



Summary Notes/Treasurer Session Readout

Overview

In July 2024, three virtual sessions were conducted for LOC treasurers to facilitate networking and idea exchange. One session occurred during core working hours and the other two taking place in the evening.

PCSE

LOCSU has regular engagement with PCSE, who have invested more resource with fortnightly meetings to work through the backlog of issues. We are also looking to work up some training and communications solutions to mitigate and prevent problems.

The issues we are currently working through with PCSE include:

- 1. Treasurer access to PCSE On-line:** Treasurers should access their account regularly to ensure access is maintained as the account is automatically locked after 90 days of inactivity. Access to an additional area has been enabled to allow Treasurers to view the live LOC levy amount.

If an LOC Treasurer needs access to their LOC treasurer account, please email pcse.portalenquiries@nhs.net with the subject line of 'LOC user management' and requesting your password is reset. Please note that this email has an agreed response time of 30-40 days.

If any treasurers are still having issues getting access to the LOC Treasurer PCSE-Online account after following the above process, please let us know at info@locsu.co.uk.

- 2. Live Levy view:** LOCSU is working with PCSE to provide some guidance including screen shots to enable Treasurers to access the levy view area in PCSE-Online. It is hoped that this will be available next month and will be circulated to LOC Treasurers.
- 3. Communication updates:** LOCSU is working with PCSE on a LOC Ophthalmic Payments quarterly bulletin from PCSE. The first one will be going out later this month and will be sent to all those who have a LOC Treasurer PCSE online account.

We are also working with PCSE to produce a guide that shows the different parts of NHS and PCSE, how they relate to one another and the areas that they are responsible for, so LOCs are more informed on who to contact when changes are needed.

LOC Constitution update

In 2023, LOCSU started a Continuous Improvement exercise to review the constitution and address the issues LOCs raised. Listening Events were held and the feedback from LOCs helped LOCSU develop and test the brief for a new Model Constitution in two parts, the core constitution with supporting schedules.

The draft core consultation was distributed to LOCs together with a survey to enable LOCs to provide feedback. Louise Robinson, Business Operations and Development Lead joined the call to give an overview of the feedback received on the 'funding' section and facilitate treasurer input to next steps.

Feedback showed that eight respondents felt the funding section wasn't clear, concise or fit for purpose. The feedback for this area has been reviewed and the three key themes are:

1. LOC Levy

Feedback suggests the wording in this section is difficult to interpret and that currently LOCs vary in their interpretation of the current constitution and supporting legislation. For example, the mechanism for a voluntary levy collected by and for the LOC is not universally understood.

Recommendations:

- Clarify scope of LOC autonomy when setting the levy and making in-year changes with no requirement for a vote at AGM/EGM.
- Clarify the role of the commissioning organisation regarding levy changed and include signposting to LOCSU guidance/ tools that support the levy change request process.
- Clarify what is meant by 'voluntary levy' and how this can be used by the LOC.

Discussion points:

Help on setting LOC levy – does LOCSU know the range of LOC levies?

When setting the LOC levy, LOCSU recommends that LOCs look at the costed programme of work for the year and review against money in hand, reserves policy and projected income for the year. The levy may need to be raised or lowered to take into account the programme of activity, or need to amend the programme of activity so that the funding required is less.

In discussion noted that it might be helpful to review and whether LOCSU can generate a range of levies/ average.

Discussion on voluntary levy and how LOCs can utilise. It was recognised that clarification on the term voluntary levy would be helpful, as it is often referred to the levy that is raised and goes to two organisations including Central Optical Fund.

2. Other Sources of income

Feedback from LOCs was that they wanted more detail and examples of services that could be provided.

Recommendations:

- Review wording to more closely reflect the 'easy read' notes.
- Provide more detail including examples of inclusions and exclusions in the funding schedule.
- Develop a template policy for sourcing non-levy funding.

Discussion points:

There was discussion with one LOC having a significant percentage of practices in the LOC area going private. They would still like to be involved in the LOC and noted that this is something that is happening across a number of LOCs and so the recommendations are welcomed.

3. End of year accounts

Feedback noted that the requirement for an accountant to inspect the LOC accounts would not be feasible for some LOCs without support. Objections were based on cost, time and also general view that it wasn't necessary.

Recommendations:

- Legal advice on whether list of 'appropriately qualified' could be extended e.g. to include bookkeeper, retired accountant.
- Pending advice on A; core constitution to refer to 'appropriately qualified as set out in schedule...' then the Funding Schedule to define what that includes.
- LOCSU to consider the feasibility of providing account service through centralised contract with an accountancy firm with appropriate sector knowledge, including feasibility testing of timelines to ensure these could be met.

Discussion points:

- Accounts are currently independently checked and agreed that it's a good idea to have them reviewed.
- What is the benefit of using an accountant for an inspection?
- Some LOCs are using accountants and advocated that it was money well spent, although there was concern on the cost that this would incur for the LOCs who aren't currently using accountants

The slides used for the constitution presentation will be circulated with these notes and if you have any further questions, please let us know at info@locsu.co.uk

Further discussion Points and questions:

LOC Bank Accounts

An LOC is having issue with their current bank and so looking to move and asked for recommendations. An LOC on the call is using Lloyds, which has a free treasurer account.

At previous treasurer sessions, bank accounts had been discussed and Metro bank and NatWest were also confirmed as having free treasurer accounts.

Account frozen/hacked

If an LOC has an issue with their bank account getting hacked or frozen, please let us know at info@locsu.co.uk and we will work on a case-by-case basis and develop a plan with the LOC.

An LOC will be splitting their funds across two banks as they are above the FSCS protection limit. This will enable them to access at least one account, and so creates resilience.

LOC Accounts

Discussion on how LOCs are recording income and expenditure and producing accounts. There was agreement that advice and guidance together with templates would be welcomed and a useful addition to the Treasurer's guide.

LOCSU will investigate opportunity to provide guidance and templates for LOCs.

LOC Committee expenses

Rates

Discussion on committee payments and types of rates – day/evening/honorarium and some LOCs haven't increased their rates recently.

It was agreed that a benchmarking exercise across LOCs would be helpful for LOCs as a method of gauging LOC rates and different rates of pay. LOCSU has produced a [survey on committee rates](#) and please complete by Monday 2 September. We will circulate an overview of rates once the results have been compiled.

Also noted that in addition to travel, some LOCs includes parking as an expense that can be reimbursed.

Committee expense claims

Discussion on how much scrutiny takes place of committee claims and what is appropriate. It was noted that there is a level of trust that appropriate claims are being submitted.

Verification of claims varies between LOCs and includes:

- Sending expense claims to all officers as another officer may have more knowledge of work undertaken by committee members/ officers.
- Treasurer is often at meetings and so notes attendance of other committee members.
- Receipts are requested for non-taxable expenses such as travel, stationery etc.

LOC Levy alteration process

Confirmation that there are two steps to the levy alteration process. There is a levy alteration form (included as Appendix 1) to complete which is first submitted to the regional ICB optometry team. They authorise the change and then pass on the form to PCSE who make the change.

Please cc info@locsu.co.uk when you email the form to the ICB, and we will add to our records and include in our fortnightly meetings with PCSE. This will allow us to follow up with PCSE if a timely response hasn't been received.

Treasurer Succession planning and training

There were several new Treasurers at the sessions and discussion on how information and knowledge of the treasurer role and LOC systems were passed on.

- Most had a handover with previous treasurer and one LOC has a three-month handover period for all LOC officer roles.
- Some treasurers also had ongoing access to the previous treasurer to enable queries to be answered and help given.
- Generic email address: this enables all email correspondence and history to be passed on to the new treasurer. It also enables continuous access to PCSE Online.

A buddy system was discussed whereby a new treasurer has an experienced treasurer to contact for support and help. This would be particularly helpful where a new treasurer hasn't had the opportunity to have a full handover with the previous channel. LOCSU will scope possibility of buddy system and if possible, the demand from LOC treasurers.

Has an LOC taken a credit card payment without using a credit card machine?

An LOC investigated setting up an e-payment portal with an ecommerce site on their website. It didn't progress further, but it's easy to set up and there is a small fee charged.

Actions Following Treasurer Sessions

LOC Actions:

- Review constitution slides and please get in touch with us at info@locsu.co.uk if you have any further feedback or questions.
- Complete [survey on committee rates](#) by Monday 2 September.

LOCSU Actions:

- Continue to pursue individual LOC issues with PCSE and proactively engage with regular meetings to escalate LOC issues.
- Investigate opportunity to provide guidance and templates to LOC for recording income and expenditure and producing accounts.
- Scope possible LOC treasurer buddy process and interest from LOC treasurers.

Central point of contact: info@locsu.co.uk

Website: www.locsu.co.uk

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LOCSU strongly advises individuals to obtain independent legal/financial advice where required.



LOC Levy Alteration Request Form

A standard template has been introduced for LOC Treasurers to email the regional ICB team when requesting to change the LOC's statutory levy percentage.

The template below must be completed in full and emailed to the regional ICB Ophthalmic team, and cc info@locsu.co.uk

Information required includes:

- the total LOC levy % to be deducted (including LOCSU %),
- confirmation of whether the LOCSU levy should be paid direct by PCSE, and
- the date you want the change to take effect from.

Once the request for change has been approved by the regional team, they will instruct PCSE to update the Ophthalmic Payments System accordingly so that the levy percentage collected is in line with your request.

PCSE will notify you once the Ophthalmic Payments System has been updated.

Please note the new process is effective immediately.

If you have any questions regarding the process or have any difficulty getting a change approved, please contact info@locsu.co.uk for assistance.



LOC Levy Alteration Request Form

Once all fields are completed, please email regional ICB Ophthalmic team, and cc info@locsu.co.uk

To be completed by the LOC Treasurer

Local Optical Committee (LOC)	
LOC Treasurer name	
Contact email	
Contact number	
Date Submitted to ICB	
Signature	

Total LOC levy % to be deducted (including LOCSU %)	%
LOCSU %	0.5 %
LOCSU levy to be paid direct by PCSE	YES / NO
Date the change takes effect from	

To be completed by ICB

Approved by (name)	
Position	
Date submitted to PCSE	

To be completed by PCSE

Actioned by (name)	
Date actioned	
Date levy change will be effective from	
Date confirmation of change sent to LOC, LOCSU and ICB	