

# Cochrane Council

## Teleconference

15 July 20:00-21:00 BST

### MEMBERS ATTENDING:

1. Vanessa Jordan (Authors)
2. Agustin Ciapponi (Authors)
3. Robert Dellavalle (Co-ordinating Editors: **Co-Chair**)
4. Jo Morrison (Co-ordinating Editors)
5. Ndi Euphrasia Ebai-atuh (Consumer Network)
6. Erik von Elm (Geographic Groups Directors)
7. Maria-Inti Metzendorf (Information Specialists)
8. Liz Dooley (Managing Editors)
9. Gail Quinn (Managing Editors)
10. Sarah Nevitt (Methods Groups)
11. Silvia Minozzi (Methods Groups)
12. Santiago Castiello de Obeso (Early Career Professionals Network)
13. Ahmad Sofi-Mahmudi (Early Career Professionals Network)

### NON-VOTING GUESTS:

#### CENTRAL EXECUTIVE TEAM ATTENDING:

14. Karla Soares-Weiser (Editor in Chief)
15. Toby Lasserson (Deputy Editor in Chief)

#### GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING:

16. Catherine Marshall, Governing Board Co-Chair

#### APOLOGIES:

17. Tracey Howe, Governing Board Co-Chair
18. Chris Champion (Head of People Services)
19. Ruth Foxlee (Senior Programme Manager)
20. Lucie Binder (Head of Governance and Strategy)
21. Veronica Bonfigli (Governance Officer and Minute-taker)
22. Rachel Plachcinski (Consumer Network)
23. Stefano Negrini (Fields: **Co-Chair**)
24. René Spijker (Information Specialists)

#### ABSENT:

25. Lotty Hooft (Geographic Groups Directors)

## AGENDA:

ITEM		INTRODUCED BY:	PURPOSE:
1.	<b>Welcome, Apologies, Declarations of Interest for this meeting</b>	Bob	For information
2.	<b>Overview of the agenda</b>	Karla Soares-Weiser	For information
3.	<b>CRGs funding: challenges and opportunities</b>	Karla Soares-Weiser	For discussion
3.1.	<b>Production model and the need for a new evidence synthesis model for Cochrane</b>		
4.	<b>Q&amp;A session</b>	Bob	For discussion
5.	<b>Any Other Business</b>	Bob	For discussion
6.	<b>Date of next meetings (GMT):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 October</li> <li>• 1 December</li> </ul>	Bob	For information

## Notes and action points

These informal notes are a record of the key points, the questions raised, and the actions assigned during the meeting.

A full recording of the meeting can be found in the *Council Dropbox folder/Teleconferences/2021 Teleconferences/15 July*.

Robert opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. All participants introduced themselves.

Robert handed over to Karla who provided an update on the Cochrane Review Groups' funding situation.

- She was in close contact with the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) which confirmed the intention of requesting Cochrane to go Open Access by 2025. No decision about the funding had been taken or communicated yet, so she was working with the NIHR to make the information available as soon as possible. She informed members that a loss of funding was inevitable, so other ways to maintain the output of the Cochrane Library were being investigated.
- The Strategy for Change had been developed by Judith Brodie, Cochrane's Interim Chief Executive Officer, and published on 15<sup>th</sup> July. The Strategy had been developed around three goals. Its focus would be to understand how to produce reviews differently and advocate and support policy making in the next two years. Goal 1 specifically focused on how to simplify the process to continue producing high quality reviews.
- The Board would meet to discuss the direction of travel on 20<sup>th</sup> July.
- The focus was on how a centralised editorial service could provide more support on a simplification process; the format of the reviews, and the tools used are too complex and are currently being reviewed.
- The business model is being improved; there would be fewer larger units to produce more than systematic reviews.
- Workshops will be scheduled to consult with the Community and to come up with guiding principles (consultation would include Centres, Associate Centres, Fields and Methods Groups to enhance the expertise).
- Karla requested the Council's support on the organisation of these workshops.
- Empowering fundraising will be key to Cochrane's future.
- Change was inevitable but it is important to understand how to make a good use of this transitional period.

Both Catherine and Karla agreed it was important to rethink the way work is being done at Cochrane as this period of change would be a good opportunity to improve its efficiency whilst being sustainable.

The Council would play a pivotal role in the discussions to ensure the Community's representation in the process.

Catherine reiterated the fact that the situation, as serious as it is, could represent an opportunity for Cochrane to become more competitive. The first step would be to identify the expectations of different users and funders and to understand the audience to target the type of information provided.

Catherine informed members there were several parallel streams of on-going work:

- a cost review of the Central Executive Team.
- a cost review of the process of reviews' production.
- a better approach to fundraising.

Bob opened the floor for questions and concerns.

*[The topics of the questions are listed below, and answers are at the correspondent minute of the recording]:*

- **How to communicate the loss of funds to groups staff. Loss of fund is a realistic possibility, but no communications had been received from NHRI at this stage. (Min.00:22)**
- **What is the worst-case scenario for Cochrane? How many equivalents of full-time employment staff are we going to lose? (Min. 00:26)**
- **Who are Cochrane's main competitors? (Min. 00:38)**
- **If you're considering a structure with fewer units, would groups not directly affected by the cut of funds also being included in the restructure? (Min 00:45)**
- **What type of funders could Cochrane have? (Min 00:46)**
- **How will Cochrane handle international contracts and funding, if the organisational model changes? (Min 00:49)**

Bob suggested that given the exceptional situation, it was preferable for the Council to meet monthly. He suggested the meeting could be repeated on the same day at different times.

**ACTION: Bob to poll members to decide whether the Council should continue meeting as a whole on a single meeting or on two sessions at different times of the same day.**

Concerns about staff wellbeing and the importance of timely communication were raised.

It was suggested that an agenda item for future Council meetings should be to discuss the future of the Review Groups' Networks.

Catherine invited everyone to start thinking about how Cochrane could do more simply in its way of working. This item will be discussed at the next Council meeting.

Karla thanked everyone for their inputs and for their time and she stressed the importance of working together during this period of uncertainty and change. Bob thanked everyone for participating and closed the meeting at 21:00 BST.

Actions	Assigned to
<b>Bob to poll members to decide whether the Council should continue meeting as a whole on a single meeting or on two sessions at different times of the same day.</b>	Bob

<b>Veronica to add the Review Groups' Networks and what can Cochrane do more simply as agenda items for the next Council meeting.</b>	Veronica
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