

**CENTRAL MERSEY**  
**LOCAL OPTICAL COMMITTEE**

**As agreed by the Department of Health with ABDO, AOP, FODO**

Approved by committee 18/11/08

**DEFINITIONS**

1. In this Constitution unless the context otherwise requires:
  - 1.1 “the Committee” means the Local Optical Committee recognised here by Warrington, St. Helens and Halton and Knowsley PCTs under the National Health Service Act 2006 section 125(1).
  - 1.2 “local contractor” means each person (including a body corporate) who, under a General Ophthalmic Services contract entered into by him, is providing Primary Ophthalmic Services in the area for which the committee is formed, as described in the National Health Service Act 2006 section 125(2); or their nominated representative.
  - 1.3 “local performer” means each optometrist (not being a local contractor) who:
    - 1.3.1 is performing primary ophthalmic services in the area for which the committee is formed and
    - 1.3.2 has notified the Primary Care Trust that he wishes to be represented by the committee, and has not notified it that he wishes to cease to be so represented,as described in section 125(3) of the National Health Service Act 2006.
  - 1.4 “Primary Care Trust” means a Primary Care Trust established for the area served by the Local Optical Committee or any successor body appointed by the Secretary of State to carry out the functions of a Primary Care Trust.

## TITLE

2. The Committee is to be known as the *Central Mersey Local Optical Committee*.

## FUNCTIONS

3. The functions of the Committee are those prescribed in the National Health Service Act 2006. The Committee may undertake such activities as are necessary to support the prescribed functions and to respond to requests from the PCT(s) for the area.

## MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 The Committee shall consist of up to twelve elected members to include local contractors (or their appointed representative) elected by local contractors and local performers elected by local performers. There shall be representation from each of the PCT areas covered by the LOCs.
- 4.2 All the local contractors shall be entitled to vote in the election of the members of the Committee who shall be local contractors. All the local performers shall be entitled to vote in the election of the members of the Committee who shall be local performers.
- 4.3 The term of office of the members of the Committee is three years. On the expiry of his term of office, a member is eligible for re-election.
- 4.4 A Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary shall be elected by all the local contractors and local performers at the Annual General Meeting. They shall serve for one year and be eligible for re-election. A Vice-Chairman may also be elected on the same terms.
- 4.5 The Committee may co-opt up to three members who may or may not be local contractors or local performers.

## DISQUALIFICATION OR RESIGNATION OF MEMBERS

- 5.1 An elected member of the Committee, who ceases to be a local contractor or local performer, shall vacate his place on the Committee with immediate effect. In such circumstances a casual vacancy shall be declared.
- 5.2 If a member of the Committee has been absent from three consecutive meetings of the Committee to which he has been summoned, the Committee shall declare that his seat on the Committee has been vacated, unless the Committee is satisfied that his absence was due to illness or other reasonable cause.
- 5.3 A member of the Committee may at any time, by notice in writing signed by him and delivered to the Secretary, resign his place on the Committee or post as an officer.

## METHOD OF FILLING CASUAL VACANCIES

6. If, by reason of the resignation, death or disqualification of a member of the Committee, a casual vacancy is declared, the Committee may elect a person to fill the vacancy. Where the outgoing member is an elected member, the person elected to fill the vacancy must be a local contractor or local performer, as the case may be. The member so elected shall hold office for the remainder of the term of office of the member of the Committee who has been replaced.

## VALIDITY OF PROCEEDINGS

7. The proceedings of the Committee shall not be invalidated by a vacancy in its membership or by any defect in the appointment of any member of the Committee.

## PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEE

- 8.1 The Committee shall meet at least four times a year, at such time and place as is generally agreed.
- 8.2 The officers shall give at least 21 days' notice of each meeting of the Committee. In cases of urgency, this period of notice may be reduced to five days.

8.3 One third of the number of the members of the Committee, or if one third is not a whole number, the next whole number above one third, shall form a quorum of the Committee.

### OBSERVERS

9.1 Subject to rule 9.4, any local contractor or local performer may observe the meetings of the Committee.

9.2 The Committee may also invite other persons to attend its meetings (in part or in whole) as observers. Such observers may include the optometric adviser(s) to the Primary Care Trust(s) and Hospital Optometrist(s)

9.3 Observers shall normally be given meeting papers and invited to participate in the discussions; but they shall not be entitled to vote.

9.4 The Committee may, at its discretion, go into private session and ask observers to leave.

### METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

10. Communications within the Committee and between the Committee and the local contractors and local performers may be in writing by post, fax or electronically, as appropriate.

### FINANCE

11.1 A majority of the elected members of the Committee shall, in respect of each year, determine its administrative expenses to be incurred in the performance of its functions and request the PCT(s) to allot such sums as the PCT(s) may determine for defraying such expenses by means of deductions from the remuneration of local contractors, pursuant to sections 125(9) to (11) of the National Health Service Act 2006.

- 11.2 The Committee shall also be empowered to raise funds by voluntary levy for such other purposes as the Committee may approve.
- 11.3 The Committee shall arrange for its annual accounts of income and expenditure to be audited annually by suitable person or persons and reported to the Annual General Meeting and to the PCT(s).

## RECORDS

12. Written minutes shall be kept of each meeting of the Committee and be made available for inspection to all local contractors and local performers.

## GENERAL MEETINGS

- 13.1 The Committee shall arrange the Annual General Meeting of all local contractors and local performers within three months of the end of the Committee's financial year.
- 13.2 An Extraordinary General Meeting may be held at any time, if called either by the Committee or by at least twenty local contractors and/or local performers.
- 13.3 The Secretary of the Committee shall give notice of the Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting at least 21 days in advance to all the local contractors and local performers, in writing or electronically. In the case of an Extraordinary General Meeting, the Secretary of the Committee shall notify the date, time, place and purpose of the meeting to all the local contractors and local performers, in writing or electronically.
- 13.4 The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:
- \* the report of the Committee's activities of the past year
  - \* the presentation of the audited accounts of the past year
  - \* the appointment of auditors for the following year

\* the election of the officers

\*and, every third year, the election of the Committee.

## ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

- 14.1 For the election of the Committee, the Committee shall appoint a Returning Officer to supervise the election. In the event of the person appointed as Returning Officer being unable to act, he must appoint a person, other than an elector, to act as deputy in his or her place. The Returning Officer shall not be a candidate for election to the Committee.
- 14.2 The Committee may reimburse to the Returning Officer all expenses properly incurred by him in the conduct of the election.
- 14.3 All local contractors and local performers shall be entitled to be present and to vote at the Annual General Meeting; or to appoint a proxy who shall be a local contractor or local performer; or to vote in advance in writing on the published resolutions and the election of officers.
- 14.4 In an election, no individual shall:
- 14.4.1 vote twice, although he or she may act as a proxy for one or more local contractors or local performers;
  - 14.4.2 stand for election for more than one post.
- 14.5 The local contractors and local performers present at the Annual General Meeting may appoint a Chairman to preside over the meeting and appoint two scrutineers to assist the Returning Officer in the counting of votes.

## GOVERNANCE

- 15.1 Members of the Committee shall declare any interests when standing for election and on appointment to the Committee, as well as at the start of each local meeting or local item on the agenda.
- 15.2 Members of the Committee, having an actual or potential conflict of interest in relation to an issue, shall not engage in discussion, nor vote, on that issue.
- 15.3 Members of the Committee shall be bound at all times by the normal rules and expectations of commercial and professional confidentiality relating to the work of the Committee. They shall not divulge, nor act inappropriately upon, nor use inappropriately any information obtained by virtue of their membership of the Committee or its work. They shall be demonstrably scrupulous in this regard at all times and, particularly, when they might have an actual or potential personal interest. They shall be reminded of this requirement at each meeting as appropriate. Any infringement of this requirement shall be dealt with, as the Committee judges fit.
- 15.4 In connection with their membership of the Committee and its work, members of the Committee shall ensure transparency and equality of information and opportunity for all local contractors in matters relating to the commissioning and provision of local optometric services.

#### AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

- 16.1 The Committee may make amendments to the Constitution with the approval of no less than three quarters of the members of the Committee.
- 16.2 The Committee shall notify and provide details of any amendments to the constitution to the PCT(s). Such amendment(s) shall not come into force until the PCT(s) indicate(s) that it is [they are] content to continue to recognise the Committee after such amendment(s) come(s) into force.