities to receive a grant.</p>	<p>P WALKER</p>
7	<p>Investments:</p> <p>The reports were noted.</p> <p>It was AGREED that an Investment Sub-Committee should continue to meet with the brief to monitor investments and policy in this area and make recommendations to the Council. It was AGREED that the membership should be: Barbara Ross, Michael Bishop, Aideen O'Neill and either Peter or Hugh should attend.</p> <p>The issue of Veola's involvement in illegally occupied territories was discussed. It was AGREED that Barbara liaise with Aideen over requesting a more detailed response from Cheviot and update re our concerns, discuss with the sub-committee and make any recommendations felt appropriate to the Council.</p>	<p>BR/AO'N</p>
8	<p>Marketing & Communications Officer:</p> <p>It was AGREED that improving marketing and communications across AvMA was a priority, and funding for this post of up to £35,000 per year (including salary + on-costs) was APPROVED. Peter to make arrangements for recruiting on a permanent basis. It was felt that the person should be an employee (subject to review/satisfactory performance). Peter was to liaise with Rachael concerning the final job description and person specification.</p>	<p>PW/RV</p>
9	<p>CEO/DECO Report:</p> <p>The report was noted.</p> <p>Peter reported that NHS England had asked AvMA to submit a proposal to train over 300 staff regarding complaints. This was felt to be a fantastic opportunity. Peter was working up a proposal over the next week. Delivery would require input from others who AvMA would recruit. It was felt trustees may be interested in this role. Angela offered her help with this.</p>	<p>PW</p> <p>AB</p>
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10	<p>Departmental Reports:</p> <p>These were noted.</p>
11	<p>Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy:</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>
12	<p>Risk Register:</p> <p>The report was noted.</p> <p>It was noted that the impact of several of the risks was the potential depletion of reserves.</p>
13	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>2 pmTuesday, 29th April 2014 at Freedman House (preceded by informal meeting/lunch at 1 pm)</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Chair</p>
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