

Governing Board Meeting Minutes

Cape Town, 11-12 September 2017

Trustees (Board members):		Present for:
Martin Burton (Board and Meeting Co-Chair)	MB	All items
Cindy Farquhar (Board and Meeting Co-Chair)	CF	All items
Janet Clarkson	JC	From item 4
Maria Gladys Faba Beaumont	GF	All items
Gerald Gartlehner	GG	All items
Peter C. Gøtzsche	PG	All items
David Hammerstein Mintz	DH	All items
Tracey Howe	TH	All items
Marguerite Koster	MK	All items
Raewyn Lamb	RL	All items
Catherine Marshall	CM	All items
Joerg Meerpohl	JM	All items
Nancy Santesso	NS	All items
Senior Management Team:		
Mark Wilson	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	MW All items
Karla Soares Weiser	Acting Editor in Chief	KSW All items
Lucie Binder	Senior Advisor to the CEO (Minute taker)	All items
Miranda Cumpston	Head of Learning & Support	3, 5-8
Chris Mavergames	Head of Informatics & Knowledge Management	3, 5-8
Charlotte Pestridge	CEO, Cochrane Innovations	3, 7-8
Sarah Watson	Head of Finance & Core Services	All items
Other attendees:		
Jo Anthony	Senior Media & Communications Officer (CET)	Items 3.3.1 and 9
Julian Elliott	Next Generation Co-ordinator (CET)	Item 5
Sally Green	Director, Cochrane Australia	Item 3.3.1
Sylvia de Haan	Partnerships Co-ordinator (CET)	Item 3.3.1
Harriet MacLehose	Senior Editor (CET)	Item 6
Jay Neill	Vice President, Digital Product & Platform Development	Item 6.1
Deborah Pentescio-Gilbert	Editorial Director (Wiley)	Item 6.1

Notes & Abbreviations:

Content is restricted when the Board considers it confidential and/or commercially sensitive – it is only made available to Board and SMT members.

AOB	Any Other Business
Board	Governing Board

CET	Central Executive Team
CEAD	Communications & External Affairs Department (a department of the CET)
CEU	Cochrane Editorial Unit (a department of the CET)
CLIB/ECLIB	Cochrane Library/enhanced Cochrane Library project
CRG	Cochrane Review Group
GES	Global Evidence Summit, Cape Town, September 2017
KT	Knowledge Translation
OA	Open Access
SDS	Strategic Development Support
SMT	Senior Management Team

List of Approved Resolutions:

2.1.1	<p>The Board approves the recommendations made in this paper, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agenda for Governing Board meetings includes clear Resolutions, prepared and proposed by a named Proposer who must be a Board Member. • The Minutes of Board Meetings are taken by a member of Cochrane's staff or - in Board only time - by a Trustee. • An audio recording is made of Board meetings and used as an aide memoire by the Minute taker. • The summary of discussion on each item of business is brief but informative. • The Minutes clearly lists the sources of information used to make decisions. • The number of votes for and against, and any abstentions, are recorded as required, but names are not recorded. <p>In addition, a statement would be made about the destruction of the recordings and that they cannot be used for another purpose.</p>
2.1.2	The Board approves under Article 15.4.1 [of the Articles of Association] that Cindy Farquhar be regarded as an Elected Member of the Governing Board.
2.1.3	The Board approves the appointment of Marguerite Koster as Treasurer of the Cochrane Governing Board.
2.1.4	The Board approves the appointment of Gerald Gartlehner as Cochrane Governing Board Representative on the Cochrane Innovations Board.
2.1.5	The Board approves the proposed members of the Governing Board Sub-Committees, and mandated them to review and/or further develop their terms of reference.
2.1.6	The Board approves the establishment of a standing Governance Sub-Committee.
2.2.2	The Board approves the CRG Transformation Programme appeals procedure set out in the accompanying paper "Process for an appeal against the Editor-in-Chief's decision during the Structure & Function Review CRG Transformation Programme", with modification to paragraphs 10 (a) changing 14 days to 30 days, and 10 (b) 30 days to 60 days.
3.3.1	The Board approves starting the KT implementation work focusing on a prioritized 10 (out of 17) work-packages outlined in the KT framework, and the implementation plan for 2018-2019.
3.3.2	The Board approves the hosting of the Colloquium 2020 in Toronto, Canada, by Cochrane Canada; and hosting of the Governance Meetings in April 2019 in Krakow, Poland by Cochrane Poland.
3.4	The Board approves the Risk Management Report (Q4).
4.1	The Board approves the Structure and Function of Cochrane Review Groups and the implementation of the Networks and Editorial Board.
4.2	The Board approves the CRG Transformation Programme Implementation plan, and the budget request of 464, 750 GBP in 2018 and 543,500 GBP in 2019.
4.3	The Board approves the establishment of two new Cochrane Centres in Argentina and Chile.
4.4.1	The Board approves the Cochrane Neonatal Review Group Application for Strategic Development Support; Budget request: 67,573 USD.
4.4.2	The Board approves the Cochrane Lung Cancer Review Group Application for Strategic Development Support; Budget request: 30,000 EUR maximum.

7.1	The Board approves the issue of share capital to Cochrane Innovations of £700,000.
8.1	The Board approves the proposed <i>Strategy to 2020</i> priorities for 2018, to guide development of the 2018 Plan & Budget.
8.2	The Board approves the 2018-2020 Financial Forecast/Scenario Planning.

List of approved Actions:

2.1.4	Member(s) of the CET should develop terms of reference for the Cochrane Treasurer and the Cochrane Governing Board Representative on the Cochrane Innovations Board.
2.1.5	The Board Sub-Committees should review and develop Terms of Reference. Member(s) of the CET should update the Cochrane Community website and Convene with the updated Committee lists. The Grievance & Complaints Sub-Committee should be renamed to the Complaints Procedure Working Group, to reflect its time-limited status.
2.2.2	The Complaints Procedure Working Group should develop a generic appeals process, and whether and how all appeals should come to the Board.
3.1.2	Member(s) of the CET should develop a dashboard specifically for the Board.
3.2	Member(s) of the CET should implement a flagging system to the Board for potentially problematic reviews.
3.4	
4.2	The Board should further consider Cochrane's Conflict of Interest policies.
4.4	Mark Wilson should provide an update to the Board on the status of funding to Cochrane Groups in Canada and Australia.
4.4.1	Member(s) of the CET should develop a strategy and principles for Strategic Development Support to Groups.
5.2	A sub-group of the Board should be formed to support the Diverse Data working group to develop proposals for future content.
6.2	
8.1	Peter C. Gøtzsche and David Hammerstein, plus other interested trustees, should develop plans on how Cochrane should review and develop its advocacy position on access to results and data that inform Cochrane Reviews. This informal group should work with the Scientific Committee and CEAD.
AOB	The Board should develop a list of priority topics for strategic discussion.
AOB	Member(s) of the CET should set-up a 'Slack' channel to improve Board communications.

1. Welcomes, Apologies, Declarations of Interest and Approval of Agenda

CF opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, especially the new trustees: GF, DH and RL. JC would join the meeting after the lunch break. CF reminded everyone that the discussions would be confidential unless stated otherwise.

No trustees declared conflicts of interest not already declared in their public-access statements.

Under Any Other Business GG proposed, and the trustees agreed, that an item on strategic topics that the Board felt was important and had arisen during the meeting would be addressed. NS proposed, and the trustees agreed, that there would be an update on the work of the Cochrane Council and a review of Cochrane's organograms would be given. MB proposed, and the trustees agreed, that topics like organizational overviews would be given as part of the Board Development Day at future meetings.

2. Co-Chairs' Report and Governing Board Business

2.1 Governing Board matters

2.1.1 Conduct and Reporting of Board Meetings

MB introduced the supporting paper **2017-CT-2.1-001**. TH proposed, and the trustees agreed, that guidance on recording of meetings and destruction of recordings would be added. CM proposed, and the trustees agreed, that this guidance would include a statement that recordings would only be used to support minute-taking. JM proposed a

future discussion on a full, open access recording of the meeting be considered; this was agreed by the Co-Chairs. CF proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the recommendations made in this paper, namely:

- **The Agenda for Governing Board meetings includes clear Resolutions, prepared and proposed by a named Proposer who must be a Board Member.**
- **The Minutes of Board Meetings are taken by a member of Cochrane's staff or – in Board only time – by a Trustee.**
- **An audio recording is made of Board meetings and used as an aide memoire by the Minute taker.**
- **The summary of discussion on each item of business is brief but informative.**
- **The Minutes clearly lists the sources of information used to make decisions.**
- **The number of votes for and against, and any abstentions, are recorded as required, but names are not recorded.**

In addition, a statement would be made about the destruction of the recordings and that they cannot be used for another purpose.

12 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

2.1.2 Governing Board Membership

MB introduced the supporting paper **2017-CT-2.1.2-001**. MB proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves under Article 15.4.1 [of the Articles of Association] that Cindy Farquhar be regarded as an Elected Member of the Governing Board.

12 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

2.1.3 Election of the Treasurer

MB introduced the item, explaining that he had stepped down as Treasurer. In response to a question from TH, MB clarified that in future, external trustees with financial experience would be sought. CF proposed the resolution and called for a vote. MK did not vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the appointment of Marguerite Koster as Treasurer of the Cochrane Governing Board.

11 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

2.1.4 Selection of Cochrane Governing Board representatives on the Cochrane Innovations Board

MW introduced the item, explaining the role of Cochrane Innovations for the benefit of new trustees. Cochrane's Governing Board had a controlling influence on the Innovations Board, with Cochrane's CEO (ex-officio) and a member of the Governing Board as representative Directors. Major financial decisions came from the Innovations to the Cochrane Board. MB was stepping down and GG was proposed by the Co-Chairs as the new member. CF proposed the resolution and called for a vote. GG did not vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the appointment of Gerald Gartlehner as Cochrane Governing Board Representative on the Cochrane Innovations Board.

11 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

In response to a question from JM, MW clarified that there was no limit on the term of the Board representative on the Cochrane Innovations Board. MK confirmed that terms of reference for the Cochrane Treasurer and Innovations representative would be developed.

ACTION: Member(s) of the CET should develop terms of reference for the Cochrane Treasurer and the Cochrane Governing Board Representative on the Cochrane Innovations Board.

2.1.5 Selection of Board members to Governing Board Committees

MB introduced the role of the Board sub-committees and the supporting paper **2017-CT-2.1.5-001**. He proposed, and the trustees agreed, that each sub-committee would review and develop its own Terms of Reference as their first task; to include consideration of the role of members, a required skills matrix, and assessment of the requirement to co-opt external members.

ACTION: The Board Sub-Committees should review and develop Terms of Reference.

ACTION: Member(s) of the CET should update the Cochrane Community website and Convene with the updated Committee lists.

ACTION: The Grievance & Complaints Sub-Committee should be renamed to the Complaints Procedure Working Group, to reflect its time-limited status.

CF proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the proposed members of the Governing Board Sub-Committees, and mandated them to review and/or further develop their terms of reference.

12 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

2.1.6 Report on the 2017 Governing Board Elections and Appointments

Lucie Binder introduced the supporting paper **2017-CT-2.1.6-001**. CF proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the establishment of a standing Governance Sub-Committee.

11 Yes 0 No 1 Abstain

2.1.7 Update by the Board Group on Complaints Procedure

CF referred to the discussion under the previous item and the Board's approval of a Complaints Procedure Working Group.

2.2 Appeals to Governing Board

2.2.1 Procedure for dealing with CRG Transformation Programme Appeal to the Governing Board

MW introduced the supporting paper **2017-CT-2.2.2-001**.

He reminded the Board of its decision in April 2017 to allow CRGs to appeal to the Board.

RL proposed, and the trustees agreed, that a generic appeals framework be developed, including timeframe, content and aims of the appeals process. TH further proposed, and the trustees agreed, that the criteria developed should be published and applicable to all Cochrane Groups and members.

ACTION: The Complaints Procedure Working Group should develop a generic appeals process, and consider whether and how all appeals should come to the Board.

MW proposed, and the trustees agreed, that for timeliness, the CRG Transformation appeals process be approved as a stand-alone process that would eventually be incorporated into the generic appeals process. CF proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the CRG Transformation Programme appeals procedure set out in the accompanying paper "Process for an appeal against the Editor-in-Chief's decision during the Structure & Function Review CRG Transformation Programme", with modification to paragraphs 10 (a) changing 14 days to 30 days, and 10 (b) 30 days to 60 days.

12 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

3. Central Executive Team Reports:

The SMT members not already present joined for this item and introduced themselves to the trustees.

3.1 CEO Update including:

3.1.1 2017 Strategy to 2020 Targets Update

MW spoke to the *Strategy to 2020* mid-year Targets report and the Quarter 2 Dashboard (2017-CT-3.1.1-001), and the excellent progress being made to deliver the Targets in 2017. However, he highlighted the Targets not yet confirmed as being delivered this year: RevMan Web, and the enhanced Cochrane Library; though both were subject to delays he hoped that they would be launched in 2017 as planned. In response to trustees' questions, MW said that an in-depth review of the enhanced Cochrane Library would take place under item 6. However, he confirmed that the project continued to take a significant amount of CET resource and that a limited access 'soft-launch' of the product would take place at the forthcoming Global Evidence Summit. Chris Mavergames confirmed that RevMan Web would work for all intervention reviews. Whether it would remain cost-free for non-Cochrane members had still to be decided. The Board thanked the CET for its work and the high level of delivery against the 2017 plans.

3.1.2 Finance Update

MW gave an update on Cochrane's central finances. He spoke of the reduced fundraising projections but better than expected royalty income, which was keeping income strong overall. Expenditure was mostly on track as expected.

JM proposed, and the trustees agreed, that the quarterly Cochrane organizational dashboard be supplemented by the development of a new Governing Board dashboard that was more reflective of the metrics needed for the strategic focus of its work.

ACTION: Member(s) of the CET should develop a new dashboard specifically for the Board.

MW said that there had been a huge growth in access to Cochrane evidence in Spanish-speaking countries, particularly in Mexico and South America. This could be partly explained by Cochrane's translations efforts but also by the relative lack of independent health information for health professionals in Spanish – which gave Cochrane a huge opportunity. GF noted that the price of licences to the Cochrane Library was still an inhibitor for even stronger growth, especially in Central and South America. MW explained Cochrane's free, immediate access and heavily subsidised national licence provisions to 3.6 billion people in low- and middle-income countries. He also encouraged and supported Cochrane Centres and Groups to be involved in Wiley's licence negotiations to guide their regional sales teams on the local conditions.

3.2 Editor in Chief's Update

KSW gave the report as Acting Editor-in-Chief while David Tovey was on medical leave. MB asked that a vote of thanks be recorded for her and the CEAD team. She reported that CEU continued to work as usual and spoke to its current activities in addition to work on the enhanced Cochrane Library and the CRG Transformation Programme: a complaints and rejections policy was in development; the Scientific Committee had met for the first time and appointed its Co-Chairs; Transform was proceeding on target; Covidence usage was now rapidly increasing within the Cochrane community, with 500 reviews using it to-date, and sales of Covidence continued to grow strongly. The Board discussed the success of the Covidence project.

The first review under the new fast-track programme had just been published in the Cochrane Library, within three months from start to finish. KSW said that the fast-track concept had been proven, but its sustainability still needed to be worked out. One issue was that senior methodologists were often not keen to use RevMan for time reasons; bypassing this requirement could encourage participation. In response to a question from DH, KSW said that an assessment of whether observational data be included in Cochrane Reviews would form part of the work on diverse data currently being prepared for the Board for its meeting in March 2018.

KSW updated the Board on editorial issues related to recent Cochrane Reviews. TW proposed, and the trustees agreed, that given the Board's overall responsibility for Cochrane's content major issues related to problematic reviews should be 'flagged' to the Board.

ACTION: Member(s) of the CET should implement a flagging system to the Board for potentially problematic reviews.

3.3 Communications & External Affairs Department Reports:

3.3.1 Knowledge Translation Strategy/ Implementation Plan

Sally Green, Sylvia de Haan and Jo Anthony were welcomed to the meeting. Sally Green introduced the supporting paper **2017-CT-3.3.1-001** and explained that following approval by the Board in April of the Knowledge Translation (KT) framework, KT priorities had been worked out in consultation with the community and a strategic implementation plan drafted across the framework's six main themes. She stressed that the KT Strategy was a transformation in function and culture change for Cochrane, not a project; and to be successful it had to be community-led and embedded across the whole organization. KT expertise and excellence already existed within Cochrane, particularly in dissemination, but was not co-ordinated. The KT team was looking for guidance from the Board on KT priorities, and these would then be incorporated within the strategy with detailed plans and budgets for each of the ten prioritized work packages developed as part of the central 2018 Plan & Budget, or later in 2018.

TH congratulated the team on grappling with such a major issue of organizational culture change. She asked about organizational capacity, which Sally Green said needed to be developed, especially via training initiatives. Implementation was going to take time and would be a major challenge. Cochrane Groups were already giving dichotomous feedback: either the strategy did not go far enough, or it was too ambitious for Groups to deliver. Resourcing for implementation would also be an issue for many Groups. JM said that more needed to be done to support sustainable translations. TH proposed that capacity and capability be differentiated and a budget request should include an evaluation framework. PG was concerned that the document lacked an evidence-base about 'what works' in KT. GG and DH raised the concern that plan was too vague; concrete plans were necessary and a recognition of a plain-language approach to support the academic endeavour would be important to support change communications.

Sally Green responded by explaining that examples of best practice and what was already known to work would be included in the work packages. KT was an academic endeavour with its own language and this language should be used and the expertise Cochrane had on hand recognised for its value and leadership. However, clear communications that engaged everyone across the organization would be essential and was planned. The KT Strategy's alignment with organizational Structure & Function reforms would be explicit; and the working groups for each of the work packages would have diverse membership. Sally Green, Sylvia de Haan and Jo Anthony were thanked for their work and left the room before the vote.

The Board discussed the KT's strategic implementation plan, CF proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves starting the KT implementation work focusing on a prioritized 10 (out of 17) work-packages outlined in the KT framework, and the implementation plan for 2018-2019.

9 Yes 1 No 2 Abstain

3.3.2 Selection of hosts for 2019 Cochrane Governance Meetings and 2020 Cochrane Colloquium

The bidders were thanked for their willingness to host the future Cochrane meetings (**2017-CT-3.3.2-001**). It was confirmed that the current uncertain funding status of Cochrane Canada would not affect the feasibility of a Colloquium in Canada. CF proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the hosting of the Colloquium 2020 in Toronto, Canada, by Cochrane Canada; and hosting of the Governance Meetings in April 2019 in Krakow, Poland by Cochrane Poland.

12 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

3.4 Risk Management Report (Q4)

MB took over chairing for the afternoon period. JC joined the meeting.

MB proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the Risk Management Report (Q4).

12 Yes 1 No 0 Abstain

4. Cochrane Groups – strategic and policy issues

4.1 The Structure and Function of Cochrane Review Groups: Implementation of Networks and Editorial Board

KSW introduced the report **2017-CT-4.1-001**. She explained the background to the CRG structure and function reforms, with discussions beginning about different ways of working as early as 2012. Consistency in quality was the biggest issue being addressed but the reforms must also meet future evidence needs and ensure that Cochrane's production structures and processes were 'fit for purpose' for the next decade and beyond. She explained the results of the comprehensive, detailed performance and sustainability reviews of all CRGs, focusing particularly on those Groups identified as requiring changes or being at risk. KSW said the reviews had been very enormously useful to get a detailed assessment of the Groups' performance and challenges, and recommended that they should be held in future on a regular basis. She then took the Board through the CRG Transformation Programme's main elements, including the establishment of eight new CRG Networks.

NS asked what consultation had been made on the document. KSW replied that the Council, Managing Editors' Executive and Information Specialists' Executive had all reviewed and provided feedback on the proposal; and JC said that there had been extensive discussion about changes for several years. The Board expressed its thanks to DT, KSW and the CEU for their work. MB proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the Structure and Function of Cochrane Review Groups and the implementation of the Networks and Editorial Board.

12 Yes 1 No 0 Abstain

4.2 CRG Transformation Programme Implementation Plan

KSW introduced the report **2017-CT-4.2-001**. She explained that implementation in the first two years of the CRG Transformation Programme is concentrating on structural and accountability changes; and encouraging greater integration and process change as a result. She said that the appointment of the right Senior Editors would be key. It was recognized that the one-day per week contribution by Senior Editors would be the absolute minimum. Resourcing, internal and external communications would also be critical.

The introduction of improved governance and accountability was essential, she said, with each CRG having to re-apply for its status, sign contracts with the CET, and develop a strategic plan – which would be shared within the Network to facilitate the sharing of best practice and new plans for the Networks themselves. The CEU would need to re-structure the service it provided to the community. The Networks would enable more rapid implementation of new methods in evidence synthesis, and Cochrane would concentrate its resources on doing this, not on the academic development of new methods.

JM said that the wider scope of Networks might be more attractive to external funders than for individual CRGs with a much narrower subject focus and regional base. JC pointed out the potential risk of Conflict of Interest of being Senior Editor and a Co-ordinating Editor at the same time; KSW agreed that would have to be managed carefully. JC said that to facilitate culture change the Review production teams should be supported to make changes themselves, and that these reforms not be promoted as only top-down change. Effective communication to engage and enthuse Review Group staff and editors would be crucial. MK agreed, and the Board stressed the importance of the communications elements in the Implementation Plan.

DH proposed, and the trustees agreed, that it be clarified what level of Conflict of Interest the Senior Editors should be allowed to have. He further proposed, and the trustees agreed, that Cochrane's Conflict of Interest policies more generally be reviewed.

ACTION: The Board should further consider Cochrane's Conflict of Interest policies.

MB proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the CRG Transformation Programme Implementation plan, and the budget request of £464, 750 in 2018 and £543,500 in 2019.

12 Yes 0 No 1 Abstain

4.3 Applications for New Cochrane Centres (Argentina and Chile)

MW introduced the applications contained in **2017-CT-4.3-001**. He strongly supported the establishment of these Groups and praised the outstanding work of the Iberoamerican Network to develop a global Spanish-speaking Network. GF spoke to the productivity of these countries in health research. The teams were thanked for their applications. MB proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the establishment of two new Cochrane Centres in Argentina and Chile.

13 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

4.4 Cochrane Groups Funding update (including Cochrane Canada/Cochrane Australia)

MW explained to the trustees the reasons for and the criteria around central funds being provided to Cochrane Groups and updated the trustees on the latest news on the Strategic Development Support (SDS) already given to Cochrane Canada (in 2016) and Cochrane Australia (in 2017).

JC said that collective Group intelligence on successful – and unsuccessful – grant proposal design could be strategically important. MB said that as a principle, the central Charity could be a co-applicant of proposals to support some bids. MB asked that the board be kept informed of the status of funding in both these areas.

ACTION: Mark Wilson should provide an update to the Board on the status of funding to Cochrane Groups in Canada and Australia.

4.4.1 Cochrane Neonatal Review Group Application for Strategic Development Support (SDS)

MW introduced the applications **2017-CT-4.4.1-001** and **2017-CT-4.4.2-001**. He explained the CET ensured that applications met the criteria for SDS, but the decision on funding was taken by the Board. He suggested that in future the CET may take a greater role in making recommendations on applications.

Linked to this, RL said there was insufficient information to consider these applications within the overall financial demands on Cochrane's funding. GG also said that he would value information on the performance of the Groups. JM said that the likelihood of future funding was an important consideration and JC agreed, stressing that return on investment was key.

MK and RL proposed, and the trustees agreed, that an SDS strategy and principles paper be developed, but given the current absence of one, these two applications should be considered on their merits on this occasion.

ACTION: Member(s) of the CET should develop a strategy and principles for Strategic Development Support to Groups.

MB proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the Cochrane Neonatal Review Group Application for Strategic Development Support; Budget request: US\$67,573.

12 Yes 0 No 1 Abstain

4.4.2 Cochrane Lung Cancer Review Group Application for Strategic Development Support

MB proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the Cochrane Lung Cancer Review Group Application for Strategic Development Support; Budget request: €30,000 maximum.

12 Yes 0 No 1 Abstain

5. Cochrane Future Content

Miranda Cumpston, Julian Elliott, Chris Mavergames and Charlotte Pestridge joined for this item and were welcomed to the meeting.

5.1 Cochrane Future Content and Product Strategy Update

5.2 Diverse Data Update

KSW introduced the papers **2017-CT-5.1-001**, **2017-CT-5.1.1-001** and **2017-CT-5.1.1-002**, explaining that they were introductory and designed to inform further Board discussion. She said that discussions and choices on Cochrane's future content strategy influenced those on its publishing strategy.

MB opened the floor for discussion and said that Cochrane would build its reputation in developing content that comprehensively covered priority questions with different types of data. JC and NS emphasized the importance of consulting with the Council and the Scientific Committee in developing further proposals. PG cautioned that reviews conducted on poor data sets would provide poor outcomes, and this was a reputational risk. DH and PG suggested the Board consider if Cochrane should develop more radical advocacy and campaigning for transparent methods and data generation; this would sit alongside content production.

JM said that strategic thinking of this kind didn't sit well with the decision-making agenda of the rest of the Board, but it would be important to set aside time for this kind of session in the future. In response, TH proposed, and the trustees agreed, that a sub-group of the Board support the current working group in developing further proposals in this areas for further consideration.

ACTION: A sub-group of the Board should be formed to support the Diverse Data working group develop proposals for future content.

MK asked where and how Cochrane should prioritize given the many different options it had. In response, Jet said that Individual Patient Data had already been identified as a priority, and KSW added that developing Prognosis Reviews and further qualitative review methods had also already been prioritized (as they were the subjects of new Strategic Methods Fund grants). KSW and Jet were asked by the Board to establish concrete recommendations in a future Content Strategy to be presented at the Lisbon Governance Meetings in March 2018.

At the end of this item the meeting concluded for the first day.

6. Cochrane-Wiley Publishing Update

CF welcomed everyone to the second day of the meeting; Harriet MacLehose introduced herself and joined the meeting for this item. MW introduced the Publishing Update **2017-CT-6.1-001** and the Open Access update **2017-CT-6.2-001**, which were interlinked.

6.1 Publishing Update

Deborah Pentesco Gilbert and Jay Neill joined the meeting and were welcomed by the trustees.

Deborah Pentesco Gilbert thanked the Board for its open and frank feedback. She invited all the trustees to view the 'soft-launch' ECLIB product at the Wiley exhibition stand. She and Jay Neill left the room.

6.2 Open Access (OA) Update

The Board discussed Cochrane's Open Access policy.

Harriet MacLehose left the room after the vote.

7. Cochrane Innovations Strategy Update

Charlotte Pestridge presented the supporting paper **2017-CT-7-001**. She confirmed the products developed by Innovations would be, or already were being, made available to Cochrane Groups and review author teams free of charge.

7.1 Cochrane Innovations Funding

MB said this funding had already been approved by the Board, but a decision on how the funding was transferred had required legal advice. It was a legal requirement for the Board to pass a vote on this decision (**2017-CT-7.1-001**). MB proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the issue of share capital to Cochrane Innovations of £700,000.

13 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain

8. Cochrane 2018 Plan & Budget

8.1 Proposed 2018 Strategy to 2020 Priorities

MW introduced this item and supporting paper **2017-CT-8.1-001**, explaining that the SMT was looking for guidance on its plans in order for a full 2018 Plan & Budget to be developed and submitted for the Board's consideration by the end of the year. He spoke to the four priorities the SMT had identified for 2018 and beyond.

JC said that she was excited by the increased synergy between Innovations and Cochrane's CET. MK was supportive of the priorities, but was concerned by the slow pace of decision-making on a big data. DH said that he was disappointed that under Goal 3, advocacy on improved access to the results of clinical trials and other data was not sufficiently prominent and urged Cochrane to make a greater 'social commitment' in future. PG concurred and argued that Cochrane should be more aggressive in its position against the pharmaceutical industry's practices in reporting the results of clinical trials.

ACTION: C. Gøtzsche and David Hammerstein, plus other interested trustees, should develop plans on how Cochrane should review and develop its advocacy position on access to results and data that inform Cochrane Reviews. This informal group should work with the Scientific Committee and CEAD.

MB proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the proposed Strategy to 2020 priorities for 2018, to guide development of the 2018 Plan & Budget.

11 Yes 1 No 1 Abstain

8.2 2018-2020 Financial Forecast/Scenario Planning

SW spoke to the financial forecast and scenario planning document **2017-CT-8.2-001**. She reiterated the key point made several times over the Board meeting of Cochrane's future sustainability resting predominantly on its success in protecting and growing Cochrane Library royalties. She confirmed that no new investment in Cochrane Innovations was proposed at the current time. Except for the Strategic Development Support funds allocated by the Board at this meeting, all other resolutions with financial implications had been included in the draft 2018 Plan & Budget.

JM said that the trustees could be bolder in investing in big data and advocacy, given the potential income opportunities of these areas. GG said that Cochrane could never compete with companies working on big data; it had to find its 'niche' and make relevant partnerships. It was noted that the financial forecast item should be stated as a standing item. MB proposed the resolution and called for a vote. The resolution was approved.

RESOLUTION: The Board approves the 2018-2020 Financial Forecast/Scenario Planning.

12 Yes 0 No 1 Abstain

9. AGM Preparation

Lucie Binder introduced the AGM agenda to the trustees and explained their role at the meeting.

10. Any Other Business

Consumer Statement of Principles

Chris Mavergames said that the Consumer Statement of Principles was a well thought out advocacy document that particularly applied to the reliability of research, and should be considered in the development of future advocacy approaches.

Marketing plan for the Cochrane Library

GF suggested that a plan be developed to make the Cochrane Library more attractive for lower income purchasers, particularly in Latin America. She was invited to make suggestions to MW or Wiley directly.

New review types and 'big data'

JM said that very little progress had been made in deciding on Cochrane's approach on new data types, and that this had been a failing of the Board and not the CET. He wanted the Board to provide more guidance in this area soon. MW confirmed that a response to 'big data' would be provided in the Content Strategy to be presented to the Board at its meeting in Lisbon, in March 2018.

GG said that Rapid Reviews were extremely important to users and there was an opportunity for Cochrane to be at the forefront of methods in this area (he declared that he was Convenor of the Rapid Reviews Methods Group). KSW and MW recognized the importance and invited GG to be engaged in the further development of the Content Strategy (as per item 5.2).

Opportunities for strategic discussions

MB proposed, and the trustees agreed, that a day be set aside at the Governance Meetings in Lisbon, in March 2018, for strategic discussion. Don Cummings and Sheila Witwicky may be asked to facilitate again.

ACTION: The Board should develop a list of priority topics for strategic discussion.

Board communications

TH proposed that the Governing Board's virtual communications be improved.

ACTION: Member(s) of the CET should set-up a 'Slack' channel to improve Board communications.

Board profile

CF requested greater visibility of the Board on Cochrane.org. Decisions taken by the Board would be actively communicated under their 'signature'. MB said that the trustees should be active in their communities where resources allow. Chris Mavergames said that the trustees could act regionally and support the CET's support and work in the regions where they are based.

Agenda pack format

The trustees agreed that the new Board software platform Convene had been a success. They requested 'blank pages' be added to items without support papers in Convene to allow for annotation. Resolutions should never be presented as joint resolutions but single items only.

MB and CF thanked the CET for their contribution to the meeting. The CET members then left the meeting, with the Governing Board closing following a period of Board-only time (not minuted here).

---MEETING END---