

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OCTOBER 2010 (SILVER JUBILEE)

Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th October 2010
Manchester Town Hall, Manchester

Present: For a full list of those present at the meeting, please e-mail Jane Durston:
info@thebls.com.

1. **Apologies:** None received

2. **Adoption of the minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

4. **Providing Public Value**

Richard Piper, NCVO

Dr Richard Piper from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations explained to members the responsibilities that Charities have under the 2006 Charities Act to provide benefits to the public. Charitable Organisations such as BLS had to have a clear focus on how their work provided a benefit to the public at large rather than just to their members or subscribers. There should be a clear set of objectives incorporating that aim and a charity should have a strategic plan for its activities which showed how it would achieve its objectives. It was important to assess the impact of activities and keep the operations of the charity under regular review. Organisations should always look at how the outside world would judge their activity rather than basing judgements purely on the reactions of members and supporters."

5. **BLS Website**

Phil Osman, Oyster Creative

The BLS website provider gave members an update on the latest developments to the website and explained the functionality of the various website areas. He stressed that the website was intended as a valuable tool and resource for members as well as being the public face of BLS. The more use members made of the site the greater the value for money that BLS would get.

6. **Silver Jubilee Annual Report**

6.1 **Chair's Report – Cheryl Pike**

Thanks to Regional Representatives, BLS Committee and Administration Staff for their support over the last year. In particular to David Combie, Communications Officer, for his successful delivery of the "BLS Lymphoedema Awareness Week".

The resignation of Professor Frank Clark CBE as Patron of the Society was announced and our thanks was extended to him for his support over the years. BLS will look at options for his replacement. Lady Jane Dawnay (formerly Grosvenor) will continue as Patron.

Last year's conference in Sheffield was very successful and this year at Manchester has been even better attended. Thanks were extended to Jane Harding, who led the organising team last year. We are delighted to announce increases in delegate numbers and corporate membership for 2010, as the size of the conference continues to grow steadfastly.

BLS members were encouraged to attend AGM, since their support and views are essential for the continued progress of the society.

The contract for the BLS Communications Officer has been extended indefinitely and this role is being developed to extend to strategic planning for future BLS conferences; allowing clinicians to concentrate on programme content.

2010 saw the commencement of the BLS Education Project, aimed at updating all existing literature for BLS members, health care professionals and the public. We will also be reviewing and updating the "Introduction to Chronic Oedema" course material. We hope this will assist current lymphoedema practitioners to host talks and courses to explain the causes and treatment of lymphoedema.

The continued financial market pressures have engendered the Trustees to review budget and expenditure. The review has been well received by all and should continue to support the BLS business plan. We remain committed to improving value for money for members.

The quorate of voting members must be one tenth of the number of society members and we can confirm those registered in 2009 was 97, with 70 voting forms completed. The proposed resolutions were all adopted.

6.2 **Treasurer's Report 2009-10: Christina Moore**

This year BLS addressed the activities set out in our objectives for public benefit as reported by fellow Trustees. The Awareness Week Campaign budget came in at a final cost of £33,945.00.

Our overall expenditure came to £139,923 compared to £110,630 in 2009. Income had increased to £111,581 compared with £97,000.00 in 2009. Increase in subscriptions was recorded from £27,222 on £21,125.00 in 2009.

There is a net deficit of £21,882 compared to net deficit of £13,630.00 last year, as we continue to address spending on certain projects in BLS strategy headings.

Conference costs remain fairly static at £39,617.00 as well as governance costs.

Restricted Funds – Fellowship Fund (Caroline Badger Research Fund) has increased to £20,345.18.

The Reserves Policy remains at £43,000.00 in case the worst case scenario happens in the event of the closure of the society.

6.3 Regional Representatives Report: Naomi Lovesay

The 2009/10 year was extremely busy for regional reps with major involvement in Lymphoedema Awareness Week in April 2009.

Regional reps worked hard to facilitate many regional events, designed to raise lymphoedema awareness. These included quizzes, display boards in hospital and community locations, mail shots to health care professionals and press releases of patient stories. Many spin off events and activities took place throughout the 2009/10 year. Overall it was felt that the week was extremely successful, and reps were in favour of repeating the exercise in 2010/11.

The restructured regions have continued to establish themselves and regional reps feel more confident with the areas which they are covering and representing. The administration team have been very supportive with assisting in the completion of any administration duties that have arisen, including communicating changes that have occurred to the regions or its members.

6.4 Research Advisory Board: Dr Jacqueline Todd

The Research Advisory Board's (RAB) role in judging the abstract submissions for conference this year was challenging as BLS had its highest number of submissions to date. The quality of submissions was varied and the RAB have requested that people seek guidance and advice prior to submitting their abstracts to ensure likelihood of acceptance. The RAB also requested and it has been accepted that they will change their name to the BLS Scientific Committee.

6.5 Children's Special Interest Group: Dr Jacqueline Todd

This was the first year of the Forum's existence and the Terms of Reference and Objectives was agreed (is available on request). The Forum will be circulating questionnaires during the forthcoming year to determine the scope and types of services available across the UK.

6.6 Cellulitis Consensus Forum: Dr Vaughan Keeley

The latest updated version of the Cellulitis Consensus document is available on both the BLS and LSN websites for downloading. There is also a paper for the argument of Flucloxacillin vs Amoxicillin for information. The Forum met earlier today and there will be some minor changes that will need to be introduced, but the current document is still accurate. There will also be an audit of patients receiving antibiotics for cellulitis and clinicians are encouraged to download the information for patients to contact Dr Keeley's team in Derby for a telephonic interview of their treatment.

6.7 Communications Officer Report: David Combie

Priority for 2009/10 was the delivery of the Lymphoedema Awareness Week. Tight controls were kept over total expenditure. Over 50 events were held throughout the country with further events held to reinforce the week's message in later months. Awareness Week expenditure had a significant impact on BLS reserves, but adequate funding was set aside over the prior 3 years to ensure there was no adverse impact on the general activities of the society. BLS will hold an Awareness Week in 2010/11, but later in the year – 1st-5th November 2010.

Relationships with ILF have developed in a positive manner with Cheryl Pike as Chair becoming one of their Trustees. BLS will therefore play a major role in supporting the ILF conference in Brighton in April 2010.

7. Trustee and Staff Update

7.1 Election of Honorary Officers

The following were nominated as Officers of the Society:-

Cheryl Pike – Chair

Tracy Green – Vice-Chair

Christina Moore – Treasurer – stepping down October 2011, to be shadowed by Naomi Lovesay this year in preparation for taking over the role.

Members approved their appointment without dissent.

7.2 Election of Committee Members

The following were nominated as committee members and trustees:-

Cheryl White (co-opted)

Elaine MacNicol

Jacqui Browse

Jan Simmons (co-opted)

Nina Linnitt

Alex Munnoch

Carol Thayer

Members approved their appointment without dissent.

7.3 Retiring Trustees and Committee Members

The following stepped down from the committee with immediate effect:-

Andrea Stigant

Marie Todd

Anita Hopkins

Jill Nandy

7.4 Paid Posts:

Anna Rayner/Jane Durston – Joint BLS Administration Managers (Job-Share)

David Combie – Communications Officer
Jan Simmons – Contract – Tariff Project Post – Education Project
Accounts – Susan Burberry

8. **Any other business:**

8.1 Congratulations were given to BLS members Naomi Lovesay, Marie Todd and Jane Durston on their marriages in the last year.

8.2 **Education Project: Jan Simmons**

An update of the work done for the education project was given. To date all papers from 2004 to the most recent have been scored and various clinicians have been emailed for views on various topics. The project will continue through to the end of March 2011 after which a paper will be presented to the committee for further work that will be required.

8.3 **Tariff Project Post**

Jan Simmons was successful with the interview to commence this post from 1 April 2011.

8.4 **Special Interest Group in Obesity related Lymphoedema**

Cheryl Pike raised the question of the need for a forum or special interest group looking at the dynamics related to lymphoedema secondary to obesity. This was met with great enthusiasm and a quorum of people have met and it was agreed that Justine Whittaker will take the lead in setting up the group.

8.5 **Awareness Event: Jane Wigg**

The committee have been talking about ideas for Awareness Raising events for the next year and an idea that Jane Wigg thought of was a 'Step Out for Lymphoedema' event, where lymphoedema clinics and centres across the country can plan a walk in their local park, hospital yard or other facility. The committee will provide advice and support through the newsletter and website.

9. **AGM 2011:**

AGM 2011 will take place in October 2011 at the BLS Annual Conference. Dates and details will be provided in the conference programme.

The meeting was closed with thanks to all for attending.