

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL OPTICAL COMMITTEE

Chair: Adam Holliday

AGM

Minutes of the virtual meeting via Zoom held on Tuesday 12th May 2020

Present:	Adam Holliday Indervir Atwal Andrew Spybey John Clissold David Bennett David Cartwright Katie Franklin Mo Aslam Sameen Qayyum John Yeomans Roma Malik	Chair Treasurer
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In Attendance:	Sam Stretton – Administrator Richard Rawlinson – LOCSU Janisha Seaman Lesley Cree Liz Whitmore Robert Blow Sophie Blow Sheeraz Janjua Vimesh Bhundia
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1. **Apologies for Absence**

Adam Kennaugh and Nilesh Mehta.

Adam Holliday welcomed everyone to the AGM.

2. **Minutes of previous AGM – 21st May 2019 - matters arising**

No matters were raised.

3. Chair Report 2018-2019

The Chair report was circulated prior to the meeting and also shared on the meeting room screen.

Under normal circumstances, the Chair would start their report with some reflection on the year just gone by and possibly make some comparison to another relevant period in time. One of the effects of the coronavirus crisis, has been to blur the very recent past – everyone is focused on the here and now, and what maybe just round the corner. The phrase ‘unprecedented times’ has possibly become overused, but the sentiment remains true. Optics along with other professional groups and businesses, has found itself in uncharted waters, with many wondering how it will survive and what the new normal may look like. One of the knowns, is that our profession is valued by the public and we are a highly skilled workforce; this will help our survival and recovery.

It's often said that in times of difficulty, people come together to face adversity - shoulder to shoulder. This sense of togetherness, has been extremely evident from colleagues in Nottinghamshire; the practical and emotional support, which has been provided through the LOC peer support group has been of enormous value and help to people. I would like to add my thanks to all who have contributed to make this resource what it is and I hope these relationships which have been developed and strengthened will continue long into the future.

Before reflection on the events prior to the COVID crisis, it is important to acknowledge the significant amount of work which goes on behind the scenes of the LOC and so I would like to thank those people who work to ensure the committee operates smoothly and efficiently. The committee would struggle to function without Sam Stretton the LOC Administrator, who continues to work tirelessly on our behalf doing all the routine stuff which is essential to the smooth running of the committee. With the retirement of Jill Gratton the committee finances are now being managed by Indy Atwal and on behalf of the LOC I would like to say a huge thank you to Jill Gratton for her care and support over the years and also to Indy for his hard work in managing the committee finances.

Thinking of the past year the LOC has been involved in numerous and diverse work streams, with the aim of supporting and developing community practices and colleagues. In preparation for eGOS, the LOC held an open meeting with a representative from PCSE. This was a useful event to help understand how this would be implemented and to consider how this could be incorporated into practice life. After this successful event, PCSE rolled this type of meeting out nationally.

The LOC had hoped to bring together the regional NHSE team, with local contractors and performers – partly as a ‘meet the team’ but also help the contractors and performers with understanding and preparing for GOS contract visits. Unfortunately this was scheduled just prior to lockdown and was cancelled. The LOC is exploring the possibility of a virtual meeting early in the autumn.

The LOC also wanted to encourage relationships with the community ophthalmology providers in Nottinghamshire. Both East Midlands Medical Services (EMMS) and Health Harmonie (HH) were invited to present at separate meetings, so providers could explain how their services are delivered and to have an open discussion around them. The EMMS meeting was well attended and received, but unfortunately HH cancelled their meeting at short notice.

Following on from the restructuring of the local NHS, the ICS is currently undertaking a review of the ophthalmology services in the area and looking at how patient pathways can be better improved and sustainable for years to come. This is a major undertaking and the ICS has already done this for other specialities. The LEHN Chair David Cartwright, has played a significant role in this process, which brings all the stakeholders together – which is a feat in itself. This review process is nearing its end and it will be interesting to see the recommendations and where the role of community sits with these, but this process does have the potential to bring benefits for all the stakeholders.

LOCSU's vision of there being regional Primary Eye Care (PEC) companies has materialised, with our area now being under the PEC North company. The Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire PEC Company still exists; however, PEC North will manage their contracts until they expire. After this point, Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire PEC company will cease trading and all future contracts will sit with PEC North company.

The LOC has long advocated the continual clinical development of community optometrists, to help meet the needs of eyecare of the population. The LOC continues to provide support for this via the online WOPEC courses and through its support to NODS, who continues with their programme of locally delivered CET events. There has been a diverse and interesting programme of CET events this year, with various speakers and the success of these events is a credit to them.

Thinking about the wider opportunities for practices, The Healthy Living Opticians programme still remains open for practices to join and the LOC would urge practices to give this some consideration; being part of the wider health agenda, will only help to strengthen our position with the ICS, commissioners and benefit our patients. If you have any questions around, this please speak to David Cartwright.

Over the last year the LOC has been involved in many different interactions with acute trust, the ICS, CCGs and third sector organisations; raising the profile of community eyecare is an important aspect of what the LOC does. We have developed our links with the equivalent professional groups in Pharmacy, Dentistry and with GPs – although we all provide different services, there are common challenges and collaborating with these groups will only increase our opportunities and help to strengthen our position.

At this point in time, it's fair to say that our thoughts are focused on the imminent future - how and what, practice life will look like... but going to back to the start of this report - we are a highly skilled workforce, which is valued by the public and we should seize all the opportunities that this new period will bring. I would like to close by saying a big thank you to everyone on the LOC for all their hard work, along with an invitation to anyone interested in becoming involved with the work of the committee, to please speak to one of its members – you would be most welcome.

4. Treasurer Report, 2019-2020 Accounts & Proposed Budget 2020-2021

The Treasure report and budget were circulated prior to the meeting and also shared on the meeting room screen.

The Statutory levy is a deduction of a percentage from the GOS fees contractors claim. The levy is formed of two parts; 0.5% that finances the LOC and a fixed 0.5% that is collected on behalf of LOCSU.

In the previous year, the levy generated £67,424.88, this year £57,733.92, a decrease of 14.37%.

The LOC has collected £27,905.16 on behalf of LOCSU, we have paid £19,007.74. They have suspended their payments from LOCs due to the COVID-19 outbreak. £8,898.42 remains unpaid to them.

We had budgeted for £42,500.00 and our expenses ran at £36,573.89 for the year, 13.38% below budget. However, outgoings were higher than last year by £3,000.00. We intentionally wanted to reduce our cash in hand. The levy paid to the LOC was reduced from 0.7% to 0.5% this raised £29,828.76 so we achieved a deficit of £6,983.93.

We end the year with £29,195.97 plus the additional £8,898.42 that remains unpaid to LOCSU.

We have decided to not charge our contactors the LOC levy during the lockdown. I am uncertain how much will be raised via the levy going forward due to the uncertainty caused by the outbreak. I work on the assumption that we will raise half-raised this year, circa £15,000.00. This will give the LOC working capital of £44,195.97.

The committee will be discussing the contractors levy at the next bi-monthly meeting.

David Bennett suggested that in-light of the inactivity of LOCSU in our particular area, could the levy paid to them also be looked into at the next bi-monthly meeting also.

David Cartwright raised concern about the low amount of the cash surplus moving forward, as many businesses normally have a surplus to cover outgoings for around three months. Indy advised that if the surplus needed to be increased, the LOC could look at increasing the levy later in the year.

The budget for 2020-2021 was proposed by Indy and seconded by Andrew Spybey. Those present voted in favour of this.

Adam Holliday thanked everyone for attending the virtual AGM and the meeting closed.

Date & time of future meetings:

To Be Confirmed