

Meeting with Alliance House Chairs

15th November 2017

Attendees:

[REDACTED]
Alasdair Murray (MFET and Macfarlane Trust)

Chris Pond (Caxton House)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

It was acknowledged that many of the issues on the agenda covered information that had only recently been requested from Jan Barlow, the CEO at Alliance House (AH) and so there would be a limited amount of information that could be provided, however it was agreed it would be useful to go through the issues. The 1st December deadline for this information had been given as much of this information was needed to inform future DH Month 9 financial planning and forecasting. It was suggested that some catch up meetings should take place with the AH CEO to ensure this was progressing and so any possible delays could be flagged up.

ACTION: [REDACTED] to arrange two catch up meetings with AH CEO

Finance

2016-17 accounts – DH noted that they had not received these accounts as yet and in previous years these had been received in September. It was confirmed that these accounts had been finalised but there had been some delay in finalising the foreword text due to uncertainty around the date when the responsibility for payments would be moved to NHS BSA - it was agreed that these would be sent to DH.

ACTION: AH Chairs to ensure DH receive accounts for 2016-17

ACTION: AH Chairs to confirm where the accounts would be published once the schemes' websites had closed down

It was noted that CEO of AH had a meeting with the auditors and the landlord of Alliance House coming up and both of these meetings would answer a number of questions relating to forthcoming costs for the funds and help inform the financial planning process.

DH officials asked AM about two extra funds they believed were being administered by the Macfarlane Trust – the Honeycombe Legacy Fund and the Wilson Empowerment Fund. It was believed that the reserves for both of these funds had been distributed already but this would be checked.

ACTION: AM to check on residual funds for Honeycombe and Wilson Funds

Data Transfer

Data sent to new payments schemes - a question had been raised regarding the data had been transferred to the new administrators once a person had given consent. It had been assumed by some beneficiaries that all of their records and files would have been transferred to the scheme that was now administering their payments, however, this was not what had happened. It was agreed that it was essential to confirm what had been consented to and if this did not permit the transfer of the whole paper record what should happen to those files.

ACTION: AH Chairs to check the letter requesting consent to see what it said with respect to the transfer of information/files; once this had been established the next steps could be agreed i.e. should they go to the new schemes / be returned to the individuals or their families.

Remaining files – the question was asked as to what should happen to the remaining files that related to people who had not responded to the letter requesting consent was discussed? How they should be stored and how they might be accessed in the future was an ongoing cost that was difficult to predict. It was agreed that legal advice may be needed to advise how these non-transferred files and records should be held and for how long. It was also noted that it would be very difficult to cross check whether someone was an existing beneficiary if they applied to one of the new schemes.

ACTION: AH Chairs to clarify how these files will be stored/accessed in the future.

Other

Macfarlane Loans – it was reconfirmed that it had been agreed by the trustees that the secured loans (numbering about 8) should be transferred to another charity on the same terms under which they had been issued by Macfarlane. All of these loans were secured through a charge being placed on the individual's property.

There was a similar number of smaller unsecured loans that it had been agreed, following legal advice, would be written off.

It was agreed that all the proceeds of these loans, once repaid, and any cash reserves remaining from the Macfarlane Trust would be distributed by the new charity to support people infected with HIV and HIV and hepatitis C as a result of treatment with blood or blood products as per the original deeds of the Macfarlane Trust.

ACTION: AM to advise on what progress has been made to identify a suitable charity to assume this role once the Macfarlane Trust closes.

It was recognised that all recipients of these secured loans needed to be informed of the plans being made to transfer the loans to another charity. It was agreed that AH would write to all Macfarlane loan recipients letting them know what was happening to the loans

and to reassure them that the terms of the loans would not be changing despite the planned change.

ACTION: AM to advise AH that a letter to secured loan recipients needed to go out advising what was going to happen to the loans following the closure of the Macfarlane Trust.

The case of a constituent of Nadhim Zahawi MP who had a loan from the Macfarlane Trust was raised. It was agreed that the Chair of the Macfarlane Trust would review the paperwork regarding this case in the next two weeks and would arrange to meet with the MP to discuss the case.

ACTION: AM to review the file relating to this case within the next two weeks

ACTION: AM to confirm within the next three weeks what arrangements he has made with Nadhim Zahawi's office to take this forward

Parliamentary Questions

Officials shared two parliamentary questions that had been submitted which related specifically to two issues linked to the closure of the former payment schemes - finance and storage of/access to records post-closure. The Chairs were reminded that there would be continued parliamentary scrutiny of all aspects of the schemes' operations until they closed and so it was essential that all the elements of the closures were managed in a timely and transparent way.