



## **MINUTES of the LOC COMMITTEE MEETING**

Held virtually on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 at 6.30pm

### **Attendees**

Emma Spofforth (ES)  
Nick Hagan (NH)  
Reshma Patel (RP)  
Chris Rushen (CR)  
Jasraj Bhangra (JB)  
Katie Kingcott (KK)

Sheila Purser (SAP)  
Maggie Glover (MG)  
Pooja Bij (PB)  
Sara Porter (SP)  
Bhups Battu (BB)

David Dixon (DD)  
Vickie Hamilton-Barr (VH)  
Mark Carhart (MC)  
Philip Bridgford (PB)  
Hayley Moore (HM)

Observer: Kayleigh Dunn (left 7.45pm)

PES: Sana Asif and Pratik Patel (arrived 8.45pm)

Minutes taken by KK

### **25/16 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest**

Welcome from SAP. Apologies from Kiran Lal who is unable to attend. Observer Kayleigh Dunn.

### **25/17 Minutes of last meeting agreed**

No amendments. Proposed as true by MC, seconded by MG. SAP to electronically sign and return to KK.

### **25/18 Action log – sent out ahead of meeting**

292 – ongoing  
304 – ongoing  
326 – closed, remove  
331 – ongoing – update: tried setting up with two banks but without success. DD to go into bank in person. Difficulty getting bank to accept our role.  
333 – closed, remove  
335 – closed, remove  
336 – ongoing  
341 – closed, remove  
342 – open  
343 – ongoing  
344 – ongoing  
345 – update: misallocated stat levy – received back payments for past two years. Agreed to pay quarterly anymore owing. Suggest close.  
346 – closed, remove  
347 – closed  
348 – open  
349 – closed, remove  
350 – closed, remove  
351 – ongoing – contract currently being reviewed. List of medications gone back to PES to

tweak. Now with ES to review.

Q - BB: If an optom gets FP10 issued, can they use outside of their ICB? ES: No, it can only be used in that particular ICB.

Q - MG: Have all FP10's been destroyed in NE Essex? SAP: Not sure, need to check with Sana that this has been done.

### **2519 Committee make-up & this year's elections**

AGM in June - ES, RP and HM are up for re-election. All to let VH know if they would like to be re-elected. The committee currently has more performers than contractors. Co-opted members are up for re-election in the first committee meeting after AGM in July, along with the officers. Hoping to continue with rotation of vice chairman. Encourage other committee members to step into this role. Anyone interested speak with officers.

ES – flagged to officers recently. Currently none of the LOC officers are contractors – three are co-opted and one is a performer. Need to be aware it's the contractor's money we are spending.

### **25/20 Vice Treasurer one-to-one**

Have had a couple of 'meet the treasurer' sessions with RP and BB. PB is next. Aim is to give committee members a better understanding of the treasurer's role, and the officers roles in general.

SAP suggests having these meetings with the other officer roles.

No questions.

### **25/21 Stat levy percentage ahead of AGM**

Every year the LOC assesses the position on how much stat levy is taken as a percentage of the GOS fee which the contractors pay to the LOC. The current rate is 1.4%. This was reduced slightly last year as there was a surplus. Still accrued more money last year as there was no NOC and money to LOCSU was reduced. DD suggests reducing stat levy again to 1.1%, which would reduce funds by £14,000 this year. Reserve funds are currently £75,000. Main account has £40,000.

Q - ES: if we reduce the levy, how much per sight test does this change? DD: works out about 7p per sight test.

Q – ES: how quickly would this reduce our funds? DD: over three years.

Q - NH: after three years would the levy need to go back up? DD: yes, we may need to increase slightly but will review yearly.

NH suggests reducing to 1.2%. DD mindful that last year we reduced by 0.1% and funds still went up. Lots of variables to consider. Difficult to predict long term.

Q - MC: are we able to change the levy without bringing to the AGM? DD: yes, this is possible but would need to hold an 'extra-ordinary' AGM to do this.

Q - MC: do we know the percentage of who is having GOS sight tests? DD: no, we don't get this information, we just get numbers of how many GOS in each area.

DD proposes to reduce the levy to 1.1%, NH seconded, carried unanimously.

### **25/22 CPD for 2025/MECS OSCE**

MECS OSCE – 9 have emailed to express interest. KK to include in May and June newsletters. In the past optoms have been charged between £120 and £150.

MC suggests subsidising MECS OSCE's, maybe put this up for a vote at the AGM? SAP: from the very beginning it was made clear that this wouldn't be subsidised.

Q - PB: do you need to get all the resources from WOPEC? HM: yes, they send it out as part of the kit.

Discussions over MECS OSCE continues.

AGM – SP has been helping to organise this. All LV charities are attending and five ECLO's.

Lucy Hughes Paralympian will be doing a talk. Looking to get another presentation/workshop.

Agenda is very packed! KK suggested starting the evening at 6.15pm. SAP says the only negative bit of this would be it reduces time for sponsors to engage.

DD suggest splitting attendees into groups of 5 and have ECLO's speak to a group each. HM agrees with this suggestion.

SP doesn't think this would be a good idea. Thinks a more casual approach would work better to just introduce the ECLO's.

MC suggest asking Writtle if they have other locations we could use for our CPD events.

HM suggests doing foreign body workshop and MECS together.

CR suggests topic for CPD could be private fees. SAP suggests emailing the officers regarding this. ES states it's up to individual practices to decide on private fees.

### **25/23 Chairman report and questions**

Verbal report from SAP – has been signed off sick for nearly 6 weeks from last committee meeting. Since back at work has attended usual meetings. Work with Gloucester LOC has been very good.

SAP to forward written report on to the committee when back from holiday.

No questions.

### **25/24 Secretary report and questions – sent out ahead of meeting**

No questions.

### **25/25 Treasurers report and questions – sent out ahead of meeting**

Reports now done quarterly. Income just over £36,00, expenditure £28,000, hence suggestion to reduce levy.

No questions.

### **25/26 Clinical lead report and questions – sent out ahead of meeting**

Announcements from government which will affect the work we do. All ICB's have to do 50% cutback in their expenditure. Plan to go from 6 ICB's to 3 ICB's. Should have a better understanding by the end of May. Hospitals are unaffected by these changes.

Q - NH: NE Essex being part of Suffolk, do you think this will remain or become part of Greater Essex? ES: NE Essex will most likely become part of Greater Essex.

Q - CR: inappropriate requests from the trust, come up quite a few times, haven't got anywhere?

ES: have to keep going back to the trusts.

### **25/27 AOB**

MG: Friends mum has to go to two separate appointments for diabetic checks, has the same tests done at each check. Communications from the hospitals are not clear and don't specify where the appointments are. ECLO contacted who were very helpful.

SAP says letters do have locations of appointments on them.

Q - MG: why are they doing the same tests? ES: the diabetic retinopathy screening service is run as a separate service. Patients seen under this service should be removed from the hospitals recall. Hospitals and screening service don't communicate. If a patient is having this problem, advice patient to go back to their doctor.

Discussions over diabetic screening continue.

No other AOB

### **25/28 Next committee meeting**

AGM June 18<sup>th</sup>, July 9<sup>th</sup>, October 15<sup>th</sup>

**Meeting finished at 9.25pm.**

