



## Governing Board and sub Committee meetings

Face to face meeting in Paris on 18, 19 and 20 May 2023 at the Crowne Plaza République 10 Pl. de la République, 75011 Paris, France

### AGENDA

Present:	Trustees:	Others in attendance:
	Catherine Marshall - Co-Chair Yuan Chi (YC) Juan Franco (JF) Sally Green (SG) Karen Kelly (KK) Tamara Kredo (TK) Gillian Leng (GL) Wendy Levinson (WL) Jordi Pardo Pardo (JPP) Emma Persad (ES) Vanessa Piechotta (VP)	<b>From the Council</b> Robert (Bob) Dellavalle – Council Co-Chair (BD) Stefano Negrini - Council Co-Chair (SN)  <b>From Cochrane Executive Leadership Team:</b> Catherine Spencer, Chief Executive Officer (CS) Gavin Adams, Director of Development (GA) Casey Early, Director of Finance & Corporate Services (CE) Karla Soares-Weiser, Editor in Chief (KSW) Laura Ingle, Director of Publishing and Technology (LI)  <b>From Cochrane Central Executive Team:</b> Lucy Johnson-Brown, Head of Governance (LJ-B) Elspeth McDonald, Administrative Support Officer (EM) Harry Dayantis, Head of Communications – for agenda item 18 on Friday 18 May 2023 (HD)
<b>Apologies:</b>	Tracey Howe - Co-Chair (joined virtually via Teams)	

## Wednesday 17 May 2023

Arrivals and check in [Crowne Plaza République](#). Dinner at 7.30pm at [@ Habile](#) 16 rue de Lancry À l'angle de la rue de Lancry, Rue du Château d'Eau, 75010 Paris.

Thursday 18 May 2023			
Time	Activity	notes	paper
09.45am – 10.30am	1. Finance, Audit and Risk Committee – pre meeting discussion on financial implications of Open Access	Karen Kelly, Casey Early, Laura Ingle plus members of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and the Open Access group	Paper (CE, LI)

11am – 11.45	2. Annual external audit - Trustees' responsibilities. Presentation from Price Bailey LLP (the external auditor)	Discussion, Q&A, all Trustees, ELT and external auditor	Presentation from Price Bailey LLP
11.45-1pm	3. Finance, Audit and Risk Committee meeting To include 15 minute private session for Committee members with external auditor	Karen Kelly (Committee Chair), Vanessa Piechotta, Juan Franco, Tracey Howe, Simon Rallison (co-opted member). In attendance Casey Early, Karla Soares-Weiser, Gavin Adams, Lucy Johnson-Brown	Papers (CE)
1pm – 2pm	Lunch		
2pm – 2.45pm	4. Future of Evidence Synthesis Oversight Committee meeting (Trustee members only) <i>(agenda and papers have been circulated)</i>	Sally Green (Oversight Committee Chair), Karen Kelly, Catherine Marshall, Jordi Pardo Pardo, Vanessa Piechotta . In attendance Karla Soares-Weiser and Lucy Johnson-Brown	Presentation (KSW/SG)
2.45pm – 5pm	5. Board only session Discussion topics to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Process and timetable for appointment of appointment of Co-Chairs</b> <i>(to be covered at the Governance and Nominations Committee meeting)</i></li> <li>• <b>Board succession planning</b> <i>(to be covered at the Governance and Nominations Committee meeting)</i></li> <li>• <b>Strategic risks and opportunities</b> <i>(to be covered under the risk session on Saturday 20 May)</i></li> <li>• <b>Big picture strategy</b> <i>(to be covered under the strategy session with Tracey Barr on Saturday 20 May)</i></li> <li>• <b>Open Access and Fundraising</b> <i>(to be covered under agenda items on Friday 19 May)</i></li> <li>• <b>Pace of our change agenda and support for new Executive Leadership Team</b></li> <li>• <b>Governance Review</b> <i>(to be covered on Saturday 20 May with Barney Tallack joining)</i></li> <li>• <b>Face to face meeting(s) in 2024</b></li> </ul>	Trustees only	Discussion
5pm – 6pm	Break		
6pm – 7pm	6. Governance and Nominations Committee meeting <i>(agenda and papers have been circulated)</i>	Tamara Kredo (will chair the meeting), Jordi Pardo Pardo, Emma Persad,	Papers (LJ-B)

		Sally Green (previously Nominations Committee Chair), Yuan Chi, Catherine Marshall		
7pm	Break			
8pm	Dinner at Picotte with Cochrane France	Governing Board and Executive Leadership Team with Isabelle Boutron (Director of Cochrane France)		
Friday 19 May 2023				
Time	Activity	notes		
09.00 – 1pm	Governing Board and ELT meeting	Agenda below		
Time	Item	Lead	Notes	Paper
OPENING BUSINESS				
9am – 9.05	1. Welcome & Introductions	Chair		
	2. Approval of the agenda	Chair		
	3. Declarations of interests (relating to items included on the agenda)	Chair		
RECURRING AND SUBSTANTIVE BUSINESS				
9.05-9.30	4. Approval of the minutes of the last meetings held on 14 March 2023 and 21 March 2023	Chair	To approve	Paper (LJ-B)
	5. Resolutions approved between meetings	Chair	To note	Paper (LJ-B)
	6. Review of the action/decision log	Chair	To note	Paper (LJ-B)
	7. Report from the Editor in Chief	KSW	To note	Paper (KSW)
	8. Report from the Chief Executive	CS	To note	Paper (CS)
	9. Report from the Co-Chairs	Co-Chairs	To note	Oral report
9.30-10	10. Product development update	LI / GL	To note	Oral report
10am - 10.30	11. Report from the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee to include: • Finance report (management accounts) • Audit report • Approval of the Letter of representation • Approval of the Trustees Annual report and accounts 2022	KK / CE	For approval	Papers (CE)
Break 10.30am – 10.45am				
10.45 – 11.15	12. Open Access update	LI	To note	Paper
11.15 – 12.15	13. Report from the Future of Evidence Synthesis Oversight Committee • Summary of the meeting held on 19 April 2023 • Resources required for expansion of the Central Editorial Service – business case for approval	SG/ KSW	For decision	Papers (KSW / SG)
1pm – 2.30pm	Lunch			

2.30pm – 5pm <i>(2 hours, 30mins to include break)</i>	<b>15. Fundraising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fundraising update from Gavin Adams</li><li>Financial strategy and financial development plan workshop with Erik Dauber (consultant)</li></ul>	GA and Erik Dauber	For information and discussion.  Erik Dauber to join virtually.	GA
5pm – 5.30pm	<b>16. Communications strategy</b>	HD / LP	For information and discussion.	Presentation from HD
5.30pm	Break			
7pm	Dinner	Le Chardon Governing Board and ELT		
<b>Saturday 20 May 2023</b>				
Time	Activity	notes		
08.30am – 1pm	Governing Board and ELT meeting	Agenda below		
Time	Item	Lead	Notes	
SUBSTATIVE BUSINESS				
8.30am – 9pm	1. Recap on previous day	Chair		
9am – 11am	2. Strategic risk deep dive <i>(to include long term decision making timetable)</i>	CE		Workshop and brief paper in advance
11am – 1pm	3. Strategy 2024-2027 (to include long term decision making timetable)	Tracey Barr		Presentation from Tracey Barr
1pm – 2pm	Lunch			
2pm – 2.30pm	4. Review resourcing decisions to be made in light of strategy discussion	All	For discussion and decision	
2.30pm – 3pm	5. Scientific Strategy	KSW	For discussion	Presentation
3pm – 3.45pm	5. Governance review update	Barney Tallack	For discussion	Presentation
CLOSING BUSINESS				
3.45pm – 4pm	6.Closing remarks and any other Business			
	7. Dates of next Meetings: 31 August – 2 September 2023 in London 6 December 2023 – Virtual meeting			
END				



## Governing Board: Reports

<b>Title:</b>	Resolutions approved between meetings
<b>Paper Number:</b>	Head of Governance to complete
<b>From:</b>	Lucy Johnson-Brown, Head of Governance
<b>Date:</b>	19 May 2023.
<b>For your:</b>	<b>TO NOTE</b>
<b>Access:</b>	Open - The default access level for papers submitted to the Board. These papers are published on the Cochrane Community website as part of an open access 'agenda pack' and are available to anyone.

Members of the Governing Board should note the resolutions approved between meetings:

### 26 April 2023 - Updated resolution re Product Development

At the meeting held on 21 March 2023, it was agreed that a Product Development Oversight Committee will be established to provide assurance to the Board. So as to not delay the project an updated resolution was drawn up asking the Board to:

**Approve** the creation of an oversight committee for product development to review the proposed 2023 development plan for the Cochrane Library and recommend to the board in May whether it should be approved.

**Approve** release of an initial staged budget to provide project management support and begin the discovery phase.

**Approve** that the oversight committee will support the approach to research and planning for New Product Development for revenue streams in 2023

**The resolution was approved - Yes:11 No:0 Abstain:0**

### 26 April 2023 - Emeritus and Lifetime Membership nominations

Two additional nominees were via email correspondence and a resolution asking Trustees to approve the two names was circulated.

**The resolution was approved - Yes: 8 No:0 Abstain:3**

The resolutions can be found in Convene [here](#).

**Lucy Johnson-Brown**  
**May 2023**

# Chief Executive Officer's Report to the Governing Board

<b>Title:</b>	Chief Executive Report May 2023
<b>Previous papers submitted on this topic:</b>	Strategy Presentation March 2023
<b>Paper Number:</b>	Agenda item 8 19 May 2023
<b>From:</b>	Catherine Spencer, Chief Executive Officer
<b>People Involved in developing the paper:</b>	Executive Leadership Team
<b>Date:</b>	04/05/2023 For Consideration at May 2023 Board meeting
<b>For:</b>	<b>Discussion and for information</b>
<b>Access:</b>	Restricted
<b>Decisions:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Agree that the Overall strategy will be signed off in September/October 2023 to align with the planning for the Plan &amp; Budget 2024 (3.1a)</li><li>2. Are the Governing Board in support of the suggested approach for Geographic Groups? (3.5)</li></ol>

## 1 Purpose:

Regular report to the Governing Board

## 2 Report

A new format update report has been included at the end of this narrative to report on progress against Strategy for Change.

## 3.0 Strategy:

### 3.1 Housekeeping

The strategy session will be run by an external consultant, Tracey Barr.

Pre-reading and information

- a PowerPoint presentation 'Pre-reading Strategy Tracey Barr 04052023', which is included in this pack.
- The route map for the strategy. It is for information only;
- PowerPoint slides showing the draft strategy presented at the March 2023 meeting, for information only

Our transformation agenda commenced under Strategy for Change and will continue under our next strategy. The strategic conversations in Barcelona have provided good initial

guidance. Further clarity will be provided by the work we do over the next few months through the strategy working group, feedback from the Governing Board and consultations with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. The financial modelling work discussed below will aid our decisions.

In the strategy session run by Tracey Barr, we have included the request (from a board member) to consider/confirm our core business. This includes consideration of whether we should continue to produce reviews or pivot to focus on, for example, methods, training and product development. Please note that a similar discussion took place before the decision to approve and implement the Future of Evidence Synthesis. Among risks that should be considered are: -

- Contract with Wiley (also at risk under Open Access)
- Business Model (under change already)
- stakeholder expectations
- Charitable objects / Community Buy in. Objects were previously changed from 'publish reviews' to 'publish reviews and other charitable activities'. It could be argued that this provides flexibility and that you don't have to do everything thus allowing change. However, significant changes require a vote of the members at a general meeting. Thus, decisions need to be taken in the context of understanding that radical change has impact including impact on reputation, community acceptance, and potential Charity Commission consent.

### **3.1a Strategy sign off to align with 2024 Plan and Budget planning (For Discussion/Decision)**

The final consultations for the new strategy are expected to be at the Colloquium in early September. This will allow time to consult with a global audience prior to September, and to hear face to face feedback at the Colloquium. An Engagement Plan has been developed to facilitate this consultation. The final work on the strategy is expected to be finished in September 2023. Thus, to enable the strategy and implementation plan to be reflected in the Plan and Budget 2024, it is requested that the Governing Board agree to sign off the final version via Convene outside of the Governing Board meeting.

### **3.2a Risk (for information)**

The Board approved a new Risk Policy (March 2022), and we are continuing to embed risk management - overseen by the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee – across the organisation. The Policy states that:

- *Trustees should be aware of the risk to the reputation of Cochrane from activities that they may undertake elsewhere.*
- *Trustees should seek assurance from the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee that appropriate strategic risk management procedures are in place.*
- *Annual review of approach to evaluation and mitigation of major risks.*

The annual review, of major or strategic risks, has not been carried out for some time although we include a strategic risk assessment in the annual Plan & Budget (which is included in the Trustees Annual Report).



During the May Governing Board meeting we will have an interactive Board risk session ("Strategic Risks: Deep Dive"). It is based on the approach suggested by Sayer Vincent (our former auditors and leading Charity advisors):

*'Risk management has traditionally been undertaken by identifying as many risks as possible and then applying an impact/likelihood scoring matrix. This may be undertaken at team, department and then board level. The resulting risk register will be extensive and so the board typically focuses on the top ten highest scoring risks. **In practice, however, this leads to much debate and discussion on the scoring methodology and distracts attention away from how the risks are actually being managed.** To achieve better governance of the key strategic risks, many boards accept that there will be a set of headline risks (usually five, but up to six) which will always be key for their organisation. And it is likely that these are similar across many organisations. This does away with the need for subjective scoring methods and an arbitrary cut-off for risks that get board focus (it will always be the eleventh risk that comes back to bite you!). It also saves much time and debate at board meetings.'* (Sayer Vincent Auditors)

The session will involve a brief presentation followed by a post-it note exercise on the suggested strategic risks set out below. The Executive Leadership Team will set out the various risks, causes and consequences, the management actions already in place and further actions identified. We would like Trustees to circulate the room, scrutinise the risks and make enquiries of the Executive Leadership Team. Such as - Do the Board have assurance that we are managing our strategic risks well? Any other risks we need to consider?

The output will be a fully updated Strategic Risk Register (one page per risk), with shared understanding of the risk, its causes and consequences, the management actions already in place and further actions identified. This will be monitored by the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee.

There are more complex areas of risk management including assessments of risk appetite and risk tolerance. We will develop these as we move along the risk management maturity journey.

#	Strategic risk
1	<b>Strategy</b> - are we delivering the strategy in order to meet our vision?
2	<b>Impact</b> - are we making the desired impact in support of our beneficiaries, and can we evidence it?
3	<b>Governance</b> – is our Governance structure enabling and supporting our compliance with the law and relevant regulations and a culture in which everything works towards fulfilling our vision?
4	<b>Financial sustainability</b> - are we managing the finances to ensure we continue to make an impact in the medium to long term?
5	<b>Compliance</b> - are we meeting our regulatory, legal and donor compliance requirements and expectations?
6	<b>People and culture</b> - do we have the right skills and experience to deliver our goals?
7	<b>Community</b> - Are the Charity and the wider Cochrane community working together towards a common vision?
8	<b>Reputational</b> - are we delivering the strategy in a way which safeguards our reputation (e.g., respond effectively to any incident that could result in reputational damage)?
9	<b>Producing and publishing trusted synthesized evidence</b> - can we maintain the delivery of our mission including any contractual obligations as intended?

Lucy Johnson-Brown has also prepared a paper on the theory of managing risk.

### **3.2b Financial Modeling: (For information prior to discussion during Risk workshop)**

The 2023 Plan & Budget included a five-year financial model which demonstrated a broadly 'worst case' scenario should long-term financial sustainability not be achieved. As we develop our financial modelling across Open Access, fundraising and other commercial products (existing and new), this five-year model will be updated with the latest robust assumptions and management information.

The work towards Open Access transition is progressing well thanks to the work by Tasha Mellins-Cohen. She has very recently provided initial revenue modelling for a suggested Open Access model from 2026. This model is a mix of 'subscribe to open' and 'freemium'. The systematic reviews would become open access, whilst those who continue to subscribe will have access to additional tools and services that are not available to non-subscribers. (Some of the tools that support this model are included in the proposed product development March 2023).

### **3.3 Increasing our work in Lower/Lower Middle-Income Countries (For information)**

Our Scientific Strategy, work with donors, and advocacy work will enable us to consider where we can add most value to global health, particularly through alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Evidence Based Health is well established in many current Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. More opportunity may exist in non-OECD countries. Thus, using our science strategy, advocacy work with donors (including Government, Trusts and Foundations) and Geographic Groups we will establish where there are possibilities to provide evidence which will be implemented, in for example guideline development. Partnership working will continue to be key. Work in this area will influence all parts of our strategic intent including our fundraising strategy. This also contributes to our desire to be more diverse and inclusive. There are additional possibilities in training and product development. The Scientific Strategy will be presented by Dr Karla Soares-Weiser. A focused approach will aim to provide evidence and reviews which are most useful and impactful.

### **3.4 Ecosystem: (For information)**

The Cochrane Ecosystem is complex. We hope that the Governance Review will contribute as to how we can simplify the ecosystem as well as using a strategic approach to determine the most efficient system.

Questions we are currently considering include -

- a. What should the feedback/information mechanism be to ensure that the community and membership have sufficient opportunity to contribute?
- b. How will Thematic Groups be determined by the Scientific Strategy?
- c. How do we reduce the number of entities in the Cochrane Ecosystem to simplify and reduce resources? This includes reviewing the role of the Council and considering the roles of Fields, Thematic Groups and Evidence Synthesis Units. Geographic Groups are discussed below.
- d. How do we create a system which is more diverse and inclusive?

### **3.5 Geographic Groups (For decision)**

Our Geographic Groups provide an existing (and expandable) network to complement our strategic move to create evidence that is focused on global, national and regional priorities, as well as their existing activities in training and advocacy.

In previous years Cochrane expanded our Geographic Groups rapidly. While we are determining our next strategy, we have halted the recruitment of new Geographic Groups.

There are important reasons why we have not re-opened processing of new groups,

- a. We want Geographic Groups to align with our strategy. This will include consideration of where new groups are in L/LMIC countries, and how we support them. We are moving away from a 'scattergun' approach.
- b. We want appropriate accountability and quality assurance – to cover training and other outputs. Implementing this in our new strategy is an important part of ensuring that training and advocacy are in line with our overall strategy and 'Cochrane' quality. Accountability across Cochrane is a challenge.
- c. We recognize that Geographic Groups can work nationally (and regionally), working with their national stakeholders to identify areas of evidence needed. This may lead to review production, with reviews being handled through the Central Editorial Service. This work may include working on national health, but in OECD countries there may be the opportunity to do more work with international development agencies.

Supporting Geographic Groups to expand the use of Evidence Based Healthcare can help us achieve our mission, however, we will need to consider the reasons outlined above. The Geographic Group Executive is creating a strategy which will align with our overall strategy.

Is the governing board content with the approach outlined above?

## **4.0 Human Resources**

### **4.1 Staff Changes (For Information)**

Susan Evans, now Strategic Implementation Manager, has taken up an expanded role working directly for the Chief Executive Officer. The project team have moved into the Chief Executive's Office to provide better visibility to the Chief Executive. This role will continue to oversee the existing responsibilities to the Future of Evidence Synthesis project but will also focus on the strategic priorities. It will play a crucial role in providing holistic oversight to the many streams of our transformation.

### **4.2 Two significant team members are leaving in mid-May.**

Chris Champion, Head of Events, Training and Membership has accepted a job at Chief Operating Officer to MAGIC. This is a perfect opportunity for Chris. We thank him for his commitment and the great work that he has done throughout his time at Cochrane.

John Hilton, Head of Content Publication and Policies has, decided to move on. His knowledge and capability are a huge loss to Cochrane.

We are considering how we can reshape Head of Content and Publications and Policies to reduce pressure and ensure that we have the capability to review our policies to support Future of Evidence Synthesis

**4.3** Wanjiru Mwangi joined the Comms team as Internal Communications Manager on 1 May. A long-needed resource, we look forward to the impact that Wanjiru's role will bring to improve our internal communications. In addition, Neil Rodgers is contracted to provide comms support to the Future of Evidence Synthesis programme up to the end of December 2023.

#### **4.4 Working Effectively (For background and discussion during the Governing Board only time)**

To aid our efforts to reduce overload I expect the Governance Review to suggest that the Governing Board and Executive Leadership team are clear on their roles and work. This includes,

- a) rethinking how the Governing Board work strategically
- b) providing clarity on scope and expectation of work so that the Executive Team can be tasked with work for next Governing Board meeting. This would recognise that the team(s) have a full workload and thus work needs to be carefully prioritised, capturing the detail at the outset.

Additionally, we recognise that we need to determine how we can best present information to ensure that the Governing Board have a clear picture of progress and challenges.

## **6.0 Strategies supporting the main strategy** (For Information)

Subject specific strategies that sit underneath the main organisation strategy are in progress. These provide more detail than the overall strategy. They are shown below. They are influenced by the direction of the main strategy and are vital components to deliver and implement the strategy. They are overseen by the appropriate committee.



## Update on Progress on Strategy for Change

Activity	Red, Amber or Green	Notes on RAG status	Progress	Key Risk and mitigations
<b>Goal 1, Objective 1:</b> Delivering timely, high-quality responses to priority global health and care questions, which the users of our evidence help define				Covered by the Editor in Chief
<b>Goal 1, Objective 2:</b> Streamlining production of reviews and simplifying editorial systems and processes.				Covered by the Editor in chief
<b>Goal 2, Objective 3:</b> Advocating for evidence-informed decision-making and integrity in research, including by pursuing high-impact partnerships and activities.	Nature of this task means it will never be complete!	Activities are ongoing	1 Cochrane is sending a delegation to the World Health Assembly at which we aim to meet with key partners and build our network. Cochrane Rehabilitation and Switzerland are co-hosting a side event sponsored by 5 Member States. 2 Ongoing talks with the World Bank about possible collaboration on climate health. 3 KSW is also having ongoing discussions with PAHO about possible formalised collaboration. 4 Trial transparency – we	<i>Delay in recruitment of Advocacy and Partnership Officer role has meant we only have one member of staff in this area and so capacity is severely limited at 1FTE. Recruitment is currently underway.</i>

			<p>have witnessed a major win in terms of the new UK policy which responds to many of our advocacy points on this issue. Geographic groups, such as Cochrane Germany and Mexico, also continue to lead national efforts. KSW is a member of the Clinical Trials advisory group at the WHO, which was established because of a political resolution which received wide support from countries (in non-Cochrane capacity)</p>	
<p><b>Goal 3, Objective 4:</b> Making all Cochrane Reviews Open Access (OA) by 2025 at the latest without placing the financial burden on review authors.</p>	Green		<p>Work with Tasha Mellins-Cohen is underway. Having scoped a potential model that might meet the requirements for Cochrane, Laura Ingle will be bringing information to the May board meeting for discussion.</p>	
<p><b>Goal 3, Objective 5:</b> Improving user experience by increasing the accessibility and usability of our products.</p>			<p>1. New Review Format Phase 1 - prototypes on the Cochrane Library platform delivered in Q1 and forecast to deliver the new format fully in time for the end of Q3 deadlines. The Oversight committee has now been approved and will meet in May to discuss roadmap</p>	

			and terms of reference.	
<p><b>Increased awareness and impact (enabling objective):</b> Increasing the visibility and profile of Cochrane globally; demonstrating our value and impact to decision-makers and funders; and meeting the needs of future generations.</p>	Amber	<p>Things are moving in the right direction, but significant resource gaps remain. The lack of Comms in the organisation previously means that there is much legacy work to complete.</p>	<p>Communications strategy is underway and progressing well.</p> <p>Increasing visibility through media promotion of reviews is proving successful. This includes coverage in high-profile national and international outlets including the BBC, New York Times and leading Spanish- and German-language publications. New collaborations with the translation team and Geographic Groups have significantly boosted coverage in non-English media.</p> <p>The website redesign is underway, although this is a significant project; results will not be visible before 2024.</p>	<p>Day-to-day operations remain strained; tasks previously undertaken by the pre-restructuring team fall to the reduced team or are deprioritized. Handling legacy issues takes up significant staff time.</p> <p>Recruitment is underway for a further 1FTE role in the team which should help to relieve pressure in the long term.</p> <p>High comms needs of the FES project are being addressed by an external consultant.</p>
<p><b>Enhanced accountability (enabling objective):</b> Strengthening communications and engagement with Cochrane members, supporters, staff and beneficiaries; improving diversity and inclusion; and</p>	Amber	<p>We expect this to improve now that we have an internal comms manager.</p>	<p>Recruitment of Internal Comms Manager is now complete. She commenced her employment with Cochrane on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023.</p> <p>This will strengthen communications with Cochrane members and supporters, ensuring diversity and inclusion.</p>	

making a commitment through the evidence we produce and how we collaborate to addressing global health and care priorities and reducing health inequities.				
<b>Sustainability (enabling objective):</b> Realizing our Open Access ambitions by moving towards a new organizational business model that reflects expanded fundraising and delivers long-term sustainability for the whole organization		Faster progress than expected has been made with modelling.	Open access modelling is on track (see above), there have been delays to recruitment of fundraising team, but fundraising work has been constructive and there will be updates – at May Board – on all these items including a ‘deep-dive’ into Financial Sustainability as part of the Strategic Risk workshop. Development of financial dashboard in progress.	These are mitigations against a Strategic Risk: <i>Financial sustainability - are we managing the finances to ensure we continue to make an impact in the medium to long term?</i>  These projects all have their own individual risk profiles.



# Editor in Chief Report to Governing Board

<b>Title:</b>	Editor in Chief Report May 2023
<b>Previous papers submitted on this topic:</b>	Editor in Chief report March 2023
<b>Paper Number:</b>	Agenda item 7 19 May 2023
<b>From:</b>	Karla Soares-Weiser, Editor in Chief
<b>People Involved in developing the paper:</b>	Toby Lasserson, Ruth Foxlee, Frances Kellie, John Hilton, Ella Flemyng, Susan Evans
<b>Date:</b>	12/05/2023 For Consideration at May 2023 Board meeting
<b>For:</b>	<b>FOR INFORMATION</b>

## 1 Background:

We are pleased to share this report summarizing key editorial issues for your information. Over the past year, we have made significant progress in our program of work, including supporting the development of high-profile reviews, improving our submission and review processes, developing new policies and guidelines, expanding the Central Editorial Service to manage a larger volume of submissions, and launching the first seven Thematic Groups.

However, we are also aware of the risks associated with the closing of UK Review Groups and the large influx of submissions to the Central Editorial Service, which may impact our ability to maintain high editorial standards and meet the needs of our authors, readers, and stakeholders. To mitigate these risks, we are actively monitoring our processes and metrics, engaging with the community to ensure their support and involvement, and seeking additional resources to support our efforts.

We remain committed to ensuring that our processes are transparent, efficient, and effective in meeting the needs of our stakeholders. We greatly appreciate the input and guidance from the Oversight Committee and Editorial Board as we work to achieve these goals, and we will continue to keep you informed of our progress and any new developments as they arise.

## 2 Report

### 2.1 Future of Evidence Synthesis Programme of work

Minutes of the Oversight Committee meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023 have been shared with the Governing Board. This meeting focused on the expansion of the Central Editorial Service and potential solutions to the challenges we face. The minutes of this meeting have been shared with the Governing Board, and a separate business case has been submitted for your consideration. A summary of key projects is provided below.

Project	RAG	Progress (Q1 2023)*	Key Risk and mitigations
<b>Prospective Author Journey</b>		<p>Our efforts to merge the <i>Author Proposal Management</i> and <i>Direct Submission Pathway</i> projects have been successful in increasing efficiency and reducing duplication of effort. As part of this effort, we have assessed the previous form for submission of new titles and adapted the proposal form to include a screening of the main inclusion criteria to avoid duplication.</p> <p>We are delighted to see that the new proposal form has been well accepted, and we received 151 new proposals in Q1 2023. Of these proposals, a final decision has been made for 102 (68%), and 17 (11%) were invited to submit a protocol. We are committed to maintaining a rigorous screening process to ensure that only the highest quality proposals are accepted.</p>	<p>While we continue to face challenges in establishing a process to record potential conflicts of interest at this stage of the review process, we are taking steps to address this concern. In the short term, we will implement a disclaimer to ensure transparency and disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest. We will also assess the need for wider changes in the long term to ensure that our processes remain transparent and effective. In addition, we are actively recruiting topic experts to assess proposals and provide expert input throughout the review process.</p>
<b>Review Development Pipeline</b>		<p>We are currently prioritizing the monitoring of progress for NIHR-funded reviews, with development support being offered to five high-priority reviews. In addition, we are providing hands-on development support to other 25 high-priority reviews, many of which will be featured in a special collection planned to celebrate Cochrane's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary.</p> <p>To date, seven reviews have been published as part of this effort, covering topics such as falls prevention, childhood vaccination, sanitation, and chronic pain.</p> <p>We are pleased to report that our recent review on <a href="#">Antidepressants for pain management in adults with chronic pain</a>, which was published on 10<sup>th</sup> May, received positive coverage in the media within the first 24 hours. This included articles in <a href="#">The Guardian</a>, <a href="#">BBC</a>, and <a href="#">CNN</a>, among others.</p>	<p>We are actively monitoring the possibility of a reduction in output in 2024, which could impact our obligations to Wiley. To mitigate this risk, we have been taking several steps to support our authors and ensure that we continue to meet our obligations. These steps include commissioning updates of highly cited/accessed reviews, providing targeted support for high-profile reviews, and improving the author submission process.</p>
<b>Central Editorial Service</b>		<p>In line with the Board's agreement, we have used strategic funds to expand and restructure the Central Editorial Service to manage the quality assurance and editorial process of approximately 250 reviews and 50 protocols per year. To address the influx of submissions in 2023, we have also added a business case to our Board discussion papers. From January to April 2023, the Service received 375 new submissions, completed the</p>	<p>We are aware that significant delays in editorial processing and time to publication can have a negative impact on our output and the overall author experience. In addition to these consequences, delays can also lead to poor performance metrics, reviews becoming out of date, a</p>

\* Progress and metrics for the Centralised Editorial Service were provide until end of April 2023

Project	RAG	Progress (Q1 2023)*	Key Risk and mitigations
		<p>editorial process for 105 submissions, and had a rejection rate of 20%. We are pleased to report that 87% of accept decisions were made within nine months or less, while 81% of rejections were made within four months or less. For more detailed metrics, please refer to our Central Editorial Service metrics, which are available <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>We have also begun communicating with non-UK Cochrane Review Groups and planning regional engagement efforts to identify the most important issues for completing the transfer of editorial content to the Central Editorial Service. In addition, we are starting to engage with editors of past and present Review Groups to establish a Board of Associate Editors who can contribute to Cochrane's Central Editorial Service.</p>	<p>reduction in published output, and negative impacts on staff wellbeing and retention, such as burnout.</p> <p>To mitigate these risks, we prepared a business case that requests additional resources to address these concerns. We are committed to maintaining high editorial standards while also ensuring that our processes are as efficient and effective as possible to support both our authors and our staff.</p>
<b>Optimise production workflows (mainly copy-editing)</b>		<p>A new project has been created to streamline Cochrane's production processes, with a particular focus on reducing the size of our current backlog of reviews and protocols awaiting for copy-editing. As part of this effort, J&amp;J Editorial has been engaged to provide freelance copy-editing resources.</p> <p>To improve efficiency and avoid duplications, the copy-editing team will be moved to the Publishing &amp; Technology Directorate. We are optimistic that this will enable us to make significant progress in reducing the backlog and ensuring that Cochrane Reviews and protocols are published in a timely manner.</p> <p>More detailed metrics are available <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p>We recognize that changes to some production processes, such as copy-editing, could potentially impact the quality of our work. To address this concern, we discussed the issue with the Editorial Board and the Oversight Committee, and both groups agreed that we should pilot a new process to align copy-editing with the changes in the New Review Format and avoid duplicating tasks already performed by the Central Editorial Service.</p>
<b>New Review Format</b>		<p>On 25 April, RevMan Web's study-centric data management became the recommended default for all newly registered reviews (milestone 1), and Cochrane announced a new <a href="#">data sharing policy</a>. To support this change, we have initiated wider communication and training efforts. We are now preparing for the August launch of a standardized/focused review article (milestone 2). Core designs for changes have been finalized, and development work has begun. The Editorial Board has approved the use of <a href="#">PRISMA</a> to report reviews of interventions and recommended the use of PRISMA for other type of reviews to be implemented in a phased approach. Our current focus is on developing reporting guidance for authors to support this transition.</p>	<p>We recognize that community buy-in is crucial to the success of making these changes mandatory, and we are actively working on an engagement plan to ensure that we secure the necessary support. This plan includes tailored communication, training, and guidance to ensure that all members of our community are informed and well-prepared for the changes ahead.</p>

Project	RAG	Progress (Q1 2023)*	Key Risk and mitigations																						
Evidence Synthesis Units		Unfortunately, our recruitment efforts for a fixed-term position to support this project were unsuccessful. However, we are currently in negotiations to hire a part-time consultant to develop an application process over the next three months.	We recognize that delays in starting the process can lead to disengagement within the community. To address this, our focus is on launching an application process as soon as possible to confirm our intention to pilot this aspect of the new model.																						
Thematic Groups		We are currently seeking legal advice to establish a contractual agreement framework that clearly outlines roles and expectations, establishes mechanisms of accountability, and enables us to provide fundraising support. While we await legal guidance, we have been meeting with all seven thematic groups to discuss their initial activities and implementation plans. More information on the type of support that we may be able to offer can be found <a href="#">here</a> .	The transition period is causing some uncertainty, which we are working to mitigate. To address this, we are developing an engagement plan that includes targeted communications to Cochrane volunteers.																						
Strategic designated funds tracker (£'000)	<table><tr><th>Description</th><th>Spent</th><th>Committed</th><th>Underspend</th><th>Total fund allocation</th></tr><tr><td>Central Editorial Service</td><td>£77</td><td>£402</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Review Pipeline</td><td>£16</td><td>£114</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>£91</td><td>£516</td><td>£43</td><td>£650</td></tr></table>					Description	Spent	Committed	Underspend	Total fund allocation	Central Editorial Service	£77	£402			Review Pipeline	£16	£114			Total	£91	£516	£43	£650
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## 2.2 Cochrane Library

In the first four months of 2023, Cochrane has published 141 reviews (74 new and 67 updated) and 49 protocols. This represents a significant increase in output compared to the same period last year (January to April; 98 reviews, 67 protocols) when we were still adapting to the transition to Editorial Manager and other changes. Despite the larger than expected number of submissions, Cochrane's central editorial and production teams are managing the workload effectively, and the immediate publishing pipeline is robust. However, we are actively working to improve the speed and efficiency of publishing the backlog.

It is worth noting that the number of protocols published in 2023 has decreased to 49, compared to 67 for the same period last year. This decline is likely due to the impact of Review Groups closure.

## 2.3 Cochrane Evidence Synthesis and Methods (OA new journal)

*Cochrane Evidence Synthesis and Methods* published its first articles, including the [launch Editorial and an exemplar rapid review](#), on 20<sup>th</sup> March. Since then, the journal has received a total of 21 submissions, resulting in eight publications and three acceptances. To ensure that we maintain high editorial standards, a training webinar for editors on the conflicts of interest policy was held in April, and handling editor guidelines are currently in development.

To foster a strong pipeline and frequent publications post-launch, we are collaborating with Wiley on a marketing campaign to encourage submissions. In addition, an in-person Editorial Board meeting is scheduled to be held at the 2023 Colloquium.

## 2.4 Cochrane editorial policies

Our policies are continually evolving to support the changes brought about by the Future of Evidence Synthesis program, as well as the closure of several Review Groups. Recently, we published a new [data sharing policy](#) as part of our efforts to enhance the management and sharing of data associated with reviews. We have also made some adjustments to [Cochrane's conflict of interest policy](#) to support the transition to a new process for managing review proposals and to clarify requirements and responsibilities for authors. These changes will be communicated soon.

We are also working on a revised rejection policy that will allow us to reject reviews or protocols based on topic/scope in addition to quality, timeliness, and policy adherence. Additionally, we are developing a new policy and process for comments management and publication, which is necessary given the closure of several Review Groups. To keep pace with technological advancements, we are also in the process of developing an entirely new policy on the use of AI-generated content and related tools. Finally, to support the changes in policies and their implementation, we are preparing a new internal editorial guidance resource to be housed on the Cochrane Library for easy access.

## 2.5 Setting out a process for high-profile reviews

Efforts are currently underway to establish a process that will enable Cochrane to continue delivering high-profile reviews. Initial discussions with Cochrane's Editorial Board have emphasized the organization's role as an independent body dedicated to publishing high-quality reviews while also recognizing the need to update our processes to ensure that these reviews stand up to scrutiny. One suggestion is to have more than one sign-off editor for these reviews.

To address recent challenges and draw upon lessons learned, we have established a panel comprising members of the Governing Board, Editorial Board, and central communications team. This panel, chaired by Governing Board member Gill Leng, will report back to the Governing Board once their activities are concluded.

## 2.6 Editorial Board

Cochrane's Editorial Board plays an active role in establishing standards for the new review format and meets regularly to discuss its progress. The Board supports the Editor in Chief and central team by advising on high-profile reviews and ways to prioritize reviews for direct support and fast-track assistance from the Editorial Service. In September, at the 2023 Colloquium, the Board will hold its first face-to-face meeting to discuss and agree on a process for conducting high-profile reviews, implementing innovative changes to the new review format, and providing input on plans for the scientific strategy.

# Governing Board: Decision Paper

<b>Title:</b>	<b>2022 Trustees' Annual Report &amp; Financial Statements</b>
<b>Previous papers submitted on this topic:</b>	GB meeting 21.03.23 (External Audit 2022)
<b>Paper Number:</b>	<b>Agenda item 12.3 – 19 May 2023</b>
<b>From:</b>	Finance, Audit & Risk Committee (the Committee)
<b>People Involved in the developing the paper:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Casey Early, Director of Finance &amp; Corporate Services</li> <li>• Finance Team: Monica Beadsworth, Lee Johnson</li> <li>• Executive Leadership Team – all*</li> <li>• Wider Leadership Team: Harry Dayantis, Lucy Johnson-Brown*</li> <li>• Trustees: Juan Franco, Tracey Howe, Karen Kelly, Catherine Marshall*</li> </ul> <p>* In respect of the Trustees' Annual Report (not the financial statements)</p>
<b>Date:</b>	For consideration at 19 May 2023 Board meeting
<b>For your:</b>	<b>DECISION</b>  The Board is asked to approve the 2022 Trustees' Report and Financial Statements.
<b>Access:</b>	Restricted - main report should only be published on completion, following submission to the Companies House & Charity Commission.

## 1. Purpose:

Following a recommendation from the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee (Committee), the Board is asked to approve the 2022 Trustees' Report and Financial Statements (Appendix 1). The recommendation, and decision for the Board, is informed by the Management Letter to Trustees (formerly Post-Audit Report) produced by the new Auditors, Price Bailey.

## 2. Background and context:

The 2022 Trustees' Report & Financial Statements has been 'signed off' by the Auditors, scrutinised by the Executive Leadership Team, the Committee and subsequently recommended for Board approval.

There is no change to the layout of the Trustees' Report: the 'achievements/performance', 'financial review', 'future plans' and 'principal risks/uncertainties' sections all fall under a 'strategic report' narrative. The enlarged 'principal risks/uncertainties' section – which forms the backbone of the Strategic Risk Register – remains and we have made the 'achievements/performance' section more concise. The 'future plans' section sets out the 2023 plans including the strategy development work and other key priorities. There is a comprehensive 'financial review' section – which aims to explain the main items of income, expenditure and why things have changed compared with the previous year ('looking back'). This is slightly different from the management accounts reporting, which is more concerned with why things have changed compared with budgets or plans and what the end of year forecasts might be ('looking ahead'). A huge thanks to everyone involved in this report.

The financial statements section of the report includes the three 'primary' statements: (1) statement of financial activities (similar to a profit & loss account), (2) balance sheet and (3) cashflow statement. In addition, there are accounting policies and 'notes' which support the primary statements by providing additional detail. The 2022 financial outputs are summarised below.

### Financial performance ('Consolidated statement of financial activities' - page 27 of the Report)

As reported in the Q422 management accounts, there was a significant £1.2m (16%) year-on-year income increase attributable to royalty income from the Cochrane Library (£0.8m) and Cochrane Response (£0.5m). The Cochrane Library performance was driven - in part - by the weak GBP pound relative to the USD dollar although actual sales remain strong into 2023. The additional Library income contributes wholly to the bottom line (there are few variable costs). The Cochrane Response income - following the extension of two large WHO COVID-19 living review contracts - contributed around £250k to the bottom line (25% margin). Notes 2-3 sets out the primary income streams.

Total expenditure fell by £1.2m (13%) to £7.9m (2021: £9.1m). The variances by expenditure type across the departments are shown in the table below (refer notes 4a, 4b). Well over 80% of the year-on-year expenditure reduction related to a fall in (employed) staff costs - mostly due to the organisational restructure. There were around 34 leavers associated with the restructure and throughout 2022 (2021: 19). This - along with a challenging recruitment market - contributed to a £0.7m underspend against the 2022 staffing budget. Two-thirds of the fall in expenditure related to the Development department: (1) Advocacy, communications & partnerships, (2) Engagement, learning & support, (3) Fundraising and (4) Cochrane Response.

Table 1: Year-on-year changes to expenditure categories across departments.

Year-on-year variance (£'000)	Cost of raising funds	Evidence production & methods	Publishing & technology	Development	Governance costs	Support costs	Total	%
Staff costs (note 6)	9	(258)	(235)	(204)	(208)	(131)	(1,027)	84
Other people costs	(66)	51	166	(119)	55	23	110	(9)
Consultancy/outsourced support	36	(124)	(3)	(183)	(54)	(4)	(332)	27
Technology	-	-	(4)	(47)	-	-	(51)	4
Commissioned Work	-	(14)	-	(49)	-	-	(63)	5
Premises costs	-	-	1	-	-	(70)	(69)	6
Travel & Subsistence	-	-	(1)	1	79	86	165	(14)
Employee-related costs	-	-	-	(64)	-	162	98	(8)
Sundry	-	-	(6)	(10)	-	55	39	(3)
Legal & professional	-	-	(15)	(33)	(1)	45	(4)	0
Colloquium costs	-	-	-	(88)	-	-	(88)	7
	(21)	(345)	(97)	(796)	(129)	166	(1,222)	100
%	2	28	8	65	11	(14)	100	

In summary: the increased, exchange-rate driven publishing income, along with staff cost reductions following the restructure, were the main reasons for the net operating surplus of £1.0m compared with the net operating deficit, in 2021, of £1.4m. The 2022 surplus also represents a favourable budget variance of £1.4m (budget: £0.4m deficit).

### Financial position ('Balance sheet' - page 28 of the Report)

With a £1.0m increase in funds, the balance sheet remains in a strong position for the challenges and opportunities ahead: total funds (or net assets) are £9.6m (2021: £8.6m). The overall financial result, including the excellent Cochrane Library performance in the last quarter, helps explain why debtors (↑ £0.4m) and cash (↑ £0.5m) have increased. As shown in Note 14 of the statements, most of the debtors increase relates to the £0.4m increase in 'accrued income' to £1.0m (2021 accrued income: £0.6m). Accrued income mostly relates to the Cochrane Library royalty income earned in the final quarter of the year but paid over by Wiley in the following month. We continue to maximise investment income, with a low-risk approach, using Treasury Reserves (31.12.22: £8.5m, 2.9%) and have reinvested in May (£5.0 for 12 months @ 4.25%, £3.0m for 6 months @ 3.75%). In the year, the Board approved £1.7m excess free reserves transfer to the three defined designated funds: Continuity (£1.0m), Future of Evidence Synthesis (£0.3m) and Pipeline Risk (£0.4m). The funds for the latter two were largely unspent at the year-end but have been incorporated into the 2023 Plan & Budget. The £0.3m reduction in 'Non-charitable trading funds' relates to Cochrane Innovations Limited, which ceased trading in the year and had returned all assets to the Charity by the year-end (struck-off: January 2023). The Free Reserves Floor 'should not be less than three months' sustainable operating cost' and was increased to £2.6m (from £2.0m) in Dec 2022. At the year-end, the excess over the target Free Reserves floor (£2.6m) is £1.0m. We will continue to monitor and report on the application of funds (including, through the Future of Evidence Synthesis Oversight Committee) as well as consider recommendations for any future reallocations.



Note that the Financial Statements are aligned to the management accounts by 'departmental' reporting which the Board are now familiar with. Following the Jan 2022 organisational restructure, the 2021 prior year numbers ('comparatives') needed to be restated so that the old departmental structure costs could be mapped to the new ones for ease of understanding.

### 3. Resolution:

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**The Board approves the 2022 Trustees' Report and Financial Statements**

**Yes/No/Abstain**

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### 4. Next steps:

The Director of Finance & Corporate Services will arrange the signing of the Report by the Treasurer. The Report will then be sent to the Auditors for signing and, following that, will be published on the Cochrane website and filed with Companies House (by 30 Sept) and the Charity Commission (by 31 Oct). Cochrane members will have an opportunity to ask questions about the Report at the 2023 Annual General Meeting.



# Governing Board: Discussion Paper

<b>Title:</b>	Development Directorate Update
<b>Previous papers submitted on this topic:</b>	N/A
<b>Paper Number:</b>	Agenda item 15
<b>From:</b>	Gavin Adams (Director of Development)
<b>Date:</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> May, 2023. For Consideration at May 2023 Board meeting.
<b>For your:</b>	<b>DISCUSSION of Development Update Paper</b>
<b>Access:</b>	Restricted

## 1 Purpose:

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Governing Board with an update on key activities within the Development Directorate since the March 2023 Governing Board meeting.

## 2 Background and context:

The Development Directorate is a relatively new structure within Cochrane, having been agreed during the organisational restructure of 2021/22. Functions contained within the Directorate include:

- Fundraising
- Communications
- Engagement, Learning and Support
- Advocacy & Partnerships
- Cochrane Response

## 3 Issues & ideas:

Key developments which have taken place within the Development Directorate since October 2022 include:

### Engagement, Learning and Support

#### Resignation of Chris Champion (Head of Engagement, Learning and Support)

Cochrane's Head of Engagement, Learning and Support submitted his resignation on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and will be taking up a new role as Chief Operating Officer with the MAGIC Evidence Ecosystem Foundation on 22<sup>nd</sup> May. We wish him every success in this new role and I would like to put on record my appreciation for all that he has contributed during his 14 years with Cochrane. Chris will be sorely missed within the organisation.

We will be using Chris's departure as an opportunity to reconfigure the functions which are currently within his remit. This will include moving the Events function to Communications and Geographic Group

support to the Chief Executive Officer's Office. We plan to begin the process to recruit for a new Head of Membership, Learning and Support by end of May 2023, both on an interim and a permanent basis.

### **Colloquium update:**

The Colloquium planning continues to run as expected. We have considered all abstracts for sessions and confirmed acceptance or rejection to submitters on time and we are now adding names of keynote speakers to the website ahead of a communications campaign to showcase the line-up of speakers: <https://events.cochrane.org/colloquium-2023/speakers>.

In total we received 805 Abstract and 125 Workshop submissions. Submission acceptance notifications were sent on 24th April 2023. The following numbers of submissions have been accepted for inclusion in the programme:

- Workshop – 72
- Long Orals – 45
- Short Orals – 190
- Posters – 306

Registration numbers are still low, but we expect a significant number of registrations over the coming weeks in the run up to the early bird deadline at the beginning of June. Sponsorship work is progressing well, with around 6 sponsorship or exhibition deals signed or nearly signed. We are still some way off our target for sponsorship, so it is important to continue pushing this area of work as hard as possible and we continue to welcome any suggestions or, more importantly, any personal contacts that can help secure sponsorship deals.

With the resignation of Cochrane's Head of Engagement, Learning and Support, additional risks have emerged in respect of the Colloquium. Colloquium management is handled by Cochrane UK, with CET input and coordination led by Sabrina Khamissa (Event Support Officer). Most of the key decisions have now been made and the team are in full delivery mode.

To mitigate any potential risks, Sabrina will have weekly check-ins with the Director of Development to keep him up to date and we will continue produce a regular fortnightly update report for ELT. Sabrina will escalate any key decisions to Gavin, though we don't anticipate any further key decisions - any future issues will be smaller scale decisions about programme arrangements, use of space etc. ELT will be kept regularly informed about registration numbers over the coming weeks. The Chief Executive Officer and Director of Development will continue to attend meetings of the Local Organising Committee (the next meeting is scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> May) .

### **Professional membership**

As reported previously, we engaged a membership professional to facilitate a workshop with a group of CET members, including members of ELT, to help us further refine the membership value proposition we are considering for professional membership. This workshop has now been held and it was a successful session. We are awaiting the write up from the session that will detail next steps and actions as well as a draft member value proposition for this concept.

### **Emeritus membership**

Remaining letters to the remaining awardees were issued in the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> May. The Communications team are ready to start work with recipients gathering news story content and a plan has been developed as to how these awards will be presented, with profiling on our websites and through social media. We are commissioning a designer to improve the current certificate designs and

have the badge designs ready. Before the departure of Cochrane's Head of Engagement, Learning & Support, all awardees will have been contacted and all nominators will have been thanked. The remaining work will be managed by the Communications team with the exception of the badges and certificates which will be managed by Ann Shackleton (Membership & Volunteering Manager).

### Diversity & Inclusion

A Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan has been developed. Further discussions are required within the Executive Leadership Team as we are keen to develop an approach which is ideally embedded in our new organisational Strategy. Chris Champion will meet with the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Development to agree a way forward. It is important that a CET staff member has clear responsibility for this key area.

### Fundraising

Key updates since the last Governing Board meeting include:

- Cochrane's Editor-in Chief and the Director of Development continue to work closely with the internationally recognized financial development consultant, Erik J. Daubert, MBA, ACFRE, to create a **Fundraising Strategy**. Erik presented to the second meeting of Cochrane's Fundraising Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 and will present on his work to the face-to-face Governing Board meeting on 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> May.
- **Fundraising Committee** – A terms of reference for the Fundraising Committee was approved at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March and, subsequently, at the Governing Board meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> March. This Committee will support the work of the Development Directorate. The Committee comprises Trustee (Wendy Levinson (chair), Catherine Marshall, Gillian Leng) and Executive Leadership Team (Karla Soares-Weiser, Catherine Spencer, Gavin Adams) membership. The Committee has met twice since its inception.
- A **General Case for Support** has been developed and circulated to Trustees. This will form the basis of approaches to funders and will be adjusted depending on the funder being approached. Design work is being undertaken by an external agency on this document.
- Recruitment for a new **Head of Fundraising** commenced in January 2023. We were unable to offer the role to any of the candidates at the conclusion of this campaign. We are now working with a recruitment agency, AAW. A number of potential candidates have been identified with first round interviews scheduled for w.c. 8<sup>th</sup> May and second interviews taking place soon thereafter. We remain hopeful that this position will be filled by August/September 2023, with a full Fundraising team recruited by end Quarter 3, 2023.

### Communications

- Development of a new Communications Strategy for Cochrane is underway and progressing well. Communication Strategy objectives have been drafted by the Strategy Working Group and will be presented to the Governing Board meeting in Paris.
- Increasing visibility through media promotion of reviews is proving successful. This includes coverage in high-profile national and international outlets including the BBC, New York Times and leading Spanish- and German-language publications. New collaborations with the translation team and Geographic Groups have significantly boosted coverage in non-English media.
- The website redesign is underway, although this is a significant project; results will not be visible before 2024.

- Handling of legacy issues takes up significant staff time. However, recruitment is underway for a further 1FTE role in the team which should help to relieve pressure in the long term.
- The high comms needs of the FES project are being addressed by an external consultant. This arrangement is working well.
- Cochrane Trustee, Gill Leng is chairing a panel to formalise our approach to dealing with controversial issues; so far one meeting has been held.
- 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary branding: Cochrane continues to use its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary branding to celebrate 30 years of Cochrane in a way that highlights the difference we have made whilst looking to the future. 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary branding is being used throughout our social media platforms (Twitter and LinkedIn):

<https://twitter.com/cochranecollab>



We plan also to roll out 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary branding for the main website once the Special Collection is live on the Library. This will happen by the end of May at the latest.

Work has commenced to produce a 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary video. A plan has been developed and this work be rolled out over the next quarter.

Work to profile our reviews in our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year is also underway.

30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary merchandise is also available, including mugs, hoodies, sweatshirts, t-shirts and tote bags. Merchandise can be purchased via the following link:

<https://store.cochrane.org/collections/30th-anniversary>.

- A new Internal Communications Manager, Wanjiru Mwangi, started with Cochrane on 2<sup>nd</sup> May. Wanjiru will be working to improve internal communications within the Central Executive Team and the wider Cochrane Community.

## 4 Next steps:

- Design work to commence on the General Case for Support and the Case for Support for the Maternal, Neonatal & Childbirth Thematic Group
- Recruitment for Head of Fundraising ongoing until end-May 2023
- Fundraising Strategy to be by Governing Board in May 2023
- Communications Strategy to be developed by end June 2023
- Communications Team vacancies to be filled by end June 2023
- Advocacy & Partnerships Strategy to be developed by end December 2023

## Governing Board: Paper for discussion

<b>Title:</b>	Strategic risk management and risk appetite
<b>Paper Number:</b>	Head of Governance to complete
<b>From:</b>	Lucy Johnson-Brown, Head of Governance
<b>Date:</b>	2 May 2023
<b>For:</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>

### Access: Open

#### Open

The default access level for papers submitted to the Board. These papers are published on the Cochrane Community website as part of an open access 'agenda pack' and are available to anyone.

#### Restricted

Papers that include information about individuals, or strategic and business plans that are not in the Charity's best interests to make publicly available are labelled restricted and are not published on the Cochrane Community website.

### 1 Purpose:

At the meeting to be held on Saturday 20 May 2023, the Governing Board will consider a deep dive into strategic risk management. This paper sets out the background and context ahead of an interactive workshop session in Paris.

### 2 Background and context:

Cochrane is unavoidably exposed to risk, either due to factors in the external environment, or through the opportunities we choose to pursue and the activities we carry out that enable us to deliver on our vision, mission and strategic goals.

Trustees are responsible for ensuring that Cochrane's key objectives are achieved, that the charity's resources are managed responsibly and that our assets and reputation are not exposed to undue risk. Risk is an everyday part of charitable activity and actively managing risk is essential.

Trustees have delegated responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of Cochrane's risk management procedures to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee but the Board of Trustees remains collectively responsible for ensuring that risk is managed.

There are different approaches to risk management but it is standard practice to have a risk management policy which sets out a systematic approach, a strategic risk register which captures high level risks (along with how they are controlled or mitigated) and a library of more detailed programme, project or departmental risk registers which are managed by the team, group or department responsible for delivery of the programme, project or area of operation.

Risk management is a cycle of continuous review, implementation of agreed controls and actions and (re-) assessing existing and new risks.

Focusing Board discussion about strategic risk at the 'right' level (rather than getting caught up with an ever increasing list of detailed risks and operational issues) can be a challenge and the risk management policy, strategic risk register and risk appetite statement or framework should be useful tools to aid decision making.

The attitude to risk within Cochrane should be positive and open, so that the organisation as a whole can learn from risk events and improve future performance.

### 3. Strategic risks

A list of 9 strategic risks were agreed in early 2023. They are:

1. Strategy - are we delivering the strategy in order to meet our vision?
2. Impact - are we making the desired impact in support of our beneficiaries and can we evidence it?
3. Governance - is our Governance structure enabling and supporting our compliance with the law and relevant regulations and a culture in which everything works towards fulfilling our vision?
4. Financial sustainability - are we managing the finances to ensure we continue to make an impact in the medium to long term?
5. Compliance - are we meeting our regulatory, legal and donor compliance requirements and expectations?
6. People and culture - do we have the right skills and experience to deliver our goals?
7. Community - Are the Charity and the wider Cochrane community working together towards a common vision?
8. Reputational - are we delivering the strategy in a way which safeguards our reputation (e.g. respond effectively to any incident that could result in reputational damage)?
9. Producing and publishing trusted synthesized evidence - can we maintain the delivery of our mission including any contractual obligations as intended?

### 4. Deep dive

At the meeting to be held on 20 May 2023, the Governing Board will be asked to consider a deep dive into strategic risk at a workshop facilitated by Casey Early and Lucy Johnson-Brown. We will ask you to do consider each strategy risk, review the mitigations that are in place and comment on how assured you are that the risks are being adequately managed.

### 5. Next steps

The output from the strategic risk deep dive will be used to develop a strategic risk register which will be reviewed by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee at each of their meetings and by the Governing Board twice a year.

Regular deep dives into specific areas of risk can bring greater context to discussion around risk. Deep dives should stimulate and bring to life a discussion around the key risks to the organisation in a different way to the ongoing review of the risk register. A deep dive should complement the review of the risk register and highlight the realities of how risks are being managed.

**Lucy Johnson-Brown**  
**May 2023**