



**COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland)**  
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## Board of COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland)

### 1. Membership of COSCA Board

Members of COSCA's Board make up COSCA's governing body and have the general control and management of COSCA. They represent an area of interest linked to COSCA's Development Plan, including all the various kinds of counselling and psychotherapy in Scotland. The remit of the member is to assemble a broad overview of his/her area of interest and keep abreast of developments, as well as carrying out their general governance roles and activities.

COSCA members are encouraged to contact specific members of the Board to pass on information related to his/her area of interest and/or to request advice/assistance with respect to that area of interest. The table below contains the names of COSCA's Board and provides information on their respective area(s) of interest.

You may contact the COSCA Board members at [info@cosca.org.uk](mailto:info@cosca.org.uk)

Name	Area of Interest
Jan Kerr	Chair/ Training; Recognition Scheme
Birgit Schroeter	Vice Chair/ Accreditation – Counsellors and Trainers
Tatjana Hine	COSCA Treasurer/ Funding: income generation; financial management
Stuart Valentine	Specialist Counselling Area – Relationships
Linda McLachlan	Specialist Counselling Area – Alcohol/Drugs; Bereavement
Jill Whitfield	Rurality
Caron Westmoreland	Statutory Agencies
Lisa McGilvray	Ethics

Martha Pollard	Research
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Name	Co-Optees
Daniel Reilly	Co-optee Lay Representative
Eleni Kepelian	Co-optee Lay Representative
Craig Ferguson	Co-optee Criminal Justice

## 2. Guidance on Public Attendance at COSCA Board Meetings

- The public may attend meetings of COSCA's Board as an observer only. Due to space restrictions, the number of attendees is limited to 10.
- No Board papers will be issued to the public attending as observers.
- Those wishing to attend must apply in writing to COSCA's office in Stirling two weeks in advance of the date of the Board meeting. Places will be allocated in the order that requests are received. Applicants will be informed about the outcome of their request prior to the meeting date.
- Those members of the public attending Board meetings are required to respect that the meeting is a Board meeting to conduct the business of COSCA and as such members of the public must not interrupt the discussion of the Board.
- COSCA reserves the right to discuss confidential matters at Board meetings in private
- No cameras or any recording equipment are allowed unless prior approval has been granted.
- Members of the public who attend Board meetings are not entitled to claim expenses for attending. They are also not entitled to any catering that may be provided for Board members.

## 3. Dates of COSCA Board Meetings

Monday      27 November 2023

## 4. COSCA Board Minutes

Approved minutes of COSCA Board meetings are posted on COSCA's website under About Us, [www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk).

Brian Magee  
Chief Executive  
COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland)



## MINUTES OF MEETING

A meeting of the COSCA Board was held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 from 11 am to 1pm.

### 1. PRESENT

Jan Kerr	Chair
Birgit Schroeter	Vice Chair/Accreditation – Counsellors and Trainers
Jill Whitfield	Rurality
Caron Westmorland	Statutory Agencies
Stuart Valentine	Relationships
Eleni Kepelian	Lay Representative
Brian Magee	(in attendance)
Ashleigh Greechan	(Minute Recorder)

### 2. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The chair welcomed Board members and said it was nice to see everyone face to face for the first time. All Board members introduced themselves.

**Apologies:** Tatjana Hine, Alison Shoemark, Linda McLachlan

Birgit joined 11.20am

### 3. CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

No conflicts of interest.

## **4. MINUTES OF MEETING**

### **4.1 Board Meeting of 20 February 2023**

Paper previously circulated.

**Decision:** Consent granted for minutes.

### **4.2 Redactions of Minutes: 20 February 2023**

No redactions were suggested.

### **4.3 Matters Arising: 20 February 2023**

JK invited BM to speak to any matters arising. BM stated that for items 9.2 and 9.3 from the 20<sup>th</sup> of February meeting that Board members have completed the forms that were requested, most if not all Board members have returned them.

## **OVERVIEW**

### **5.1 Information on items 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6 and 5.10**

Paper previously circulated.

JK noted items for information only and reminded Board members that any questions or queries relating to these items should be raised before the meeting.

JK thanked BM for overview and stated that she finds it helpful.

## **DEVELOPING, COMMUNICATING AND MARKETING COSCA:**

### **5.2 COSCA Corporate Affairs Group** Paper previously circulated.

JK explained the report shows the number of people applying to be members of COSCA and noted that it is gratifying to see the continued upward trend.

BM explained the purpose of the report coming to Board is to keep Board informed about patterns or trends happening and give them the opportunity to raise any concerns but currently the report is looking good.

### **5.3 Board Elections 2023**

Information in overview document 5.1.

It was noted that there were nominations for Research and Ethics, and no nominations received for the Criminal Justice area of interest. BM explained that the Criminal Justice area covered a wide area including advancing counselling and counselling skills in prisons and he had worked with the prison service and police force in the past to advance Counselling Skills

training, however it often came down to issues with funding. It was suggested that COSCA member organisations may be involved in that area and could be contacted to let them know of the vacant Area of Interest.

A short discussion took place around nominations and the procedures for nominating.

**Action** – Another call to go out for nomination for Area of Interest Criminal Justice before AGM in September.

#### **5.4 Scottish Government Mental Health Strategy Analysis**

Information in overview document 5.1.

JK stated that COSCA had submitted a response and thanked BM for highlighting the main points and that there are more strategies to come from this.

JK invited BM to speak to this. BM stated that hopefully counselling gets mentioned, there is a perception that counselling costs money. It was noted that waiting lists could be an issue, as in the voluntary sector there is three to six months waiting lists.

**5.5 Psychological Matrix Review** Information in overview document 5.1.

The updated version of the matrix is expected sometime in 2023. There was a discussion on the way the matrix was structured and how it could be confusing.

#### **5.6 COSCA Staff Changes**

Information in overview document 5.1.

Also mentioned on overview paper, the Board thanked Ashleigh for her service and work during her time as Administrator of COSCA.

**5.7 Board Members Area of Interest Report** Paper previously circulated.

JK thanked Alison for preparing report.

Other Board members thought it was interesting and noted the speakers at the recently held COSCA events had been involved in research and it's good to see COSCA being involved in promoting research.

**DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING SYSTEMS AND STANDARDS:**

**5.8 Recognition Scheme Annual Report 2022-23** Paper  
previously circulated.

JK noted the report was prepared by Development Officer Jenna. BM let Board know that Jenna had been working on developing a Pre-recognition scheme which involved working closely with organisations to get structures etc. in place to become full members.

**5.9 Recognition Scheme Business Plan 2023-24**  
Paper previously circulated.

**INCREASING ACCESS TO TRAINING, KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION:**

**5.10 Re-accreditation of COSCA Courses** Information  
in overview document 5.1.

JK stated that this is the first year courses have been reaccredited by UoWS and it was good to know application was successful and thanked BM for his work in this area.

**5.11 FUTURE EVENTS:**

**5.11.1 COSCA Annual General Meeting** Paper  
previously circulated.

Flyer has been advertised for this and includes all details of venue and information.

**5.11.2 COSCA Annual Trainers Event 2023** Paper  
previously circulated.

This event will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2023 on Zoom, holding the event online allows people from all over Scotland to attend and results in bigger number of attendees.

**5.12 PAST EVENTS**

**5.12.1 COSCA Annual Ethics Event 2023** Paper  
previously circulated.

BM – thanked JK for speaking at the event and let Board know that she is writing up the case study for the COSCA Journal. Other Board members stated this was a well put together event, the content was interesting, engaging and useful.

## **INFORMING AND INFLUENCING POLICY MAKING**

### **6. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

#### **DEVELOPING, COMMUNICATING AND MARKETING COSCA:**

**6.1 Financial Report to March 2023** Paper previously circulated.

**Decision:** Consent was given to report.

**6.2 Report of the Treasurer to March 2023** Paper previously circulated.

Government grant still not received in figures for that quarter but we have been assured money will be received soon and it is a technical/admin problem that has delayed the payment from Scottish Government.

**Decision:** Consent was given to report.

**6.3 Forecast Budget 2023-24** Paper previously circulated.

**Decision:** Consent was given to report.

### **7. RISKS**

#### **7.1 Assessment of New Risks to Clients**

##### **Verbal report**

JK invited any potential new risks for clients. BM stated the conversion therapies legislation is still ongoing, it is not easy to track but expected to be announced by end of this year. However, everybody on Board has read the report and agree that counselling is not being affected negatively.

There is also gender recognition - if this goes forward we need to keep a close eye on it and the cost of living crisis, which is under economic risk.

Board members were happy with the report as it stands.

## **8. INCREASING ACCESS TO SERVICES**

### **8.1 Equality, Inclusion and Diversity**

#### **Verbal report**

Standard agenda item – invited discussion. Linked to PSA EDI. Discussion took place with main points being, Relationships Scotland are doing work around this, it's challenging with potentially unintentional blind spots. Consideration has to be given to what changes we need to make, what steps we might be able to take and the importance of being open to new ideas. Networks of wellbeing are opening things up in regards to veterans. Students on placement are being encouraged to think about EDI areas. Board members like the fact this is on the Agenda as a standing item. It was suggested that for future COSCA events, we could have speakers from EDI backgrounds who can share their lived experience. It was suggested that Relationships Scotland could provide a brief update on how they have dealt with EDI further down the line, and agreed this would be helpful.

### **8.2 Professional Standards Authority New EDI Standards** Paper previously circulated.

Newly published document, BM stated this was a shockingly demanding new standard. There has still to be meeting of registrars with PSA. COSCA made an overture to taking this slowly which was taken to their Board and resulted in a change to their plans. The deadline given is September. Document raised many questions. We know the profile is going to be skewed, what can we do about that? How are people attracted to training courses? When there is financial exclusion. What changes can we make? How do we control who becomes members? All these standards must be met. BM has requested that they make clearer standards with examples. Recognition scheme survey might give us some information on demographic data. It raises the question of who's going to analyse the data? Bigger organisations have more resources than COSCA. We need to comply as we are committed to PSA for Accreditation. The meeting with PSA is going to be crucial, as there are several registrars in the same situation.

## **9. DEVELOPING, COMMUNICATING and MARKETING COSCA**

### **9.1 Stakeholders Engagement Strategy Review**

Paper previously circulated.

JK reminded Board members that we didn't have cohort at last meeting. This is our annual opportunity to review this strategy.

**Decision:** Consent granted.



## **9.2 COSCA Risk Management Report Review**

Paper previously circulated.

This paper was also carried over from last meeting.

There was a question on any risk around members retiring and membership numbers going down to which BM explained there is a Subscriber membership level that retired members can transfer to.

There was a discussion around the levels of risk on the report and whether any had to be amended but it was agreed to keep them the same. However, it was suggested the wording for Brexit had to be changed on the report.

**Decision:** Consent granted.

**Action:** Change Brexit wording on report.

## **10. INFORMING AND INFLUENCING POLICY MAKING**

### **11. DEVELOPING and PROMOTING SYSTEMS and STANDARDS**

### **12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 21 August 2023 11 am to 1 pm

JK – proposed a blended approach to Board meetings with some being face to face and some being on Zoom.

It was agreed August and February Board meetings will be Zoom and the AGM and May and November Board meetings will be face to face.

The meeting closed at 1pm.