

## Confirmed minutes of a meeting of the BAOT and RCOT Councils

Held on 7 September 2023, 10.30am, Phoenix House, 106-114 Borough High Street, London SE1 1LB

| Council members present |                                                                  |
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| Name                    | Position                                                         |
| Dr Anita Atwal          | Council member, Research and Development                         |
| Paul Dunning            | Council member, Wales                                            |
| Samantha Flower         | Council member, Scotland                                         |
| Cathryn Holding         | Council member, Industrial relations                             |
| Kalimah Ibrahiim        | Council member, England                                          |
| Dr Kee Hean Lim         | Council member, Vice Chair and International Affairs             |
| Andrea Lothian          | Council member, Learning and Development                         |
| Odeth Richardson        | Council member, Chair                                            |
| Also in attendance      |                                                                  |
| Regular attendees -     |                                                                  |
| Karin Bishop            | Director of Membership and Movement Building (items 1-14)        |
| Clare Cochrane          | Director of Brand and Marketing (items 1-14)                     |
| Steve Ford              | Chief Executive (items 1-14)                                     |
| Kate Monro              | Head of Governance and Compliance (items 1-14)                   |
| Karin Orman             | Director of Practice and Innovation (items 1-14)                 |
| Jenni Pearce            | Interim Head of Finance (items 1-14)                             |
| Satvinder Reyatt        | Director of People, Finance and Governance (items 1-14)          |
| Rob Smyth               | Director of Strategy, Technology and Transformation (items 1-14) |
| Other attendees -       |                                                                  |
| Suhan Rajkumar          | Bates Wells (item 4)                                             |
| Ruth Mullan             | Head of Member Experience (item 6)                               |

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| Nick Entwistle | National Officer, UNISON (item 8)                   |
| Reuben Turner  | Rewild Consulting (item 10)                         |
| Thea Healey    | Head of Profile and Campaigns (item 13)             |
| Maria O'Malley | Head of Membership Engagement and Insights (item 9) |

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

| Item       | Main point                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Action          |
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| <b>1.</b>  | <b>Meeting business</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                 |
| <b>1.1</b> | <b>Welcome, introductions and apologies</b><br>The Chair welcomed attendees including new Council members Andrea Lothian and Anita Atwal. The Chair thanked JP, the outgoing Head of Finance, for the difference she had made to the organisational finances.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                 |
| <b>1.2</b> | <b>Declaration of conflict of interest.</b><br>The Chair asked if anyone attending needed to declare a conflict of interest they may have in relation to the items on the agenda. No declarations were made.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                 |
| <b>2.</b>  | <b>Minutes and matters arising of the meeting held 22 June 2023</b><br><br>Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confidential minutes of the meeting held 22 June 2023 – approved by Council.</li> <li>Minutes for publication of the meeting held 22 June 2023 – approved by Council pending a change to regarding the confidential item.</li> </ul> Action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KO to follow up with AL regarding links to HEIs in Scotland.</li> <li>KB to share the UNISON contract with CH.</li> <li>KB to share the cost/benefit analysis of the various membership projects with Council.</li> </ul> | Actions KO / KB |
| <b>3.</b>  | <b>BAOT-RCOT Management reports</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                 |
| <b>3.1</b> | <b>CEO report</b><br>SF summarised that the overall theme for the organisation was now about delivery, with significant activity over the last few months being focussed on planning and prioritisation.<br><br>There were no tenants for the building yet, however the space had made the shortlist for 2/3 companies recently. In response to feedback RCOT was kitting out a 'show floor'. This would make the space more attractive by enabling prospective tenants to move in immediately.                                                                                                                                           |                 |

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| <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p> | <p>In response to questions SF confirmed that management had been looking at the competition and were re-benchmarking the price range accordingly, as well as starting to think more creatively about the space.</p> <p>It was noted that the financials with regards to the building would be covered in more detail as part of the budget report later in the meeting.</p> <p><b>Risk report</b></p> <p>KM presented the new format risk report to Council. The Council gave positive feedback on the new format.</p> <p><b>Organisational performance report</b></p> <p>RS presented the organisational performance report noting that there were plans to move to a more visual data workbook - designing this would be an iterative process with Council.</p> <p><b>Year-to-date management accounts</b></p> <p>JP confirmed that the budget had been readjusted to take into account expenditure on kitting out a 'show floor' in the building. The level of income anticipated had been pushed back as part of the reforecast exercise.</p> <p>Feedback from Council was that members would want to see that the organisation was recouping the cost of the building redevelopment, and to have confidence in the value for money of the work.</p> |  |
| <p>4.</p>                        | <p><b>Confidential item: BAOT-RCOT Governance Review: revised approach</b></p> <p><i>Suhan Rajkumar joined the meeting</i></p> <p>Council discussed with management and SR the timeframes of the governance review and agreed a phased approach over 2 years.</p> <p><i>Suhan Rajkumar left the meeting</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |
| <p>5.</p>                        | <p><b>BAOT-RCOT Budget and plan 2023-24</b></p> <p>Council heard from JP with regards to the budget that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The emphasis this year had been on a bottom-up process.</li> <li>• The original budget of £1.6m deficit for the current year had moved to £1.4m and for the next year there would be a deficit budget of £532k.</li> <li>• The financial plan was to deliver a surplus of £581k at the end of the 5 year period, with income increasing at a greater level than expenditure.</li> <li>• The £2.5m for the building project would be generated from the net income for the organisation and as the charity was still within its</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |

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|    | <p>reserves policy there was no need to pay the money back to the reserves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From the perspective of members, it was important to remember that the transformation and building fund was for the purpose of transforming the organisation for the benefit of members and ensuring it was fit for purpose and future-proofed. If those goals were achieved that would deliver value-for-money for members.</li> <li>• Member subscriptions were not increased and the organisation was looking to other avenues so as to reduce the pressure on membership income.</li> </ul> <p>The Council discussed the proposed budget with management.</p> <p>There was concern from Council members that the targets relating to membership numbers and growing the profession were overly optimistic within the context of a cost-of-living crisis and a shrinking public purse. Council members wanted to be sure that the organisation's income and spending projections were based on achievable goals.</p> <p>Management stated their confidence in the capacity for growth, stressing that currently the organisation did not have a clear membership strategy or membership value proposition, therefore there were gains to be made by undertaking this work and becoming a truly member focussed organisation. It was noted that historically there had been growth in the profession of 2.5% a year. Additionally, the organisation would be widening its definition of membership to encompass new markets, e.g. support workers.</p> <p>It was noted that while the organisation was setting aspirational goals for membership growth, the approach to planning and budgeting was still realistic and pragmatic.</p> <p>Additional points raised in discussion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of reflecting the changing profile and demographic of new OTs in planning.</li> <li>• The toxic culture in the NHS leading to OTs leaving the profession.</li> <li>• Expenditure would be kept level over the course of the financial plan.</li> </ul> <p>Decision –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council voted to approve the budget the 2023-24 plan and budget.</li> <li>• Council voted to transfer £500k from the designated funds for transformation projects back to unrestricted reserves; and, a transfer of £250k from the building project to unrestricted reserves.</li> </ul> |  |
| 6. | <p><b>BAOT-RCOT Membership growth and retention update</b></p> <p><i>Ruth Mullan joined the meeting.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |

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|    | <p>RM presented the membership update to Council. Overall there had been a slight decrease in membership since March 2022, with growth in some categories such as apprentices. A reduction in partnerships with university and group joining from students had contributed to the drop in numbers. A big project for 2023 would be to strengthen engagement with HEIs.</p> <p>There were action plans in place for all groups in which losses were observed.</p> <p>The hardship fund would be implemented and a dedicated insights team was now in place, with automated journeys for members in different categories.</p> <p>Action – RM to check communications regarding the hardship fund to ensure that it was clear that those who accessed the Covid hardship fund could access the new fund.</p> <p>There was healthy engagement and stable growth with specialist sections. However there was a perception of high costs on top of the base subscription so there would need to be work to raise awareness about the benefits of belonging to a specialist section.</p> <p>Council discussed the importance of students in protecting the future of the profession. It would be important to work with tutors and academics and understand students' experiences (AL could provide support with this).</p> <p>Action – KB to follow up with AL regarding supporting work with HEIs and students in Scotland.</p> <p>RCOT would be looking to develop champion networks with students, to create peer-to-peer support, recognising that the journey that students were on now was very difficult and different to previously.</p> <p>Council asked whether the new membership offer would be inclusive in terms of offering all members access to different types of benefits. The membership offer project research would look at what members wanted.</p> | <p>Action</p> <p>Action KB</p> |
| 7. | <p><b>Workforce strategy</b></p> <p>Council heard from KO that the strategy consultation had received input from many forums and networks and had given a picture of the current landscape, as well as highlighting future opportunities and challenges. The strategy would set out where RCOT needs to be by 2035, based on statistics around demographics and service needs.</p> <p>The strategy would be delivered via a 3-year action plan with in-built review, and there would be a separate action plan for each of the 4 nations. Under the action plan year 1 would focus on readiness, year 2 on transformation and year 3 on modernisation. The approach would be split</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                |

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|    | <p>between actions within RCOT's control, partnership working and influencing.</p> <p>Council would be asked to approve the final strategy at their meeting in January 2024.</p> <p>Council discussed the draft strategy, noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contrast between health and social care policy.</li> <li>• That the number of people living with multiple morbidities would increase exponentially by 2035.</li> <li>• They would like to see EDB more centred in the strategy, especially within the leadership space.</li> <li>• The importance of RCOT facilitating a professional movement.</li> <li>• The role of OTs in public health – there was a lack of funding at the moment, but it would be good for RCOT to consider more ambitious goals in this space.</li> <li>• OTs were not currently in positions of power where they were able to make things happen.</li> <li>• A clear view of what success looks like, along with targets, would be required.</li> </ul> <p>Action – KO to take on feedback from Council when developing the final workforce strategy for approval in January.</p>                                                                                                         | Action KO                                                    |
| 8. | <p><b>BAOT UNISON and joint working project update</b></p> <p><i>Nick Entwistle joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>Council heard that initial work was underway to review how the relationship between UNISON and BAOT was managed, with a focus on proactive work that was of value to the profession.</p> <p>UNISON was planning an OT away day to build OT stewards within UNISON. The existing cadre of stewards were excellent but would not be enough in future due to their age profile. The OT panel were on board with this work.</p> <p>Action – Council to use their influence and encourage those they know to join the away day and to become stewards.</p> <p>Council asked about union practice in university and how students received support. NE clarified that students' union support came via their student union.</p> <p>Action – NE to consider the relationship between pre and post registration support and how communication around this could be improved.</p> <p>Action – NE and KB to plan piece of OT news about the process for directing OTs to their union support.</p> <p>A Council member queried whether HCPC cases were getting the union representation they needed. NE confirmed that there should not be any</p> | <p>Action Council</p> <p>Action NE</p> <p>Action NE / KB</p> |

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|     | <p>HCPC cases without UNISON representation, if Council members knew of any these should be notified to NE.</p> <p><i>Nick Entwistle left the meeting.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |
| 9.  | <p><b>RCOT Culture</b></p> <p>There were a number of pieces of work underway to improve RCOT culture, with a focus on improving accountability, celebrating what good looks like and encouraging colleagues to call out EDB issues. Sessions on EDB had been really positive with colleagues willing to show vulnerability.</p> <p>Plans were in place to run an engagement survey at the end of the year. This would provide a base for measuring colleague engagement and give a starting point for thinking about how to improve engagement.</p> <p>Other areas of work included bringing in the mental health first aider programme, working with the colleague forum and implementing the L&amp;D strategy. Thought was going into how the impact of this work could be measured, e.g. by sickness, formal cases, retention rates etc.</p> <p>A new appraisal process had been introduced.</p> <p>Council asked whether resilience was included within the wellbeing initiatives. They heard that resilience development was on the learning hub, including a specific module on resilience and resources on imposter syndrome and confidence building. A Health and Wellbeing strategy and workplan would be developed in the new year.</p> |  |
| 10. | <p><b>BAOT-RCOT strategic narrative</b></p> <p><i>Reuben Turner joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>The Council discussed the creation of the strategic narrative, which was about telling the story of the organisation's transformation journey.</p> <p>The presentation generated broader discussion around the positioning of occupational therapy among Council members, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An apparent disconnect between what universities teach and the experience of Ots working in professional practice; there needs to be realism in RCOT's vision to balance this.</li> <li>• The core principles of OT did not need to change in order to modernise – principles of human justice, person-centredness can co-exist with tools of a modern society, such as AI.</li> <li>• Council discussed what leadership meant, noting that OTs tended to have soft power within the system, but what was important was holding decision-making power.</li> </ul> <p>The points raised by Council will be considered in the context of the strategic narrative but it was noted that it would not resolve all the issues raised; some will need to be considered in the broader context of the brand.</p>        |  |

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|     | <p>The strategic narrative document will be updated and work to translate into brand and communications assets will begin.</p> <p><i>Reuben Turner joined the meeting.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |            |
| 11. | <p><b>BAOT-RCOT Complaints Policy for approval</b></p> <p><i>Maria O'Malley joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>MoM presented the proposed Complaints Policy.</p> <p>Council requested further amendments to the policy prior to approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of annual reporting back to Council.</li> <li>• Consideration of where a respondent should go to next if they were not satisfied – escalation both internally and externally.</li> <li>• Amend to put compliments first.</li> <li>• Change 'must' to 'should' in relation to missing information.</li> <li>• Capture how someone would raise with their line manager.</li> </ul> <p>Action – MoM to make amendments to the policy and circulate to Council for approval via email.</p> <p><i>Maria O'Malley left the meeting.</i></p> | Action MoM |
| 12  | <p><b>BAOT-RCOT EDB strategy</b></p> <p>Council received the update on the EDB strategy and the high level analysis from the consultation. It was agreed to circulate the slides and analysis to Council along with the meeting minutes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |            |
| 13. | <b>Confidential item</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |            |
| 14. | <p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>There were no items of AOB.</p> <p><b>Date of next meeting(s)</b></p> <p>Council approved the meeting dates for the 2023-24 year and agreed for provisional dates to be booked in for the 2024-25 year on the same basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday 25 January 2024</li> <li>• Wednesday 17 April 2024</li> <li>• Thursday 27 June 2024 - AGM</li> <li>• June/July Council meeting TBC</li> <li>• Thursday 19 September 2024 – Council development day</li> <li>• Thursday 17 October 2024</li> </ul> <p>The Chair closed the meeting and thanked all for attending.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                           |            |
| 15. | <b>Confidential item: BAOT-RCOT election of Vice Chair</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |            |

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|  | <p><b>These minutes are agreed by the Council as a true record of the meeting.</b></p> <p>Signature: <u>Odeth Richardson</u><br/> <small>Odeth Richardson (Mar 14, 2024 12:13 GMT)</small></p> <hr/> <p>Minutes signed by: <b>ODETH RICHARDSON</b><br/>         (name in capital letters)</p> <p>Date: <b>Mar 14, 2024</b></p> |  |
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