

Forward Plan

placing LOCs front and centre

April 2024

Priority 1:
Increasing LOC focus

Priority 2:
LOC development

Priority 3:
PEC relationship
development

Priority 4:
Building the data and
evidence base

Priority 5:
LOCSU transformation

Priority 6:
Improving communications
& collaboration

Priority 7:
Protecting & increasing
resource in primary eye care



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LOCSU

Summary

This refresh of the [2023/24 forward plan](#) sees LOCSU build upon the progress undertaken in the last 12 months and the initial learning from the LOC listening events and LOC feedback throughout 2023. LOCSU continues listening and learning throughout 2024/25, balancing transformation, development and service provision to ensure maximum support and value for LOCs.

2024 is likely to see a period of unsettlement and inertia within the NHS as England enters a cycle of local and national political elections. With increased demand and stretched resources - particularly funding - local investment and innovation may be stifled as commissioners navigate a challenging year of purdah and potential government change. The 2024 NHS Planning Guidance for England offered little for eye care beyond 'annual sight tests within special day and residential schools' which will heighten the challenge for LOCs and LOCSU.

Given the political flux, 2024 will be utilised to consolidate and prepare the evidence and tools required to enable LOCs and LOCSU to proactively influence the health agenda locally through to 2030. Alongside the underpinning governance and best practice, a focus will be placed upon leadership training, skills development, and data collation to ensure all are in the best possible place and ready for action. Increased LOC networking and 'sharing' opportunities will harness the power of the 'hive mind' and spread LOC excellence and eye care success across England.



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NOC
SHAPING TOMORROW'S VISION

LOCSU transformation will continue throughout 2024. This change is essential to enable us to evolve to meet LOC needs, and each step of change will be shaped by, and take place in partnership with, LOCs and sector bodies. This ensures we are agile to provide the right support, at the right time, with the right expertise to complement LOCs.

Throughout 2024, more engagement and listening events will inform our five year strategy, which will be co-created with LOCs and sector bodies. Building upon an LOC informed value proposition, we will ensure that customer needs are not only met, but exceeded, through a resilient and viable LOCSU. The aim will be to align the LOCSU five year strategy with local and regional LOC strategies that, in turn, tackle and facilitate ICB strategies. Further aligning these to national sector body strategies will assist all to work in unison through every part of England, driving a coordinated, successful eye care sector for the benefit of contractors and performers.

Communications are intrinsic to the success of this plan and this document is designed to be read in conjunction with the [LOCSU communications plan](#).



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LOCSU Roadmap

Spring/Summer 2023

- New Board
- LOC payroll service
- Launch Forward Plan
- Bitesize training
- LOCSU phase one restructure (central team)
- National LOC Forum

Spring/Summer 2022

- Consolidate post pandemic

Autumn 2022:

- NOC
- Re-engage
- New CEO and Chair

Spring 2024:

- Refreshed Forward Plan
- LOC engagement events
- LOC constitution consultation
- PEC Forum
- Succession planning toolkit

Autumn/Winter 2023

- NOC23
- #YourLOC
- LOC listening events
- LOCSU and PEC governance review
- New CUES specification launched

Autumn 2024:

- ROCs (NOCs in the region)
- LOCSU pathway reviews

Summer 2024:

- LOC constitution co-creation
- LOCSU phase two restructure (field team)
- Inaugural LOC Chair Conference
- Data and evidence base developed

Spring 2025:

- LOCSU transformation phase three
- NOC, May 25
- LOCSU five year strategy launch

Winter 2024:

- LOCSU website launch
- LOC Constitution launch
- Pathway supporting cases

2025 and beyond

2023/24: Phase 1
Building foundations

2024/25: Phase 2
Listening and co-creation

2025/26: Phase 3
Refine and build

LOCSU Purpose, Vision and Values

Our purpose, vision, and values, as shown below, will shape all we do and every interaction with LOCSU. In living these principles, as we deliver the specific activity outlined later in this plan, we will better collaborate and work jointly with LOCs, sector bodies and the wider health care system supporting LOCs to play their full role in the new NHS structures.

Above all, LOCSU will add value and clearly demonstrate this to others. This is further explored in the next section.



Our **PURPOSE** is to support Local Optical Committees to fulfil their statutory functions, so that GOS contractors and performers can deliver NHS eye care effectively in their areas.¹

Our **VISION** is to make it easier for Local Optical Committees to function and maximise opportunities to provide primary eye care in their areas.



In doing so we will live our **VALUES** of being: professional, transparent, supportive, proactive, inclusive, collaborative and approachable.



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Forward Plan Work to Date

Increased training opportunities

Bitesize training
Induction courses and leadership training
Supporting LOCs in gaining CPD approval
Refreshed clinical pathway training
Supporting LOC CPD events

and more...

Improved communications

National LOC forum
Podcasts, case studies and fortnightly bulletins
Listening/engagement events
Feedback surveys and service design based upon responses

and more...

Increased support, resources and advice for LOCs

Legal advice for LOCs
Payroll service for LOCs
Designated IT lead within LOCSU team
LOC constitution development
PCSE trouble shooting

and more...

Increased transparency of LOCSU Board and LOCSU activities

Restructured central team, increasing skills and resilience
100% Optical presence
Board 'read out' documents shared with national and regional forums
OFNC observer and wide engagement with sector bodies

and more...

Adding Value

LOCSU value added:

- **Deliver direct support to LOCs**, making it easier to fulfil duties and thrive as influential organisations with the local health care system.
- **Allocate resources and economies of scale:** guidance and expertise, services (incl. LOC payroll), documents and evidence.
- **Provide leadership, guidance, knowledge and expertise:** coordinated best practice sharing and networking locally, regionally and nationally.
- **Develop people and LOCs** through high quality training and development.
- **Drive transformation through clinical pathway design** leading to extension of services in primary eye care.
- **Enable consistency borne of national and regional oversight:** manage relationships to facilitate sector understanding and joint work.
- **Establish high standards of delivery and governance.**
- **Elevate local voice on national stage.**

The strategic priorities developed in 2023 continue to hold true to enable the proactivity and agility required for LOCSU and LOCs to maximise local opportunities and mitigate local challenges as they arise.

Whilst we have further refined the activity within the high-level priorities to continue to bring tangible outcomes and benefits for LOCs, the overarching priority of placing LOCs front and centre of all we do remains the prime focus that underpins all LOCSU activity.

The seven priority areas with key activity are explored on the following pages.



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Increasing LOC Focus

Value: highly engaged, thriving LOCs benefiting from timely, accessible, effective national support which ensures they have the tools to maximise their position as profession leaders within their locality.

**What difference
will it make?**

Increased LOC influence
at regional and local level

Strong, thriving primary eye
care leadership at every level

Greater LOC input in LOCSU/
sector decision making

Consistent information and
engagement across England

Improved shared learning and
illustration of best practice

Sector confidence in
regional activity and delivery

**United/amplified
primary eye care
voice, maximising
LOC potential**

What is our goal?

Off the shelf, national toolkits
and guidance for local use

Improved LOCSU website
and information libraries

LOC promotion including
succession planning support
and #YourLOC campaign

LOC input flow throughout LOCSU
structures: Board/national LOC forums/
regional forums/individual LOCs

How will we do it?

Multi-way engagement events
and seven Regional Optical
Conferences (ROCs)

Skill focussed, responsive
LOCSU team complementing
LOC expertise



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LOC Development

Aim: LOCs with strong governance and depth of expertise to meet local, regional and national needs consistently and effectively for the benefit of their members and wider primary care.

**What difference
will it make?**

Increased LOC skills in localities and regions incl. business and negotiation

Clear model of what is a 'good' LOC and with recognition of appropriate variation

Strength and resilience in LOCs with succession planning

Accessible training library and signposting for upskilled LOC workforce

Improved information and best practice sharing

Robust representation for NHS primary eye care providers

**Skilled LOCs
influencing local
commissioning
and delivery**

What is our goal?

Support LOCs' review and reflection of skills inc. support LOC strategy development

LOC role forums and networks inc. Treasurer and Communications Forums and Chair Network

How will we do it?

Focus upon supporting CPD/leadership training as third year of three year GOC cycle

Facilitate best practice sharing, buddying, mentorship and LOC success celebration/promotion

Targeted, accessible and funded LOC training and development programme inc. bitesize training & Chair conference

Development of constitution and schedules inc. policies, procedures and governance documents



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PEC Relationship Development

Aim: To improve information flow between PECs and LOCSU to understand and maximise potential of all providers at scale delivery, identifying boundaries and collaboration opportunities

**What difference
will it make?**

Increased data flow on activity to
inform service development

Mitigation of perceptions of conflicts of interest to
increase commissioning through PECs

Increased understanding of PECs'
structure, maturity and opportunity

Improved sector understanding and
maximisation of delivery models

Improved information and
best practice sharing

Clearly defined PEC/LOCSU
boundaries and governance

**Strengthen
PEC/LOCSU
relationships and
collaboration**

What is our goal?

PEC governance review
continuation – including updated
policies, articles and frameworks

Develop data sharing/collection
agreements with PECs

How will we do it?

Extend relationship engagement
inc. PEC 'forums' to facilitate
shared learning and intelligence

Refresh LOCSU/PEC
relationship and guidance
documents



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Building the Data and Evidence Base

Aim: To better influence opinion makers and inform sector work through robust evidence demonstrating benefits and outcomes of services delivered in primary eye care

**What difference
will it make?**

Better informed decision making for
viable, sustainable commissioning

'Living' service map and
service uptake to track activity

Accessible robust evidence and
data to influence decision makers

Library of patient outcome centred case
studies to rally wider support

Improved information and
best practice sharing

Outcome evidenced service
delivery and development

**Library of evidence
and data,
showcasing
outcomes of
services delivered
in primary eye care**

What is our goal?

Data analysis to produce
national evidence supporting
case toolkits

Improved governance and data
sharing agreements to facilitate
information flow

Hosted primary eye care
evidence, service and data hub

Outcome focussed case
studies with patient voice

How will we do it?

Local service activity and outcome
evaluation to assist commissioner
engagement and report compilation

Proactive, systematic (hard and soft)
data collection, collation and sharing
with wider sector



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LOCSU Transformation

Aim: effective, efficient support to LOCs and the wider sector through improved operational and governance systems; complemented with a revised, skill-based structure centred around a 'value added' LOC focus

**What difference
will it make?**

Robust, agile and fit for the
future LOC support unit

Improved transparency, credibility and
confidence in LOCSU

More efficient, accessible and
professional service for LOCs

Clarity on function, greater value for levy
and increased accountability to LOCs

Greater LOC voice and control
in LOCSU priorities and output

LOC and sector informed
five year LOCSU strategy

**Increased
efficiency, quality
& depth of LOCSU
support to meet
LOC needs**

What is our goal?

Information systems and
management review and
development

LOCSU five year strategy
development (to complement
sector, NHS, and LOC strategies)

Value for money audit of all
activity and procurement

LOCSU governance, maturity and
skills gap review

How will we do it?

Strengthened, skills focussed
central and LOC liaison roles with
development plans

Full review of LOCSU support and
services offered to LOCs – including
funding/levy review and tracking



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Improving Communications and Collaboration

Aim: wide engagement and joint working leading to clear, high quality, multi-way communications across the whole sector that are easy to navigate, enabling the consistent amplification of national messages

**What difference
will it make?**

Realise the power of a single
message across the unified sector

Easily accessible information
hubs for full sector use

Improved consistency in key
messaging, focus and direction

Reduction in duplication of work
with timely trend analysis

Improved information and
best practice sharing

Increased profile of primary
eye care in local systems

**Cohesive
consistent
communications
and engagement,
driving action**

What is our goal?

Improve internal communications
and information flow

Meaningful, outcome
focussed engagement events

How will we do it?

Redesign website and
information libraries

Accessible multimedia resources,
templates and guidance

Efficiently manage, record and share
LOC queries, identifying trends



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Protecting and Increasing Resource in Primary Care

Aim: supporting the sector locally to protect existing resource and services (including GOS) whilst proactively collaborating with the sector to identify and maximise opportunities for additional services and investment, improve existing services and ensure best possible uptake and evidenced, successful outcomes

**What difference
will it make?**

Improved patient outcomes
as pockets of excellence roll
out across England

Increased investment in
and recognition of services
within primary eye care

Thriving, sustainable and
growing primary eye care
providers

More resourced
extended/enhanced services
commissioned and provided

**Successful LOC and
sector activity
increasing delivery
of and investment
in services
delivered in primary
eye care**

Growing workforce with
increased retention and
satisfaction

What is our goal?

Working with sector bodies, elevate
local voice for national influence
e.g. round table events

Support national sector
committees inc. OFNC, IIT

Clinical pathways - review, refresh and
develop (extended/enhanced services)

Support sector workforce and
training review

How will we do it?

Investment in LOC and wider sector
initiatives through projects

Appropriate, proactive collaboration with
national organisations with similar aims



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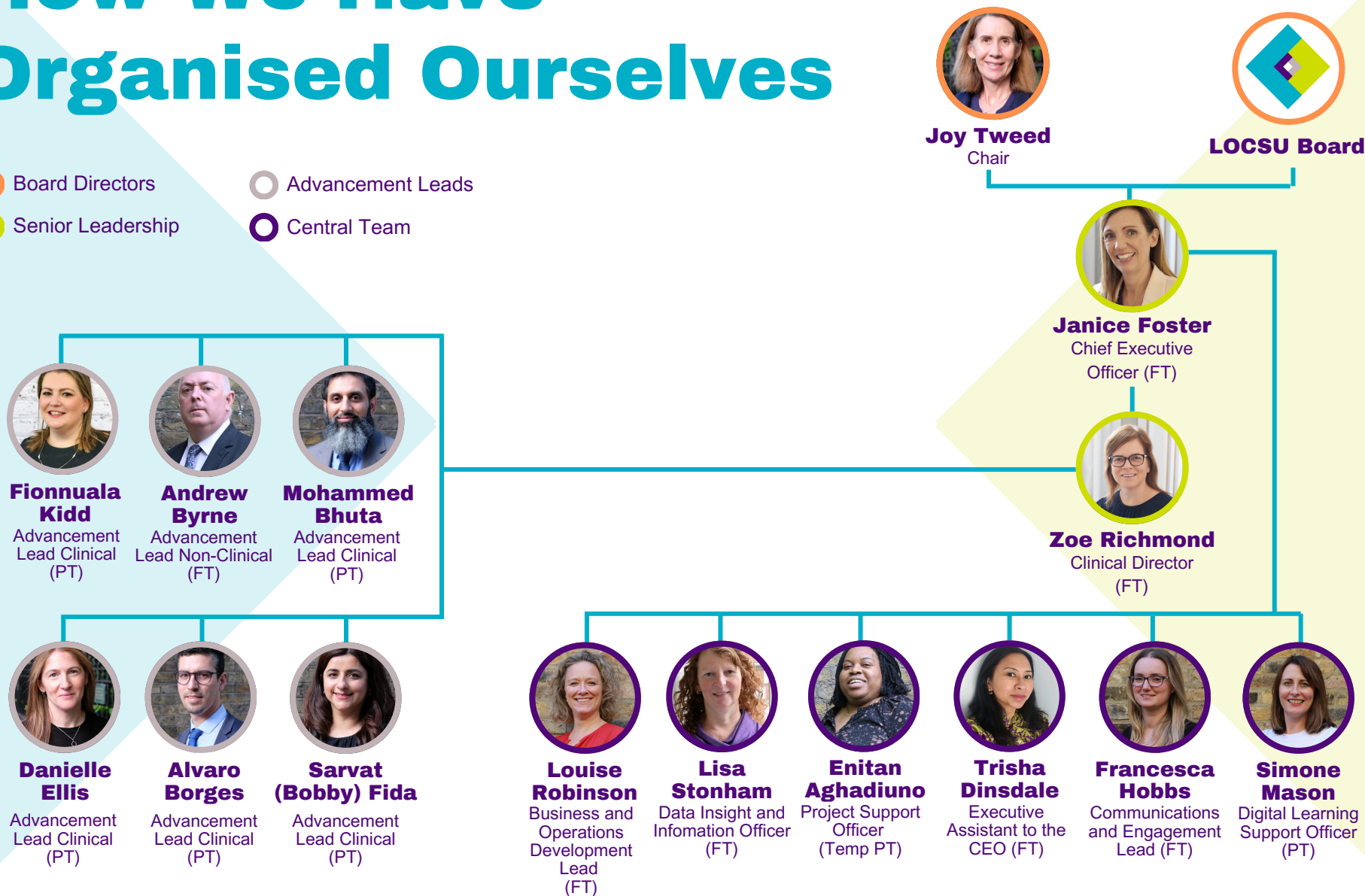
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How We Have Organised Ourselves

-  Board Directors
-  Advancement Leads
-  Senior Leadership
-  Central Team



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What to Expect Next

The overarching principle of the Forward Plan is 'LOCs, front and centre'; ensuring LOCSU is a true support unit complementing and adding value to LOCs and their activity. Continued LOC engagement and co-creation of the five year strategy will ensure this is a lived reality.

Throughout 2024/25 LOCSU will utilise as many communication channels as possible to reach all LOCs. Combined LOC (customer), sector body, LOCSU Board and LOCSU Team feedback will be utilised to develop a comprehensive LOCSU value proposition and fully costed service/support framework for 2025 – 2030.

The extensive engagement and value proposition will underpin a five year strategy which will be developed for stress testing and consultation in November 2024 at the seven ROCs (Regional Optical Conferences) ahead of the launch at the NOC in spring 2025.

An additional principle included in the LOCSU approach going forward is 'how the functionality of LOCSU developments (workforce and technological) may transfer to LOCs'. This includes building a team that supports LOC needs and consideration of 'piggyback' arrangements with the aim of making life easier and to maximise return of investment for LOCs through economies of scale and reduced duplication.



Appendix: Learning from Listening Events 23/24

During phase 1 of the listening exercise, a greater understanding of the LOC customer has been developed. It is important to note that whilst there is reference to 'LOCs' and the 'LOC customer' throughout the sector, forward plan and LOCSU work, there is no 'typical' LOC and all vary in size, activity, maturity and need.

Phase 1 of the listening events identified challenges and opportunities that LOCs experience, and to add value and fulfil the support role, LOCSU should look to:

- Be flexible to support LOCs of differing levels of maturity and meet different LOC needs at different times.
- Increase LOC administration support and reduce duplication (streamline and automate).
- Lift communications pressures (socials, websites, wider messaging etc).
- Increase LOC membership, particularly around succession planning and mentorship/buddying activity and bringing new people with new skills and/or train to provide skills.
- Assist ICB engagement and relations (proactive and reactive demands) and provide data, information, evidence, and reports to underpin discussions.
- Lift efforts required in planning and executing meetings, training, and events (though LOCs should retain control and profile).
- Streamline templates, governance and document production and provision, including flexing these meet differing needs.
- Act as 'introducer' – facilitating cross fertilisation of information and ideas between LOCs, LOCs and other sectors, LOCs and ICB/commissioners, LOCs and national organisations.

In addition to the direct support themes, the following were identified as key areas of LOCSU work:

- **Influencing:** adding weight to LOC messaging and profile building.
- **Pathway development and refresh:** providing clinical leadership, horizon scanning and identifying and maximising opportunities.
- **Quality assurance and skill elevation:** particularly within LOCs and through clinical pathway delivery (including QiO).

The following were identified through the Board or LOCSU team as important underpinning work:

- PECs: governance and relationship review, ensuring robust, fit for future sector architecture with appropriate articles, operational frameworks and policies.
- Workforce: training and development needs (LOC and wider), including consideration of accreditation, linked to pathways/specifications and access.
- LOC/LOCSU/sector body/NHS aligned strategic planning (with supportive financial planning).
- LOCSU internal governance improvements.
- LOCSU value for money contract reviews.
- LOCSU transformation (phase 2 and 3) undertaken with a '1' LOCSU team culture embedded.

