

## **Members Summary: AGM & Governing Council meeting held at SIA House on Saturday 12 November 2016**

The trustees November Governing Council meeting was held in conjunction with SIA's 2016 AGM.

### **AGM**

The AGM was attended by trustees and senior staff who were delighted to also welcome a number of members who had travelled afar to join them for the business of the meeting.

The Chair began her opening remarks saying SIA had had a very successful year by reflecting on the success of SIA's new Nurse Advocate Service, which is making a significant impact to the support and treatment SCI people receive in non-specialist settings.

The Chair reported on the long awaited NHS England Spinal Cord Injury Service Review, which is Co-Chaired by Professor Charles Greenhough, and SIA's own Chair. This is a pivotal piece of work which will shape and influence services that are vital to our members in England for many years to come. SIA's Head of Public Affairs has led one of the work streams which gathered the experience and views of those with a spinal cord injury who have accessed services as a result of their injury.

To inform this Review, SIA led the surveying of 1700 Spinal cord injured people with responses received from approximately 1600 individuals. The results provided invaluable evidence of the differences in the positive outcomes between spinal cord injured people who access a specialist route, in comparison to the poorer outcomes for people who do not access specialist care. As a result of this, the final report from the NHS England Review firmly said that 'all Spinal cord injured people should have timely access to specialist SCI services, irrespective of issues such as age, location, co-morbidities or cause of injury'.

The Chair reported on SIA's continued lobbying, against funding caps for care which have been introduced in various areas around the country. SIA is also continuing to support members who are concerned by the increasing costs of or restrictions to their care packages.

In closing, the Chair reported that fundraising for vital services continues to be challenging; in the current climate and SIA is exploring opportunities for new funding streams as part of a wider fundraising strategy.

SIA's auditors, Keens Shay Keens LLP, were in attendance for the meeting to answer any questions. They re-affirmed a pleasing report and satisfactory outcome to the auditing processes conducted on SIA's Financial Statements for 2015-16. The Honorary Treasurer proposed that Keens Shay Keens be formally re-appointed for a third term, which was agreed unanimously.

The Chief Executive reported on SIA's Impact Report for 2015-16. A survey conducted with the membership reconfirmed that SIA's services remain pertinent and relevant. The main headline was

the vastly increased demand for SIA's services, with SIA doubling the number of SCI people supported when compared with the previous year.

SIA's new Volunteer Co-ordinator has successfully attracted a number of people who want to support SIA through volunteering, both internally and externally, and this is proving beneficial to both parties.

The Chair then presided on an open forum session with members. A number of views and questions were raised and duly answered. The Chair then closed the business of the AGM.

### **Governing Council meeting**

The November meeting is the first meeting held by the newly formed Governing Council Board for 2016-17.

The Chair formally welcomed all trustees and also thanked those trustees who had retired for their commitment and hard work during their terms in office. Trustee Honorary Officer and Co-opted roles for 2016-17 were duly noted along with the names for the Vice President role and three Special Advisor positions.

The Chair and trustees approved the powers delegated to trustees and senior staff for 2016-17.

The Honorary Treasurer reported on SIA's financial position for the second quarter. Trustees paid attention to movements within the financial statements and noted the results of SIA's investment report. SIA's financial reports continue on-track to meet the predicted year-end results.

The trustees approved SIA's Corporate Strategy for 2017-22. The strategy document has taken almost a year to develop and has encompassed the views of the membership, trustees, and staff; the result of which will see 9 development areas focused over the coming five years. The strategy does not represent a big change of direction for SIA as spinal cord injured people have told us that what we are doing is meeting their needs. The big change is that many more members are now seeking SIA's support and when they do, they are needing more intensive support. Going forward, we need to reach out and ensure that everyone who could benefit from SIA gets the level of support needed. The strategy will include development for growth and be adaptable to changing environments. New opportunities will continue to be explored, that will fit with SIA's ethos and which will be to the benefit of our membership.

The Chief Executive reported more broadly on some of SIA's activities during the last quarter, which included attendance at the Conservative Party Conference where there were opportunities to hold conversations with various people in influence, including Penny Mordaunt, the Minister for Disabled People. She agreed to a follow up meeting.

The Chief Executive also reported on the establishment of two Public Affairs campaigning groups 'Strike a Cord' and 'Care Cuts'. These groups will focus their campaigns on the importance of high quality specialist care for SCI people and to fight against invalid cuts to care packages.

Michelle Howard

SIA Chair