



# Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting by videoconference

31 January 2023; 20:00-21:30 GMT

Approved at the 4<sup>th</sup> April meeting

## MEMBERS ATTENDING:

1. Vanessa Jordan (Authors)
2. Nai Ming Lai (Authors)
3. Stefano Negrini (Fields: **Co-Chair**)
4. Montserrat Conde (Fields)
5. Irena Zakarija-Grkovic (Geographic Groups Directors)
6. René Spijker (Information Specialists)
7. Gail Quinn (Managing Editors)
8. Liz Dooley (Managing Editors)
9. Silvia Minozzi (Methods Groups)
10. Jack Nunn (Consumers Network)
11. Robert Dellavalle (Co-ordinating Editors: **Co-Chair**)
12. Jo Morrison (Co-ordinating Editors)
13. Ndi Euphrasia Ebai-atuh (Consumers Network)
14. Cinzia Del Giovane (Methods Groups)
15. Santiago Castiello de Obeso (Early Career Professionals Network)

## OTHER ATTENDEES:

16. Catherine Marshall, Governing Board Co-Chair
17. Catherine Spencer, Chief Executive Officer
18. Roma Grant, Interim Head of Governance
19. Chris Champion, Head of Engagement, Learning and Support
20. Veronica Bonfigli, Administrative Officer

## APOLOGIES:

- Tracey Howe, Governing Board Co-Chair
- Karla Soares-Weiser, Editor in Chief
- Valerie Wells (Information Specialists' representative)
- Luis Garegnani (Geographic Groups Directors)

## ABSENT

- Ahmad Sofi-Mahmudi (Early Career Professionals Network)

### **1. Welcome, Apologies, Declarations of Interest for this meeting**

Stefano Negrini chaired the meeting. There was a round of introductions and the apologies were noted.

### **2. Approval of the Agenda, including the papers.**

The Agenda was approved.

### **3. Conflicts of Interest**

Agenda Item 5: the annual report and Council priorities for 2023 - Stefano explained that the Co-Chairs were conflicted as the item included a proposal about the Co-chairs' term of office.

**4. Approval of the minutes from 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022 formal meeting**

The Minutes of the 7 December 2022 formal meeting were approved.

**5. Draft annual report to the Board and 2023 priorities**

Stefano summarized the content of the report and opened the floor for comments. Council members expressed concern as in its view the report did not reflect all of what was achieved in 2022, particularly the work of the sub-committees that had not been mentioned.

It was recommended adding:

- The number of Council meetings in 2022;
- The working groups and the highlights of their work in 2022.

Roma welcomed the suggestions and invited members who were part of a working group to send her a short report of the work done within the next two weeks (i.e. w/c 13<sup>th</sup> February inclusive).

**ACTION: Council members part of a working group, to send a report to Roma on the work carried out in 2022.**

In the report, Roma had suggested to limiting to three the 2023 Council priorities. The Council proposed rewording bullet point two to clarify that the Council was not a conduit relaying the decisions of the Board to the Community, but acts as a bridge between the latter and the Board in order to inform Board decisions. Roma thanked the members for their input and confirmed she would re-write the paragraph to reflect the comments. Council members noted that the new Head of Communications could help the Council improve its communication mechanisms.

The report contained a proposal to freeze the Council's composition in this time of transition. Roma explained that this was not a change to the (out of date) terms of reference, but fixing the status quo until the new structure of the organization was clearly shaped. Council members expressed concern, particularly about how the community would view halting elections. It was recommended that it should be carefully explained that this would be a time-limited extension of the terms of the existing members. This issue was discussed at length and many concerns were raised particularly around communicating the message and clarifying concepts such as "stakeholders", "Community" and "consumers".

**DECISION POINT: The Council agreed to postpone the Council's elections due to take place in 2023 for the limited period of time of one year. All members ending their first term would automatically start their second term; Council members ending their second term would stay on the Council unless they no longer worked for Cochrane or if their group had closed down. Furthermore, it was agreed that the Co-Chairs would stay on in their role until the London Colloquium in September where an election for the Co-Chairs' positions would be held.**

**ACTION: Roma to discuss with Karla the roles of Council members still part of Cochrane but no longer belonging to a CRG or Cochrane group.**

**ACTION: Roma to rewrite the draft of the Council Annual Report 2022 and to share with the Council for feedback with a deadline for comments of mid-February. The final draft to be approved by the Co-Chairs.**

**6. Future of Council: A discussion regarding the future to feed into the Board's Governance Review.**

Council members were invited to add their thoughts and suggestions to feed into the Board's Governance Review on the virtual Miro board.

**ACTION: Members to add thoughts and comments to feed into the Board's Governance Review to the Miro board until the 3rd of February.**

**7. Thanks and farewell to people leaving this year**

In the light of the discussion above this item was not discussed.

## **8. Any Other Business**

- Report from the Barcelona meeting

Catherine Spencer reported on the Board's discussions in Barcelona.

She explained that the next frontier would be aligning the future of Cochrane with Open Access. The new approach would allow Cochrane to better respond to important global health and social care challenges, streamline the model of evidence synthesis, invigorate funding sources and achieve long term sustainability.

Moving forward the aim was to:

- Make sure Cochrane was really contributing to improving global health;
- Make sure that more reviews addressed the greatest challenges;
- Make sure collaboration with consumers, members and funders was increased whilst maintaining quality and independence, and simplifying processes.

Catherine also stressed the importance and value of working with the Community which would enable Cochrane to

- increase the usefulness and impact of the reviews,
- collaborate to enhance diversity and equity
- strengthen the collaboration by reuniting the Community.

The impact focus was on open science, open access, data use, fundraising, communication and advocacy.

Catherine added the draft Strategy would go to the Board in March and then to the Community for a consultation period between March and the Colloquium in September.

Catherine Marshall explained that the ecosystem of Cochrane would be clarified so that everyone's role in the new environment would be clear. She added it was important to understand how the reviews made an impact on people's lives.

## **9. Date of next meeting:**

7 March 2023 (informal) at 20:00 UK

## **10. Closed session (Council members only)**

Catherine Marshall, Catherine Spencer, Roma Grant, Chris Champion and Veronica Bonfigli were thanked for their attendance and left the meeting. Council members convened in closed session, a record of which is kept by the Council Co-Chairs.

**---MEETING END---**

## **Remaining action items from 2022:**

| <b>Meeting and Agenda Item</b> | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Status</b> |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------|
| 4. 14 April 2021               | Council Co-Chairs to circulate to Council the key issues discussed at the Board and Council Co-Chairs' catch-ups in a bullet-point format.                   | Standing      |
| 6.6 October 2021               | Constituency and Working Group representatives to provide short written reports of activities and issues for the Council to consider at each formal meeting. | Paused        |

**POST MEETING NOTE:** Following the Council meeting, members contributed to the Miro Board on the Future of Council - imagining what the body might look like in three years' time, after the implementation of the significant change programmes.