

Environmental Sustainability Committee

Terms of Reference

Version	2025/1.2
Owner	Mark Blaney
Committee approval	n/a
Board of Trustee approval	19 March 2025 (provisional)
Review due	18 March 2027 (provisional)

Purpose

The RCoA Board of Trustees recognise the climate, environmental and nature emergency facing the world.

The Committee will deliver the Environmental Strategy as approved by the Board of Trustees.

This strategy has two aims which are to influence speciality practice (anaesthetics, intensive care medicine and pain medicine) in the NHS to reduce the NHS's environmental impact and carbon footprint, whilst also working to reduce the College's own environmental impact and carbon footprint.

The committee will:

- Agree a programme of work to deliver the Environmental Strategy.
- Oversee and monitor progress against the objectives of the Environmental Strategy.
- Consider environmental matters referred to it by the Board of Trustees or Council.
- Seek involvement with areas of College activities that have a significant environmental impact (such as the provision of a new College estate).
- Review and propose to the Board of Trustees further iterations of the Environmental Strategy in a timely manner.
- Draft the environmental section of the College's annual report (agreed by email depending on Committee meeting schedule).
- Seek external assurance on environmental matters as may be deemed necessary appointing external third parties to carry out this assurance.

Accountability to the Board of Trustees

The Committee is accountable to and reports to the Board of Trustees through the presentation of minutes and a verbal report from the Committee Chair.

The Board of Trustees will review and approve the terms of reference for the Committee, and any subsequent amendments.

The Council Lead will report to the Council on the work of this committee.

The Committee operates within the College's Regulations, Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations.

The Committee will review its own performance at least every two years.

Groups reporting to the Environmental Sustainability Committee

None

Membership

The Committee will consist of:

- College Vice-President (Chair).
- Council Environmental Lead.
- A Lay Trustee.

In the absence of the Chair, the Council Environmental Lead will deputise.

The committee can co-opt additional members as necessary/request staff attend/seek appropriate external expertise if required.

In attendance:

- Environmental Advisors.
- The CEO.
- CQ&R Board Representative.
- Finance & Resource Director.
- Staff Representative (Employee Engagement Group Member).

The Executive Assistant for People and Operations will act as secretary to the Committee.

The appointment of the Chair and committee members are co-terminus with their role.

The lay trustee is appointed for an initial period of three years, which can be renewed for a further three years.

Committee quorum is two committee members (67%).

The Committee will make decisions consensus whenever possible. When this is not possible, the Chair may call for a vote in which only members may participate. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair will decide whether to use their casting vote or refer the matter to the full Board of Trustees.

Frequency of meetings

The Committee will meet two times a year, in the month before alternate Board of Trustees.

Additional meetings can occur in exceptional circumstances called either by the Chair or at the request of the members of the Committee. The number of Committee members requesting the meeting would need to make the additional meeting quorate before it is arranged. The Committee following any additional meeting can forward their concerns to the full Board of Trustees with a recommended course of action for their consideration.

Definition of Exceptional Circumstances: The College has caused or is involved in a significant environmental incident through either its actions or inaction.

All meetings will be held virtually by audio or video-link.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Committee members must declare any conflicts of interest to the Chair prior to the meeting. The Chair will decide whether for the relevant item in which the Committee member is conflicted the member recuse themselves or are directed not to vote.

A conflict of interest refers to situations in which personal, occupational, or financial considerations may affect or appear to affect the objectivity or fairness of decisions related to the committee activities. A conflict of interest may be real, potential, or perceived in nature.

Confidentiality

All members of the committee shall preserve confidentiality with respect to all information that comes to their knowledge in the course of their duties and shall not communicate any information to any other person.

Expenses

As these meetings will be held virtually there should be no expenses incurred in members, those in attendance or third parties attending.

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