



Date	Item / activity
October 2008	Three new board members elected at the AGM: Alistair Smith, Brian Hill & Ken Mackinnon.
November 2008	Council for Voluntary Services Inverness (CVSI) to be approached on fundraising in general and to facilitate an application to the Duchess of Westminster Trust. 2nd Common Good Fund application proposed.
December 2008	Proposal to increase therapy charges prior to seeking further funding externally was defeated on the vote. Claims made by management that numbers would fall off as had been the case before. Consulted two fundraisers. Manager instructed to prepare usage and transport figures over the past 5 years to establish the degree of fall-off.
January 2009	Board member proposed MSTCI own website to be set up free of charge (FOC) by himself. Received fundraiser report postponing action pending Funder Finder outcome. MSTCI promotional DVD (sponsored by two other board members and some outside companies) was launched. Manager to source new computer. Board expressed concern at inadequate financial information. Manager offered to reinstate appropriate financial reporting to the board. Various fundraising activities reported and planned.
February 2009	Usage and transport figures proving useful in funding applications and not showing appreciable fall-off in usage at previous increase in charges. Manager reported quiz tickets going slowly Ceilidh arranged for 18 April No change in the financial reporting structure to the board.
March 2009	Concern expressed over accuracy of time-sheet completion by hourly-paid staff. Manager to instruct time sheets to be completed daily. Driver hours to be assessed over 2 months to determine fair holiday pay. Ceilidh postponed to May. Funder Finder exercise to be completed by 4 board members in preparation for Manager to make applications to trusts. MSTCI adopted as charity of the year by HBWC. Manager to make presentation at CVSI AGM in June as thanks for Duchess of Westminster grant facilitated by CVSI. No change in the financial reporting structure to the board.
April 2009	Centre went into overdraft. Ceilidh cancelled. 26 April – MSTCI website created and hosted by board member free of charge went live. Applications made to local trusts. Staff Terms and Conditions, job descriptions being progressed by board. No change in the financial reporting structure to the board.
May 2009	Finances critical with overdraft position of (£7,000) likely. Second proposal to increase charges rejected on the vote. 13 May 2009: Formal letter to Provost for Common Good Fund appeal. No change in the financial reporting structure to the board.



<p>June 2009</p>	<p>Even having secured Common Good Fund award, overdraft position predicted by January 2010 Manager declined to speak at CVSI AGM because of pressure of work on financial reporting – board member stepped into the breach. Request to members and families for fundraising help went out with board meeting minutes. Request went out to 4 other Scottish Centres for financial information. Charges increased from £10 to £12 per therapy session. Staff received and accepted new handbook and Terms and Conditions. Staff made aware of board anxiety over funding Staff made many good fundraising proposals. Still no change in the financial reporting structure to the board.</p>
<p>July 2009</p>	<p>No strong reaction to increased charges. Two other centre finances examined. Inverness found to be the only centre in Scotland operating a minibus. Bus found to be costing the Centre c£27,000 a year to run. Other centres make more use of volunteers in the centre than MSTCI. Other centres provide therapies to non-MS members. Board assessed insolvency position. Board decided to hold some parts of some meetings and occasionally, extra board meetings without management presence. Cllr Janet Campbell co-opted to the board in an individual capacity. Original funding group formally asked for assistance. (Response received: they no longer do fundraising.) Management produced forecast showing income of £10,000 in August and £10,000 in December, neither of which was correct. Board agreed consultancy input (free of charge) to sort out financial reporting.</p>
<p>August 2009</p>	<p>Consultant presented draft full set of reports under new format with adequate forecasts illustrating the dire financial position. Promotional materials (fold-out card and banners) designed free of charge and sourced by board member were warmly received. Board meeting attended by Chair of MS Society. Minibus deal discussed. HBWC raffle, and Ceilidh date and format agreed. 6 fact sheets produced by board members for profile awareness raising event in Eastgate 2. New computer purchased by board member for use free of charge by Centre management. Highland Council Community Transport Service asked for help in minibus operation.</p>
<p>September 2009</p>	<p>Manager and board members attended MS Scotland meeting in Perth. Manager led appeal for reduction in MSTCI levy. Major application work on Glaxo Smith Kline Impact Award application completed by board members. Funder Finder list reviewed and reduced from 55 to 27 target trusts for manager to make applications. Bus operation to be reviewed in detail at next meeting. Highland Cross formally approached to review style of transport awards. Alistair Smith resigned from the board for health reasons.</p>



October 2009	<p>Refinements to forecasts revealed increased cause for concern. Board meeting frequency continued to increase as concern rises. Staff were advised of financial position just prior to the AGM on 22 October and advised that redundancy is a possibility. A detailed statement on concern about the future was presented to members on 22 October at the AGM for the year to 2008. The board was accused of defeatism and negativity. Board efforts at benchmarking with other (viable) centres to find solutions were rubbished by a Highland Councillor in attendance. A 'secret' offer of £30,000 from Asda (previously known to the manager but withheld from board) was revealed by a Highland Councillor in attendance. Board informed staff that redundancies would be on hold for one further month. Board launched a positive press campaign.</p>
November 2009	<p>Positive press campaign by board actively sustained. Redundancies on hold for one further month pending funding update. Board expressed disappointment that new computer still not being used. Member petition started for the election of new board members. Letters of complaint / concern received from staff and members. Members organise PR events without including / informing board. Manager formally instructed to keep board members informed of all significant activities taking place in the Centre. Notification that Glaxo Smith Kline Impact Award application unsuccessful. Manager formally asked for update on funding applications. No update was received and manager took sick leave. Written call for board members to stand down. Members launch 'friends of' project. 24 November - board was labelled dishonest and non-transparent at meeting with staff and member representatives, led by a Highland Councillor, chaired by Inverness City Manager in Town House. New structure proposed by members with no user-member representation on the board. Members call, then cancel an unconstitutional EGM for 24 November. Members call a second unconstitutional EGM for 1 December.</p>
December 2009	<p>In light of members' diminishing confidence in the board and the board's diminishing confidence in management, all six board members resigned on 1 December 2009 to clear the way for members to elect a board of their choice.</p>

Something not always appreciated by some members when reminded; the board that stood down comprised six volunteers, five of whom have full-time jobs, all of whom understood their statutory obligations. These board members really did (and still do) understand the anxiety felt by members who fear that services may be reduced or even lost and members of staff whose livelihoods may be at risk.

However, members and staff must realise that there is a ceiling to the amount of time that board members with jobs can devote to Centre affairs and having to cope with the series of disruptions over the weeks since the AGM has had a severe negative impact on their time that could otherwise have been spent on fundraising.

Furthermore, these board members regret that the board had not been informed or involved in the proposed 'friends of MS Inverness' project, as it seems to hold prospects for fundraising and had they known, would have supported it.