

## **NRCPD Board Meeting 28 February 2017 at 11:00**

### **Present**

Liz Duncan (Chair), Sarah Haynes, Lesley Weatherson, Heather Fiskén and David Wolfenden via telephone

### **In Attendance**

Alan Peacock (NRCPD Director), Heidi Doyle (Registration Services Manager), Lindsay Foster (CEO Signature) and Paula Rosenberg (Business Services Manager, Signature)

### **Apologies**

Hilary Maxwell-Hyslop and Frank Harrington

### **Communication Support**

Darren Townsend and Peter Shilston (RSLIs), and Jean Gough (registered STTR)

### **Declarations of interest**

1. There were no declarations of interest.

### **Staff Matters**

2. This item was taken in closed session: the NRCPD Director and Registration Services Manager left the meeting for this item.

### **Minutes of the last Meeting**

3. David Wolfenden queried point 17 regarding the recruitment of an Honorary Treasurer; The Chair advised that there had been no applications to date, but an update would be provided as part of the Director's report.
4. David Wolfenden requested that point 24 be reworded and the Chair confirmed that this would be actioned.

5. The minutes of the meeting on 17 January 2017 were seconded by Sarah Haynes (SH) and approved.

### **Lipspeaking – developments in the sector**

6. The Chair asked Lesley Weatherson to present this item. Lesley then gave an overview of the formation of the Association of Lipspeakers with Additional Sign (ALAS).
7. This development had arisen from a belief among service providers and service users that there needs to be formal recognition of this form of communication, which will give rise in future to a qualification and national occupational standards. She noted that SLIs are available for Deaf people who prefer BSL, and lipspeakers are available for those who lip-read; however, for deaf people who prefer to lip-read with sign to support the meaning, there is no formal category or qualification to accommodate this need, hence the recent formation of ALAS. She envisaged that those included in the association's directory would be a qualified NRCPD registered level 3 lipspeaker with a minimum of level 2 sign language skills.
8. She stressed that this was not a move to replace the Association of Lipspeakers but to complement what already exists. This was evolving from a demand from the Deaf community and not by lipspeakers. The association had not yet been formally launched. She invited the Board's views.
9. The Board generally agreed that this was a positive development and fitted the Board's strategic aim to explore the potential need for new registers and routes to registration, responding to the demand of service users.
10. Sarah Haynes queried whether Level 2 BSL would provide a sufficient vocabulary range. Lesley Weatherson confirmed that the majority of lipspeakers hold level 2 (this would afford the Deaf person/user the knowledge that vocabulary may be limited/sign language skills may be limited). Her view was that level 2 would be a minimum standard, and the association's directory would list what qualifications each professional holds.

At the moment, however, a minimum requirement for level 3 BSL would not be realistic.

11. The Chair suggested that the proposals would provide more flexibility for service users but understood the concern expressed about level 2 BSL as a minimum standard. David Wolfenden suggested that a new qualification could be developed that would incorporate extensive vocabulary in sign.
12. Lesley Weatherson indicated that her preference would be for a separate register to be set up and held by NRCPD in respect of lipspeakers with additional sign. The Director advised that a separate register would involve mapping the skills which would be deemed sufficient in terms of competence. Otherwise, practitioners could sit on the existing lipspeaker register with an annotated register entry which would enable service users to search for the required skill set.
13. The Chair recommended that the Board endorse this initiative as a positive development, which was agreed; and asked that it be taken to the Signature Board for discussion.

### **Governance and Finance**

14. The Asset Transfer Agreement and the Signature and NRCPD Service Level Agreement needed to be formally signed off by both NRCPD and Signature. The Chair advised that she and the Chair of Signature Board had reviewed both documents and were content that they were in order. The wording in the documentation was required for legal purposes. The Chair asked the Board if there were any objections to these being signed..
15. In response to queries from Sarah Haynes, Lindsay Foster clarified that clause 3 of the Service Level Agreement referred entirely to Signature Trustees. The Service Level Agreement would run for an initial period of two years; however, the cost charges would be reviewed annually.
16. The Chair advised that she would now sign the agreements on behalf of the Board.

17. The Director advised that the management accounts for January showed that NRCPD's finances were on track with a small surplus of £4,000 against the budget. The only deficit against budget was a one off cost to print NRCPD invoices. The Director would liaise with Signature about the potential to reduce printing costs by automating the invoicing system.
18. Heather Fiskin asked whether board travel costs could be shown separately and this was agreed.

### **Directors Report**

19. AP advised that, following the meeting of the TSLI Standards review group on 23 January, revised TSLI recommendations would shortly be sent to members of the group, and to some trusted trainees. The next meeting was scheduled for 22 March after which the review would be concluded and recommendations would be presented to the Board.
20. There had been no applications for the role of Honorary Treasurer, which would now be re-advertised on a different website.
21. The Director had arranged to meet with the Vice Chair of ASLI in March, and both Director and Chair are keen to meet with senior BDA officials to establish a channel of communication. The Director advised that the BDA had approached him in respect of presenting to local BDA groups in Leicester and Derby.
22. In respect of the report on outstanding complaints, Lesley Weatherson asked whether there was a time limit on dealing with a case before it was concluded, and if not, should this be reviewed. The Director advised that the only stated time limit was the gap between the event having happened and the complaint being submitted to NRCPD (6 months). During the investigation process, parties to complaints are asked to respond to requests for information within specific timeframes; however, there were occasions when extensions were requested, which causes delays.

## Relay Interpreting

23. The Director advised that towards the end of 2016 NRCPD had received separate representations, from a registered SLT and from an unregistered deaf relay interpreter, regarding the appropriate skills and registration status required of those working as relay interpreters. The unregistered person's view was that it was inappropriate for individuals to use their registration status to gain work and increased credibility in deaf relay, as there is no qualification available for deaf relay interpreting. The registered SLT's view was that only qualified and registered practitioners should be engaged in this field.
24. The Chair reminded members that there is currently no qualification in deaf relay interpreting in the UK, and therefore no registration category; however, there was clearly a demand for people working in this specialty. David Wolfenden agreed, and suggested that there was a need to "professionalise" those in practice. He advised that Clarion was considering the provision of some form of training and that this may be a useful contact.
25. The Board agreed to recommend to the Board of Signature that it investigate the possibility of developing qualifications in deaf relay interpreting. Lindsay Foster undertook to discuss this with the Chair of Signature, with a view to including it in the strategy agenda in respect of product development.
26. The Chair advised that she would report this discussion to the Signature board meeting that afternoon. The Board also agreed that iBSL should be approached in respect of the development of deaf relay qualifications.
27. David Wolfenden added that the European Forum of Sign language interpreters and the World Association would be considering this issue at its Spring seminar.

## Operations

28. The Director advised that the strategic plan had been published on the NRCPD website and a link to it had been sent to all registrants. A first draft of

the operational plan was now before the Board for review and any comments/suggestions. The Chair asked members for broad comments on the plan and to indicate whether they were content that it was fit for purpose.

29. It was suggested that performance indicators should be included for the potential increase in new registrations; and that generally the performance indicators should be expanded to include a focus on service users. The Director undertook to make the suggested additions to the plan.
30. The Chair reminded members that the plan was a fluid document which would be amended to reflect changes throughout the year. The Board agreed that the plan was suitable to be taken forward.

### **Any Other Business**

31. The Chair advised that the proposed Board meeting on 4 April would probably not be required, as it was likely that the Board could resolve the immediate staffing issues by email over the next few weeks. This would be confirmed in due course.

### **Date of next meeting**

32. Tuesday 11 July 2017 at 11.00am