

Macfarlane Trust

Minutes of the meeting of the National Support Services Committee (NSSC) held at 11am on 5th January 2005 at Alliance House, 12 Caxton Street, London SW1H OQS

Present:

Mrs Elizabeth Boyd, (Chair of the NSSC)
 Mr Stuart Gregg
 Mr William Payne
 Mr Peter Stevens, (Chair of the Macfarlane Trust)
 Mr Roger Tyrrell

In attendance:

Ms Jude Cohen, Head of Support Services (HSS)
 Mr Martin Harvey, Chief Executive (CE)

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

It was agreed that the order of the agenda would be changed, to deal with the most important issues first.

35.04 Minutes of meeting 1st December 2004

These were agreed as a correct record and signed as such by the Chair,

36.04 Matters arising

a. 1534W has expressed unhappiness at the decision of the NSSC to offer no further support. Following discussion of the case it was agreed that the original decision be confirmed.

b. It was agreed that a THT suggestion re tendering to provide the RSW service for MFT be politely refused.

c. It was agreed that communications from the Independent Financial Advisor should be directed through the office and not sent directly to trustees.

It was agreed that the HSS should arrange to meet the IFA in an attempt to progress the issue of fees for future work.

37.04 Any other business

a. Newsletter

i. The HSS' suggestions re a more frequent, small, single-issue newsletter were agreed.

ii. It was agreed that the mailing to registrants regarding grants should not indicate amounts that can be claimed, and that it should clarify that all single grants are discretionary – there are no automatic grants. The office guidelines should never be publicised.

iii. Further amendments to the office guidelines were agreed.

b. DWP investigations into registrants savings

The HSS reported that six registrants have now sought help in dealing with DWP investigations, and that all have been satisfactorily dealt with. The Chief Executive

congratulated the HSS on her work around this and expressed pleasure at the Trust being able to offer this type of assistance to registrants.

38.04 Loan policies

It was agreed that loans will only be given as a last resort, and that registrants loan histories would be included in the supporting information provided with applications.

39.04 Hospital travel costs for registrants living overseas

It was agreed that all applications for hospital travel costs from registrants living overseas will be considered on an individual basis.

40.04 Applications and ongoing cases

1059 It was agreed that the offer of a loan to fund house adaptations remain as agreed earlier, with repayments at £100 per month.

1141 It was agreed that no grant be awarded towards complementary therapy.

1264W It was agreed that reg pay of £345 be paid for three months, followed by £200 for 3 months, £150 for 3 months, then £100 a month (ie from 9 month's time).

That the letter include information on Bereavement Counselling as offered by the Trust, and information on the opportunity to request a grant towards fees to attend vocational training courses.

1416 It was agreed that no grant be awarded towards the cost of obtaining a US visa.

1449 It was agreed that no grant be awarded towards the cost of roof repairs.

1459 It was agreed that this application be deferred whilst further information is sought on the likelihood of work following completion of the course and what, if any, support the employing NHS Trust has offered.

1476 It was agreed that a grant of £800 be awarded to cover car hire, and the other request for assistance with accommodation costs be refused.

1921 It was agreed that no grant be awarded towards further driving lessons for the registrant's partner.

2031D It was agreed that a grant of £300 be awarded towards the cost of a new sofa.

1826 It was agreed that a grant of £3,211 be awarded towards travel costs incurred attending a teacher training course, and that the registrant be reminded that they can request a grant towards hospital travel costs.

1015 It was agreed that a grant of £500 be awarded to cover consultation fees, to enable the applicant to ascertain the exact cost of treatment for a further application.

1002 That a grant of £2,500 be awarded to cover vocational training course fees, to be paid direct to the loan company.

1114 It was agreed that no grant be awarded towards a bedroom carpet..

1219a It was agreed that grants be awarded of £373 towards fares to attend hospital in the UK, £260 towards setting up home costs and £500 towards car repairs.

41.04 Further discussion of policy on assisted conception

It was agreed that the NSSC will recommend to the Macfarlane Trust Board of Trustees that: "The policy on financial support to registrants towards Assisted Conception be expanded to include:

'Applicants should attempt to obtain through the NHS as many of the tests and procedures as are available.

As Sperm Washing is not available via the NHS, the NSSC will consider applications towards a maximum of three cycles of sperm washing at a maximum cost of £2,000.

That the NSSC will consider applications for funding for other aspects of assisted conception where there is evidence that the NHS will not fund these or that there would be inordinate delays due to waiting lists'."

42.04 Future events

a. Bereavement Weekend

It was agreed that the purpose of the weekend should be clarified, and a budget produced for approval.

b. Carers' Weekend

It was agreed that the MFT should plan a carer's weekend for 2006, to offer support and encouragement to those carers who face considerable difficulties in caring for registrants.

43.04 Further discussion on principles of reg pay

It was agreed that a paper should be produced for the next meeting, and the subject form the first discussion item on the agenda.

44.04 Dates of future meetings

The next meeting will be held on 23rd February at 11am at Alliance House.

The meeting closed at 5pm