

Approved minutes of a meeting of the RCOT Council

Held on 17 April 2024, 10.30am, at Phoenix House

Council members present	
Name	Position
Dr Anita Atwal	Council member, Research and Development (via Teams)
Kalimah Ibrahiim	Council member, England
Samantha Flower	Council member, Scotland (via Teams)
Cathryn Holding	Council member, Industrial relations
Dr Kee Hean Lim	Council member, Vice Chair and International Affairs
Odeth Richardson	Council member, Chair
Also in attendance	
Regular attendees (attended all items except confidential items)	
Clare Cochrane	Director of Brand and Marketing
Steve Ford	Chief Executive
Kate Monro	Head of Governance and Compliance
CJ Odeleye	Head of Finance
Karin Orman	Director of Practice and Innovation
Satvinder Reyatt	Director of People, Finance and Governance
Rob Smyth	Director of Strategy, Technology and Transformation
Karin Bishop	Director of Movement Building & Membership
Other attendees	
Angela Daniel	Senior Business Support Partner (minute taker)
Dr Gillian Ward	Head of Research and Innovation (via Teams)
Apologies	
Paul Dunning	Council member, Wales

Please note: Items are recorded in agenda item order rather than the order in which they were taken.

RCOT Council meeting

Item	Main point	Action
1.	Meeting business The Chair welcomed all to the RCOT only section of the meeting. Apologies were noted from Paul Dunning. The Chair announced it would be Kee Hean Lim and Samantha Flower's last meeting as they are stepping down from council. Decision 25 January 2024 council meeting minutes - approved Declaration of conflict of interest No declarations were made.	
2.	Standing management reports CEO Report Steve Ford (SF1) summarised the CEO report highlighting the new tenants moving in on 1 May occupying two floors, and a number of organisations interested in the remaining floors. SF1 stated that the workforce strategy had been launched in March and the focus was now on transforming the member offer with MyRCOT, alongside focussing on finances, noting a short fall in income from the building and membership targets. Organisational performance report Rob Smyth (RS) spoke to the organisational performance report, emphasising areas for improvement while noting a generally positive trend over the past three months, surpassing initial expectations. AA asked what benchmarks we had and what expenditure allocation was for each performance metric. RS clarified that indicator owners were tasked with assessing performance against expectations, highlighting whether it met, exceeded, or fell short of targets. AA underscored the significance of external benchmarking and urged for clearer reporting. RS elaborated on instances of project delays contributing to overspending, providing context to the financial aspects of the report. Action: Share the AIR Committee project management report with Council. This report goes into more detail on each project. RS asked for feedback on the report format, noting the dashboard is more interactive with the use of PowerBi. CH asked if a key could be added to the static document for ease. Samantha Flower (SF2) asked if council could have more detail around risks and items causing concern.	RS

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	Action: RS to discuss with SLT how best to present the interactive version of the report and provide more information around the risk sections at future council meetings. Add hyperlinks to reports covering all indicators. RCOT Risk Report The risks in this report have been presented to the AIR Committee and are moving forward. Some of these risks will be covered further in the meeting today. The governance risk had been reduced now that there was a clear plan in place to address the governance risks as part of the governance review. AA raised a question about the absence of research and workforce risks in the report, emphasising the significance of showcasing workforce risks, such as OT's facing redundancy. SF1 suggested separating these concerns as a distinct risk, considering its impact on membership. KO highlighted the relevance of these issues under threats to the profession, emphasising concerns about the OT workforce career prospects in academia. CH suggested addressing these topics separately in the report, and proposed adjusting the naming to distinguish between strategic and business aspects. Action: KM to consider recommendations in next iteration of the risk report. Group finance report and management accounts CJO provided an update on performance against budget in the first half of the financial year. A re-phasing exercise was conducted to align the budget with planned activities, resulting in a clearer view of performance. In the first six months, a deficit of £677k was recorded, £232k more than expected due to a £500k under performance in income and a £269k reduction in spending. Efforts to mitigate income risks are ongoing, with a re-forecast exercise shaping the second-half of the year delivery, which is focused on reducing income losses and managing spending risks. Investments have improved, with the portfolio valuation reaching £4.8m by March 2024, up £384k from the previous year. Dividend income remains on track. Overall reserves stand at £15.5m, with free reserves at £6m, aligning with the proposed reserves policy range of £5-£8m. AA enquired where efficiencies could come from and CJO explained this would come from recruitment and changing the approach to avoid large recruiter fees. SLT will also reprioritise and defer some operational activities. The key message for the council to consider was the need to revisit the five-year plan to realign income assumptions WITH actual performance. It is recommended that we reassess the cost base to align with the achieved income levels. Action: SLT to come back to Council in July with the budget and planning approach for 2024-25 within the context of the five-year financial plan. Future budgeting and financial strategy should include scenario planning in	SLT SLT

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	the event of income shortfall, setting out what that would mean and what decisions would need to be taken.	
3	RCOT annual report and financial statements, and approval of reserves policy CJO provided an update to the council on the audited annual report and financial statements for RCOT for the 2022-23 year. Additionally, it included the management response to the auditor's letter and the RCOT letter of representation. CJO made council aware that there were changes to what they were being asked to approve, due to an unexpected issue with one of the numbers identified at a late stage by the auditors. The level of investment to refurbish the building was approximately £1.9 million including all four floors, and to repurpose the ground floor for our own use. The building is currently valued at £7 million with no rental income. Council are asked to provisionally approve: - Accounts subject to the changes identified and the corresponding disclosure being corrected - approved - Delegate authority to Chair/Vice Chair to sign off the final set of accounts, management letter and letter of representation, supported by the AIR Committee - approved SF1 and CJO to work with auditors to ensure this does not happen again so council have reassurance around the audit process. Reserves Policy CJO explained the reserves policy required updating to accommodate new business developments, including the recognition of investment property and anticipated surpluses from rental activities. The policy needed clarification regarding the differentiation between the reserves of BAOT as the Union (and Parent company) and those of the Charity (the subsidiary). RCOT are working with newly appointed investment managers Barclays. Council were asked to approve the reserves policy - approved AA left the call	
4.	Research Foundation Review Dr Gillian Ward (GW) joined the meeting. Karin Orman (KO) introduced the paper. The UK Occupational Therapy Research Foundation (UKOTRF), established in 2007, underwent a review, and subsequent changes approved by the Council led to the launch of the RCOT Research Foundation (RCOT RF) in January 2019. The current objective of the RCOT RF is to enhance research capacity and capability within the occupational therapy profession. This involved supporting the	

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	development of emerging occupational therapy researchers and leaders, as well as fostering a community of researchers to facilitate peer learning and collaboration. GW had a separate conversation with AA who is the research representative on council, who was supportive of the proposed changes. GW explained how the proposed changes would introduce a system where applicants could provide additional information if needed (aiding the decision-making process for the panel) and would align grant proposals with RCOT's top ten research priorities. The Council discussed the need to research the economic benefit of OT as a way to gain traction and support for the profession. Council was asked to approve the proposed changes and consider if there were further risks that should be addressed prior to implementing the changes. The changes cover: • Revision of name and refresh of aim and purpose - approved • Establishing new funding categories - approved • Process and administrative changes - approved • Changes to financial controls and reporting - approved	
5.	Confidential item: Fellowship and Merit Awards	
6.	Our position in the world: follow up session Clare Cochrane (CC) summarised the paper and updated council on progress since the last meeting. The EDB Insight session aimed to initiate discussions on allyship during global conflicts, with AHP panellists sharing powerful stories and perspectives. The focus was on promoting compassion, empathy, and humanity. Additionally, the need for more EDB-specific resources to support the EDB Strategy and Action Plan was identified, leading to the creation of a Head of Inclusion and Involvement role, with recruitment expected before the next council meeting in July. Council discussed publishing a follow up statement and what next steps should be. Council discussed how the website needed to be updated to ensure it communicates the EDB support currently offered and signposting to additional toolkits. Action: CC to include Council in the communications around the creation and publication of a follow up statement that outlines the council discussions and agreed position.	CC

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	Council were asked to approve the proposed actions highlighted in the paper - approved	
7.	International activity and WFOT meeting report KHL and KO highlighted discussions and key points from the WFOT council meeting and RCOT's representation. At the WFOT Council meeting, RCOT raised topics such as AI in OT, workforce development, and primary care roles. They collaborated with international partners and approved a position statement on OT in primary care. Additionally, discussions covered Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI), research collaboration, education standards, and responses to international geopolitical events, emphasising humanitarian support and non-political engagement. Currently, RCOT appoints a delegate and an alternate representative for WFOT, but the alternate's role is inactive, serving only as a backup. KO attended the WFOT meeting as an observer to provide support to the delegate. However, this model presents challenges as the alternate is ill-prepared for succession planning, and the observer cannot access confidential documents or fully support the delegate during discussions. It was proposed that having an SLT member directly serve as a delegate would enhance continuity and effectiveness in working with WFOT Council. This approach would require covering travel costs but could significantly improve contribution to the WFOT decision-making processes. Council agreed the current inherited system needed to change in order to improve ways of working, and discussed the various options available. CH would like to see another member being involved. Council were asked to consider: • Changing the role of alternate from a member role to the Director of Practice and Innovation or alternatively, • Establish a second alternate role for a RCOT member with a view to then step into the delegate role. This would require an eight year commitment from a volunteer and an increase in budget of between £6-8k to cover costs to attend council and congress. Council required further thought on the most suitable model but approved an interim arrangement whereby the Director of Practice and Innovation would serve as the alternate.	
8	Confidential item: Cost of living proposal	
9	Procurement Policy amendments AA rejoins meeting	

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	Council were asked to approve the proposed changes to the procurement policy - approved	
10.	Any other business KHL asked if council could be informed of any positions being contested in the elections. Action: KM to share the candidate pack with those council members not up for election.	
	These minutes are agreed by the Council as a true record of the meeting. Signature: <u>Odeth Richardson</u> Odeth Richardson (Sep 26, 2024 13:56 GMT+1) Minutes signed by: <u>Odeth Richardson</u> (name in capital letters) Date: <u>26/09/24</u>	