



**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

## **AGM USING ZOOM**

### **DRAFT MINUTES**

**Present:**

Jane Bunker (Chair) (JB)	Anita Jones (AJ)	Gavin Sirett (GS)
Steve Roberts Vice Chair) (SJR)	Ash Patel (AP)	Seema Raunier (SR)
Eileen Gay (Treasurer & Minutes)(EG)	Kavita Kathuria (KK)	Deepali Modha (DM)
Nisha Shah (NS)	Katie Patel (KP)	Karan Sai Malik (KSM)
Fionnuala Kidd (LOCSU) (FK)	Hansil Shah (HS)	
Wendy D’Vallancey (WDV)(obs.)	Valerie Ekeanyanwu(VE)(obs.)	

**1. Welcome and introductions for Observers and New Applicants to join the Committee**

JB welcomed the observer, VE. Each member briefly introduced themselves.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Peter Chapman (PC) was unable to log in to the meeting

Sally Tucker (ST) was mid-flight and lost her internet connection

**3. Minutes of the last AGM held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

The minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting.

**4. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**5. LOCSU update**

**FK**

**(a) Model Constitution**

There has been a huge amount of work going up to update the LOC Model Constitution, so that it meets the current legal requirements as LOCs are Statutory organisations. There have been a number of “listening events” to discuss the constitution which have enabled LOC members to voice their opinions and ideas around this subject, and ensure the constitution meets everyone’s needs.

**(b) MECS**

LOCSU have been working with others on a single specification for Minor and Urgent Eyecare Services. This will take the form of a “how to” guide for Commissioners. LOCSU are aware that there is no such service in Hertfordshire, and is aiming to establish both MECS and glaucoma refinement services in the future.

### **(c) LOCSU Restructuring**

There has been considerable restructuring at LOCSU and a development of a new strategy. LOCs have requested more transparency and better communication with the Board, and LOCSU have responded by setting up direct recruitment to the Board from LOCs and improving the skills of the team.

### **(d) NOC**

The NOC held in 2023 was very successful.

### **(e) National Forum**

LOCSU have established a National Forum to engage with practitioners and identify problems in day-to-day practice. Information is then fed into Regional Forums and back to the LOCSU Board, so that resources can be targeted more effectively.

### **(f) Communications**

To improve communications with LOCs, LOCSU have been active in the production of podcasts, videos bulletins etc.

### **(g) Support Systems**

LOCSU are working on supporting systems to enable more effective use of the optometric workforce, and appropriate referral mechanisms. The aim is to provide services which meet the local population needs depending on which services are already commissioned.

### **(h) Challenges Ahead**

There are big challenges ahead, particularly with providing equitable services across the area rather than depending on where the patient lives.

Advice and guidance pilots were started in 2023 and work is ongoing.

LOCSU are supporting LOCs in engagement with ICBs to provide the services required and assist Commissioners in meeting their targets. There is particular difficulty in our area (East of England) because LOCs are often split across several ICSs, so services are not provided equally across the area. ICBs need to engage with each other so that services are delivered more effectively.

## **6. Chairman's Report**

**JB**

This was circulated before the meeting.

JB was pleased that the LOC is now being invited to more NHS meetings in the area; the various organisations now use the LOC as a means of engaging with optometrists, which is a major step forward. We have good engagement with most areas in our patch, particularly West Essex; the exception is N&EH, where there is very little communication.

There is a MECS service in West Essex which covers a small area of Herts (on the borders, covering Bishops Stortford and Sawbridgeworth), but otherwise we have no such service. It was noted that 80% of England has a MECS service, so Herts was in the minority.

A discussion followed with FK regarding the decommissioning of MECS services in some parts of the country. This appears to have happened in West Yorkshire, due to a lack of funding rather than the service being unsatisfactory, and East Sussex, where the reasons are as yet unclear.

## **7. Treasurer's Report**

### **Presentation of 2023 Accounts and 2024 Budget**

**EG**

Finances are now stable and we have a healthy balance, despite much increased activity this year. A vote was carried out on the Accounts and Budget, which were passed unanimously

## **8. Treasurer's Update for the next financial year and appointment of Auditors.**

**EG**

There will be no changes in accounting for the next financial year. It is unlikely that we will need to increase the Statutory Levy in 2024.

The existing auditors were elected unanimously.

## **9. Adoption of Reports**

All reports were accepted unanimously.

## **10. Elections of Committee Members**

**SJR**

One third of the Committee stand down each year.

Application forms were sent out one month ago and there were no new applicants. The four members who were due to stand down this year are:

Anita Jones (AJ), Steve Roberts (SJR), Deepali Modha (DP) and Kavita Kathuria(KK).

They were all willing to stand again so a confirmatory vote was carried out to confirm their re-election.

All candidates were returned unanimously.

## **11. AOB**

### **(a) CPD Certificates**

NS queried whether certificates for the CPD event held at Tewinbury had been sent out, as she had not received hers. SJR will send this information on to SpaMedica as they issued the certificates.

### **(b) Promotional Pens**

KK asked what options there were for the colour of LOC pens. At present black and orange are available. SJR said that any colour could be obtained, but ours should be a colour contained within the LOC logo ( red, orange or blue)

### **(c) SpaMedica CPD Event**

**SJR**

SJR has received good feedback on the event and the venue (well organised, good food). which we will consider using again.

#### **Comments on the Event**

**(i)** Some speakers were difficult to hear from the back of the room; we did not use the venue's own sound system, so we will do this next time to see if there is any improvement.

**(ii)** GS commented that the room was very hot. SJR said that we need to make sure the air-conditioning system is working.

**(iii)** Some attendees had difficulty exiting the venue, so additional instructions will be given in advance of the next event there.

### **(d) Next CPD Meeting**

The next CPD sub-committee meeting will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> March. The Committee comprises ST, DM and SJR. FK will also be present to help with the GOC approval process. HS enquired about the Committee and was invited to join.

### **(e) Future CPD Events**

Praveen Patel has asked if he can talk to us about new treatments for AMD.

JB already has a slide presentation on Biomodulation therapy from Nicholas Lee (Bishopswood and Hillingdon), but the content does not have GOC approval, and he is involved in marketing the equipment used, so this has not been taken forward.

AJ said that the Macular Society have an article on their website on the new treatments, entitled "Encouraging Results". She will send a link for this onto the LOC WhatsApp Group and SJR will send it on as a Mailchimp message. This article refers to private treatments only.

JB asked attendees for suggestions for CPD events. A number of consultants and organisations have offered us CPD.

DM said that she had hosted events for Specsavers, and suggested Thea, and also Lorcan Butler from the Brain Tumour Charity.

## **12. Date of Next Meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

The Hertfordshire LOC represents all NHS Optometrists