

Macfarlane Trust Annual Review of 2012/13

16 January 2014, MR9 Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2NS

Attendees

Ailsa Wight (DH, policy)
Rowena Jecock (DH, policy)
Ben Cole (DH, policy)
Naomi Balabanoff (DH, policy)
Harry Haralambous (DH, finance)
Roger Evans (Macfarlane Trust, Chair)
Jan Barlow (Macfarlane Trust, CEO)

Minutes

1. Ailsa thanked everyone for attending and apologised for the delay in holding the the meeting. AW also thanked the Trust for their hard work on this issue.
2. Actions from last meeting
 - a. DH now sends relevant PQs to MfT after they are published on Hansard
 - b. RE clarified why MfT backdated various widow payments. RE confirmed that the Trust are not in a financial position to make similar decisions again and confirmed that decisions regarding disbursements for the Trust are to be made within their allocation
 - c. DH had not received the original benchmarking data for the widows' payments
 - d. The term "capital grant" has been used again for the 2012/13 accounts (page 14), and it would be preferable to use a different term.
 - e. Operating balance with the Macfarlane Trust has now been agreed at £60k (based on potential quarterly applications for one-off grants)
 - f. DH had not yet received the rationale underpinning the Trust's disbursement policy
 - g. Statement of financial procedures – another version to be circulated shortly.
 - h. Meeting was not required following ministerial decision
3. Annual report and accounts 2012/13
 - a. RE set out that a lot had happened in 2012/13, with more changes afoot in the current year.
 - b. The Board was changing, with the recruitment and appointment of three Trustees underway (one a Haemophilia Society appointment)
 - c. The financial assistance survey has been used for prioritising needs for spending the reserves. In 2013/14, MFT was spending some reserves on improving beneficiaries' homes, which is giving support to most people who applied (125 applications). The only claims not approved were those outside of the set criteria. There was a fair process in place for assessing claims, and

some beneficiaries came forward who the Trust had not heard from for several years.

- d. MFT described the ageing profile of their beneficiaries, with 36% of beneficiaries over 50, and how they are going to need to take a strategic look at the changing profile. **Action: MFT to provide to DH the age profile of primary beneficiaries and widows, with age bands and the number of individuals in each pay band**
- e. The international conference in the accounts was paid for by donations and was attended by the Chair and former CEO.

4. Current year (2013/14)

- a. The Trust had agreed to make winter payments this year, to be funded from their reserve.
- b. MFT identified that they need to do more work in engaging with the beneficiary community, which is >600 individuals. There are usually around 10-15 attendees at partnership group meetings, which are not accessing the vast majority of beneficiaries.
- c. MFT are not holding any weekends away this year.
- d. RE highlighted that the Trust has a funding gap, which in 2012/13 was around £700k, which is currently being funded from the reserve. However, the Trust were trying not to use the reserves for ongoing expenditure. By the end of 2013/14, he estimated that there would be approx. £2m left in the reserve. A reduced reserve will also generate less investment income for the Trust.

5. Future years (2014/15 onwards)

- a. RE said that the trustees did not want to make cuts in regular payments, and that the index linked MFET payments should cover basic needs. If they would need to cut payments, the trustees would first look at cutting winter payments, CPI increases for discretionary payments and one-off grants. If MFT would need to cut payments to beneficiaries significantly, then the Board would want to meet with the Minister.
- b. RE said that if MFT don't get the increased budget requested in their business case for 2014/15, then it will need to assume that it would also not be increased for 2015/16. No increase in funding for 2014/15 would mean that the Trust would need to cut their regular payments.
- c. RE pointed out that there was read across if only one of the business cases for increased funding from the Caxton Foundation and the Macfarlane Trust was approved.
- d. **Action: DH to provide interim reply to MFT business case to help the discussion at the upcoming Board meeting.**

6. Implications for MFT of pending developments with other blood related organisations

- a. MFT asked if there were any DH plans should the Chair of any other DH funded charities supporting those affected through contaminated blood, in

particular the smaller charities, step down. DH indicated that it had not yet considered this.

7. Political interest

- a. There has been recent increased political interest in support provided to those affected by contaminated blood, including a question at Prime Ministers Questions in October 2013.
- b. Ministers are listening to concerns being expressed.

8. Date of next meeting.

- a. DH would like the next accounts by August 2014, with a meeting in September or October.