

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION AND STANDING ORDERS

31 January 2008

GLOUCESTERSHIRE LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION

DEFINITIONS

1. In what follows, unless the context otherwise requires:

'The PCO' means the primary care organisation covering Gloucestershire

'The Committee' means the Gloucestershire Local Medical Committee for the area of the PCO.

'GP' means a registered general medical practitioner¹ whose name is included in the performers list of the PCO.

'GP Provider and Performer' means a GP alone or in partnership in a practice which has a contract with the PCO to provide GP services and also perform GP work.

'GP Performer' means a GP who is not a provider of GP services.

'Freelance GP' means a GP Performer who is not regularly employed by a practice but instead undertakes work on a fee basis.

'Ophthalmic Practitioner' means a registered medical Practitioner on the general Ophthalmic list for Gloucestershire who is under agreement with the PCO to provide general ophthalmic services.

'Constituency' shall have the definition given to it in paragraph 6.

The male gender shall be deemed to include the female gender and vice versa.

The singular number shall include the plural number and vice versa.

TITLE

2. The Committee shall be known as the Gloucestershire Local Medical Committee.

ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

3. Only GPs shall be eligible for election to the Committee.

CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE

4. The Committee shall consist of:

a. Elected members. Up to 24 GPs, who should ideally be representative of the diversity of the GP workforce and be members from both the GP Provider and Performer and the GP Performer workforces.

b. Non-Elected Members.

(1) Co-opted members.

(a) The Chair of the Professional Executive Committee of the PCO, or his appointee.

(b) A medical practitioner of consultant status, nominated by each of the Medical Staff Committees of the NHS Trusts in Gloucestershire.

(c) The current member of the General Practice Committee of the British Medical Association representing Gloucestershire.

(d) A representative GP Registrar undergoing training for general practice within Gloucestershire.

¹ As defined by the Standard General Medical Services Contract

(e) One Ophthalmic Practitioner.

(2) Invited Member. The Chief Executive of the PCO and/or his nominee.

c. Attendees. The Committee shall have the right to invite others, who shall not have the right to vote, to attend a meeting or meetings, e.g. to provide experience to Registrar GPs during their training.

5. Proviso. The number of non-elected members shall not exceed one quarter of the total members of the Committee.

REPRESENTATION

6. Constituencies. For the purposes of electing members of the Committee there shall be Geographical and Freelance constituencies. In this Constitution the word 'constituency' on its own can be used to apply to either type of constituency.

a. Geographical Constituencies. The PCO area shall be divided into 8 geographical constituencies. The area of each geographical constituency and the number of persons to be elected by each constituency are set out in columns (a) and (d) of Table A1 of the Schedule at Annex A to this Constitution.

b. Freelance Constituency. The Freelance GPs will collectively form a constituency. The number of persons to be elected to represent that constituency is set out in Column (c) of Table A2 of the Schedule at Annex A to this Constitution.

7. Modification of Membership Numbers. In the month of January in each year in which an election is to be held the Committee shall consider the constituencies and the number of members serving or to be elected in each constituency:

a. The Committee shall have power to modify the figures in column (d) of Table A1 of the Schedule if necessary to restore a fairer representation in relation to the number of patients registered to the practices in each area on the 1st of January of that year.

b. The Committee shall have power to modify the figure in column (c) of Table A2 of the Schedule if the number of Freelance GPs to be represented has so changed that it would be fairer to increase or decrease the number of members elected by that constituency.

METHOD OF ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

8. The Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall be a person, other than an elector, appointed by the Committee for the purpose and in the event of his absence or inability to act he shall appoint some person other than an elector to act in his place.

9. General Outline. A full election will be held every leap year in February/March. Voting shall be by postal ballot. There will be 2 groups of electors – those GPs voting for members from geographical constituencies on the one hand and the Freelance GPs on the other.

10. Electors. The location of the practice (and if a practice shall have more than one surgery, its main surgery) will dictate the geographical constituency in which that practice's electors can vote. Freelance GPs will vote in the Freelance GP constituency. If any doubt arises under this paragraph the decision of the Returning Officer shall be final.

11. The List of Electors. The Returning Officer shall prepare a list of all the persons entitled to vote ('the electors') as at the 1st day of January of the year in which the election takes place, giving the following detail:

a. The GP's address, which will be:

- (1) For GPs voting in geographical constituencies, their primary place of work.
 - (2) For Freelance GPs, their home address, unless they have specified otherwise.
- b. The type of election (Geographical or Freelance) in which he is entitled to vote. Members of each category may only vote for a member in that category.
 - c. The constituency in which he is entitled to vote.

It shall be the responsibility of each GP to ensure that his name is included in the correct list of electors.

12. Notice of Elections. The Returning Officer shall send written notice of the election to each elector, to be delivered to the elector not less than 28 clear days before the date of the election. Such notice shall:

- a. State the date of the election.
- b. State for which group the elector is entitled to vote (GP or Freelance GP).
- c. State in which constituency the elector is entitled to vote.
- d. State the day by which nominations for election must be submitted to the Returning Officer.
- e. Set out the provisions with regard to nomination.
- f. Enclose a nomination form.

13. Nominations. Every candidate for election shall be nominated by at least two electors who must be entitled to vote for them. Every nomination form must be accompanied by a statement in writing signed by the candidate that he is prepared to accept office. A candidate nominated for election for a constituency must also be entitled to vote in that constituency.

14. Voting Procedure. If the number of nominated candidates qualified for election does not exceed the number of vacancies the Returning Officer shall declare those candidates to be elected. If there are more nominated candidates than vacancies in a given constituency a vote shall be taken in that constituency as follows.

- a. Each elector shall be entitled to cast a number of votes equal to the number of vacancies to be filled by those for whom he is entitled to vote but he may not cast more than one vote for any one candidate.
- b. Voting shall be in accordance with the following rules:
 - (1) Voting Papers. Separate voting papers, containing the names of the duly nominated candidates in random order, shall be prepared by the Returning Officer and sent to each elector.
 - (2) Format of Voting Papers. Each voting paper shall contain:
 - (a) A statement of the number and names of candidates for whom the elector may validly vote.
 - (b) A statement that the voting paper must be returned to the Returning Officer so as to reach him by the date of the election (which shall be specified in the voting papers and shall be not more than 28 days after the issue of such papers).
 - (3) Invalid Votes. A voting paper shall be invalid if:
 - (a) The elector has purported by it to cast more votes than is permitted under paragraph 14.a.
 - (b) It is not signed.

(c) In any other respect it does not comply with this Constitution or is marked in such a manner as to cause uncertainty as to the candidates for whom the elector desires to record his vote - except that the Returning Officer may, if he thinks fit, treat a voting paper so marked as valid for the purpose of any vote other than in connection with which the uncertainty arises.

(d) It is received by the Returning Officer after the date of the election.

c. Counting the Votes. The Returning Officer shall examine the voting papers received on or before the date of the election and after rejecting any that are invalid shall count the votes recorded on the remaining papers and shall prepare a return for the candidates according to the number of votes which each has received, the person receiving the greatest number of votes being placed highest in the return. Also:

(1) If the votes received by any two or more candidates are equal and the addition of one vote to any one of such candidates would enable that candidate to be declared elected the Returning Officer shall decide by lot which of the candidates shall take the highest place.

(2) Any question as to the validity of any nomination or voting paper or otherwise in connection with an election shall be determined by the Returning Officer.

d. Administrative Matters.

(1) Publicising the Results. The Returning Officer shall immediately give notice of the result of the elections to all candidates.

(2) Delivery of Documents. Where any document is under this Constitution required to be sent to an elector it shall be deemed to have been duly sent if it has been delivered or posted direct to the address of the elector on the list of electors prepared in accordance with paragraph 11.

(3) Dealing with Irregularities. No election shall be invalid by reason of any misdescription, or non-compliance with the provisions of this Constitution, or by reason of any miscount, or of the non-delivery loss or miscarriage in the course of post of any document required or authorised by this Constitution to be despatched by post, if the Returning Officer is satisfied that the election was conducted substantially in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.

FIRST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

15. The Returning Officer shall give not less than seven clear days' notice to the members of the Committee of the time and place of the first meeting.

16. It shall be the duty of the Committee to inform the electors of the identity of its members and the Committee shall decide at its first meeting by what means this shall be done and shall give appropriate instructions for the decisions to be implemented.

UNFILLED VACANCIES

17. Where an elected membership vacancy exists after an election the Committee may appoint a duly qualified person to fill the vacancy (who shall then be considered elected) to serve until the next election. Pending any such appointment, the proceedings of the Committee shall not be invalid by reason of a vacancy.

APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY

18. The Committee shall appoint a person to act as Secretary to the Committee; and in the event of the death, resignation or removal from office of the Secretary so appointed, the Committee shall appoint a person to act as Secretary in his place; and the appointment of a Secretary shall be notified to the PCO.

TERMS OF OFFICE

19. The elected members of the Committee shall hold office for four years.

CASUAL VACANCIES

20. How a Casual Vacancy May Arise. A member of the Committee shall cease to be a member, thereby creating a casual vacancy, if:

- a. He ceases to be on the performers list.
- b. As a GP Registrar he ceases to be so.
- c. He has been absent from 6 consecutive meetings of the Committee unless the Committee, being satisfied that his absence was due to illness or other reasonable cause, resolve that he shall continue to be a member of the Committee.
- d. He resigns his office by notice in writing signed by him and delivered to the Secretary of the Committee, which resignation shall take effect immediately.

21. Method of Filling Casual Vacancies. Where a casual vacancy in the membership of the Committee arises, the Committee may fill the vacancy by the appointment of a duly qualified GP who shall then be considered elected, and shall hold office for the remainder of the period for which the member in whose place he is appointed would have been entitled to hold office. Pending any such appointment, the proceedings of the Committee shall not be invalid by reason of any vacancy.

INFORMATION TO BE SENT TO THE PCO

22. The Secretary of the Committee shall, as soon as may be, inform the PCO of the names and addresses of all newly elected, appointed and/or co-opted members of the Committee, and of any casual vacancies in the membership of the Committee which may from time to time occur, and of the names and addresses of the persons, if any, appointed to fill those vacancies.

QUORUM

23. One-third of the number of 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, provided that at least three-quarters of the members present shall be elected members.

STANDING ORDERS

24. The Committee will be organised and will conduct itself in accordance with the Standing Orders at Annex B.

ANNUAL REPORT

25. The Committee shall prepare in each year a report of their proceedings since the publication of their last report, together with an audited statement of accounts, and this report and statement of accounts shall be circulated to those on the list of electors not later than three months after the Committee shall have approved the same. A copy shall also be sent to the PCO.

FUNDING

26. The administrative expenses of the Committee may be collected on a statutory basis from all GP electors except Freelance GP electors. The Committee may raise an additional voluntary levy from GP electors to cover its other expenses. Each levy shall be collected as determined from time to time by the Committee. The amounts of each levy shall be determined by the Committee, having regard to the requirements of openness, transparency and equity, and upon an estimation of the expected administrative and other expenses. The Committee shall cause proper accounts to be kept.

WINDING UP

27. If upon any amalgamation or reorganisation of the Committee there remain any residual funds or liabilities, these shall be distributed between such other Committees as may be involved in the amalgamation or reorganization so as to reflect the proportions in which electors are transferred to other Committees, and in default of that the residual balance is to be transferred back to the practices which contributed to it.

AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION AND STANDING ORDERS

28. Amendment of the Constitution. This Constitution may be amended in the following manner but not otherwise:

- a. Initial Consideration by the Committee. Proposals for such amendment shall be sent to the Secretary who shall place them before the Committee for consideration at the earliest opportunity but the Committee shall not consider the same until at least seven clear days' notice of such proposals shall have been received by the members of the Committee.
- b. Circulation to the Electorate. After such proposals have been considered by the Committee the Secretary shall, if requested so to do by not less than two-thirds of the members of the Committee or twenty of the electors, embody in a letter any proposed amendment of these Sections of which the Committee has approved and circulate such letter to all GPs on the electoral rolls with an invitation to such GPs to submit to the Secretary their comments on the proposals within 14 days of the despatch of the letter.
- c. Final agreement by the Committee and PCO Endorsement. The Committee shall at a meeting held not later than four months after the date of despatch of such letter consider all replies received by the Secretary within such period of 14 days and shall decide whether the proposed amendment (either as circulated in the letter or as varied as a result of consideration of the replies) shall be adopted. If so the approval of the PCO shall be sought by the Secretary.
- d. Taking effect at next Committee Meeting. Any such amendment duly carried and approved by the PCO shall be notified to the Committee at the next meeting of the Committee and shall forthwith take effect.
- e. Feedback to Proposer. The Secretary shall tell the amendment's proposer the outcome when known.

29. Amendment of the Standing Orders. The Standing Orders at Annex B may be amended as follows.

- a. Notice of a motion to amend these Sections shall be sent to the Secretary to reach him no less than fourteen clear days before the date of a meeting of the Committee, and the Secretary shall include such notice of motion in the Agenda circulated with the notice of the meeting.
- b. The motion shall make clear the exact terms of the amendment whether by alteration of, addition to, or deletion from the terms of the Standing orders.
- c. A majority of not less than three-fourths of those present at the meeting and voting shall be required for the carrying of such a motion.

List of Annexes:

- A. The Schedule.
- B. Standing Orders of the Committee

ANNEX A TO
GLOUCESTERSHIRE LMC CONSTITUTION
DATED 31 JAN 08

THE SCHEDULE

The number of GPs elected to a given constituency is to be proportional to the number of registered patients on the lists of those practices within the constituency. A higher number of patients than average is accepted for the urban areas. This table will be updated as at 1 Jan in each leap year, prior to an election.

As at 1 Oct 07 the numbers were as in Table A1 below:

GPs other than Freelance GPs	Number of patients	Percentage of total patients in the county	Number of members	Average number of 'patients per LMC Member'	%age difference from the overall average
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
North Cotswolds	27,671	4.58%	1	27,671	+5.33%
Cheltenham, Bishops Cleeve & Winchcombe	146,086	24.18%	5	29,217	+11.21%
Cirencester, Fairford & Tetbury	55,746	9.23%	2	27,873	+1.48%
Dursley, Wotton-under-Edge & Stonehouse	37,710	8.25%	2	18,855	-28.23%
Forest of Dean (incl Newent and Corse)	78,753	13.03%	3	26,251	-4.42%
Gloucester City	154,799	25.62%	5	30,960	+12.72%
Stroud	67,517	11.17%	3	22,506	-3.30%
Tewkesbury	23,807	3.94%	1	23,807	-13.32%
TOTALS	604,246	100.00%	22	26,272	0.00%

Table A1 – Elective Constituency Sizes and Representation

The number of Freelance GPs is set by what seems fair to the Committee, bearing in mind the number of Freelance GPs paying the voluntary levy. The current figure is as in Table A2 below.

Freelance GPs	Number of levy-paying Freelance GPs	Number of Members
(a)	(b)	(c)
Freelance GPs	8	1

Table A2 – Freelance GP Representation

STANDING ORDERS OF THE COMMITTEE

A. OFFICERS OF THE COMMITTEE

A1. The officers of the Committee shall be the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, a Fourth Officer and the Secretary. These officers will comprise an Executive. The roles of the Executive, each of the officers and individual members of the committee are defined in the following Appendices to this Annex:

The Chairman	Appendix 1
The Vice Chairman	Appendix 2
The Treasurer	Appendix 3
The Fourth Officer	Appendix 4
The Secretary	Appendix 5
The LMC Member	Appendix 6

A2. Only elected members of the Committee shall be eligible for office, except the office of Secretary.

A3. All elected members of the Committee shall be entitled to vote in the election of officers.

A4. An election of officers will be held biennially for all posts (less that of Secretary which is not an elected post). These officers serving a the time of a full Committee election can, if willing, continue in their posts until the first meeting after an election, in order to provide continuity.

A5. Between the date of formation of the Committee and its first meeting the Returning Officer shall invite nominations for the offices of Chairman and Treasurer and, in the event of there being more than one candidate for an office, shall conduct a postal ballot. Each nomination shall be by any one member of the Committee and shall indicate that the nominee has given his consent to the nomination. The Returning Officer shall attend the first meeting of the Committee to announce the names of the members elected to those offices.

A6. The Secretary shall be appointed according to the terms of his contract.

A7. Remuneration and all expenses necessarily incurred in fulfilling the duties of the office shall be paid and reimbursed by the Committee at an agreed rate, subject to annual review.

A8. Immediately after the first meeting of the newly constituted Committee the Returning Officer shall invite nominations for the office of Vice Chairman, fourth officer for the Executive and for persons to serve as Representatives to the Conference of Local Medical Committees. In the event of there being more than the requisite number of candidates a postal ballot shall be conducted. The result of the election shall be communicated by the Returning Officer to the Secretary before the next ensuing meeting of the Committee.

A9. A casual vacancy in any office, from whatever cause, shall be filled by election and until that can take place the Executive will fill the functions of that post. The election shall be conducted by the Secretary

A10. In the event of two or more candidates for an office receiving an equal number of votes, the Returning Officer shall decide by lot which of the candidates shall take the highest place.

B. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

B1. Ordinary meetings of the Committee shall be held at such place and at such time as the Committee shall from time to time determine, but so that meetings shall be held not less than once in every three months.

B2. The Chairman may, or if he be so requested in writing by not less than five members of the Committee, shall, summon immediately a Special or Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee. If the Chairman after such request does not within seven days call a meeting, any five members of the Committee may on the expiration of those seven days call a meeting.

B3. Want of service of a notice of meeting on any member of the Committee shall not invalidate the meeting.

B4. Every member of the Committee attending a meeting shall sign his name on the attendance sheet.

B5. Minutes of the proceedings of every meeting of the Committee shall be circulated prior to the next ensuing Ordinary Meeting and at that meeting, after confirmation, shall be signed by the Chairman.

B6. Notice of all meetings of the Committee shall be delivered or sent by post so as to reach each member not less than six clear days before the day of the meeting.

B7. If the Chairman and Vice Chairman or Secretary be absent from a meeting of the Committee, the members present shall elect from among themselves a person to act as Chairman or Secretary respectively for that meeting.

B8. Only elected members of the Committee may vote. In the event of an equal number of votes being cast for and against a motion or amendment before the meeting, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

B9. Elected members of the Committee shall be paid at a rate to be agreed from time to time by the Committee for attending the monthly meeting of the Committee, for representing the Committee at various meetings and for work performed at the request of the Committee.

C. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

C1. Every member shall address himself to the Chair. During the time any member is speaking all other members shall remain silent.

C2. Any motion or amendment shall, if required by the Chairman, be submitted in writing, and after being seconded it shall not be withdrawn or modified without concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the meeting. No motion or amendment shall be spoken upon, except by the mover, until it has been seconded.

C3. A member shall confine his speech strictly to the motion or subject under discussion, or to a motion or amendment to be proposed by him, or to a question of order.

C4. When an amendment has been moved and seconded, no other amendment shall be moved until the first amendment shall have been disposed of.

C5. If an amendment be rejected, other amendments may be moved on the original motion. If an amendment be carried, the amendment, or the motion as amended,

shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the question upon which any further amendment may be moved.

C6. Any member whose practice or the conduct of whose practice is the subject of discussion by the Committee shall retire from the meeting while the discussion is in progress.

C7. In the event of the conduct of a member or members rendering the orderly despatch of business impossible, the Chairman may at his discretion suspend such member or members for the remainder of the meeting, or he may suspend the sitting for a reasonable period or adjourn it to a date not later than a calendar month from the date of the sitting.

D. CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL MATTERS

D1. The Secretary shall maintain a register of interests and any changes to that register should be announced by members at the beginning of each meeting.

D2. Any motion concerning the principle of collection, management or distribution of the Committee monies shall require a majority of not less than two-thirds of those present and voting for the carrying of such a motion.

E. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

E1. The Executive Committee has three main functions:

- a. To reduce the volume of routine work that would otherwise have to be dealt with by the full committee at its regular meetings.
- b. To deal with any unplanned contingencies requiring urgent consideration.
- c. To make decisions on behalf of the LMC when it is not appropriate to wait until the next full LMC meeting.

E2. Decisions made should be congruent with the values and policies of the LMC.

E3. Any decisions made by the Executive shall be reported to the Committee at its next meeting.

F. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

F1. Any one or more of the Standing Orders, in any case of urgency or after notice duly given, may be suspended at any meeting, provided that three-fourths of those present and voting shall so decide.

G. SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

G1. The Chairman shall be a member ex-officio of all sub-committees.

List of Appendices:

1. The Chairman.
2. The Vice Chairman.
3. The Treasurer.
4. The Fourth Member.
5. The Secretary.
6. The LMC Member.

APPENDIX 1 TO
ANNEX B TO
GLOUCESTERSHIRE LMC CONSTITUTION
DATED 31 JAN 08

THE CHAIRMAN

1. The primary duty of the Chairman is to direct and lead the LMC. This involves:
 - a. Developing and maintaining close relations with local and national GP organisations, especially the GPC and neighbouring LMCs.
 - b. Developing and maintaining close relations with local and national NHS organisations, especially the PCO and SHA.
 - c. Encouraging the development of LMC members in the work of the LMC.
 - d. Line management of the Secretary. The Chairman will be the normal first point of contact for the Secretary when seeking advice and guidance in the performance of his duties
 - e. Ad hoc chairing of the Executive Committee Meetings.
 - f. Chairing of the full LMC Meetings.
 - g. Developing and maintaining close relationships with the GP constituents and elected LMC members.
 - h. In exceptional circumstances, the Chairman may make executive decisions on behalf of the LMC, congruent with the LMC's values and policies.

APPENDIX 2 TO
ANNEX B TO
GLOUCESTERSHIRE LMC CONSTITUTION
DATED 31 JAN 08

THE VICE CHAIRMAN

The Vice Chairman:

- a. Provides support and advice to the Chairman.
- b. Stands in for all the Chairman's duties should the need arise.

APPENDIX 3 TO
ANNEX B TO
GLOUCESTERSHIRE LMC CONSTITUTION
DATED 31 JAN 08

THE TREASURER

1. Overall responsibility for the LMC finances, ensuring resources are used efficiently, effectively and ethically. To liaise with Office staff and the Accountant, and involving thence the Executive and full Committee as required.
 - a. Annually reviewing and setting the budget in liaison with the Accountant and Office Manager.
 - b. Consultation to set GP levy.
 - c. Reviewing the quarterly and annual GLMC budgetary position as presented by the Office Manager.
 - d. Being available to discuss financial matters when necessary with other members of the Executive and Office Staff.
 - e. Reporting financial matters to the full Committee for consideration.
 - f. Presenting the Annual accounts to the full Committee for discussion and ratification.
2. Overseeing the Charitable trust.

APPENDIX 4 TO
ANNEX B TO
GLOUCESTERSHIRE LMC CONSTITUTION
DATED 31 JAN 08

ROLE OF THE FOURTH OFFICER

The fourth officer is appointed to add balance and breadth to the Executive Committee.

APPENDIX 5 TO
ANNEX B TO
GLOUCESTERSHIRE LMC CONSTITUTION
DATED 31 JAN 08

THE SECRETARY

1. Currently the LMC has a Lay Secretary rather than a Medical Secretary. His post is not elected but contracted. His terms of service are set out in the contract.
2. For ease of reference, the Lay Secretary's duties are reproduced here:
 - a. Administration. He is line manager for the Office Manager. The Office Manager is responsible for the day-to-day work of the office, planning and reporting on meetings. The Office Manager handles the Committee's financial affairs, for which he is accountable to the Treasurer. The Office Assistant is accountable to the Office Manager. The agendas for meetings are put together by the Office Manager in consultation with the Lay Secretary and appropriate chairmen.
 - b. Communication. The Lay Secretary shares with the Office Manager the job of communication with GPs. This includes production and circulation of the Minutes and monthly newsletter. The theme of each Newsletter is usually decided by the Lay Secretary, and he usually writes the main articles. He may also arrange constituency meetings to meet GPs. The Lay Secretary may from time to time issue press releases and is often approached by the local and medical press.
 - c. Information Gathering. An important part of the Lay Secretary's role is to assimilate the regulations and guidance for primary care that emanate from the centre, so as to be able to guide GPs locally. This requires a facility with the Internet and an ability to précis documents to make them easier for busy GPs to digest.
 - d. Advising. Advice on routine matters arising from GPs or Practice Managers is given by the Office Manager or Lay Secretary. Most requests are dealt with on the basis of policy formed by the LMC or national guidance. If not we seek advice from the GPC at national level, or arrange for an item to be raised with the full LMC.
 - e. Assistance to Practitioners. The Lay Secretary is often asked to help GPs with problems of under-performance, complaints, partnership difficulties or sickness. Most contacts of this kind are handled on a confidential basis by the Lay Secretary and/or the LMC Chairman. He may seek further help from the Support Panel, LMC members, or the PCT, or point the GP to alternative confidential sources of help.
 - f. Policy development. The LMC has developed a number of policy documents to deal with specific issues concerning primary care. The policies are formed in response to problems arising from general practices, or on the initiative of LMC members. The Lay Secretary is expected to anticipate, initiate and update policies for discussion by the LMC as the need arises.
 - g. Relating to other bodies. The Lay Secretary has strong personal links with PCT managers concerned with primary care. These links enable most problems to be sorted out quickly and easily. The LMC is served at national level by a Senior Executive Officer through whom queries are directed. The Lay Secretary attends the national Meeting of LMC Secretaries in November and, as an observer, the Annual Conference of LMCs in June.

APPENDIX 6 TO
ANNEX B TO
GLOUCESTERSHIRE LMC CONSTITUTION
DATED 31 JAN 08

LMC MEMBER

1. The primary duty is to represent constituency members and their interests. The following tasks are involved:

- a. Relaying important Committee news and views affecting constituents.
- b. Canvassing views from constituents on specific issues raised by the Committee and feeding back.
- c. Keeping abreast of national and local issues which may affect GP Practices and ensuring these are raised when and where necessary.
- d. To represent and to report back to the LMC, whether as lead or deputy, in any subject or subjects which the LMC has requested. (See the Roles and Responsibilities paper on the website)
- e. Serving on sub-committees.
- f. Regular attendance at full Committee meetings to fulfil the above.

2. Members of the LMC are expected to adhere to established LMC policy when representing the LMC's view to outside organisations. If members express a personal or constituency member's view, rather than LMC policy, this should be made clear in any discussion. If unclear on matters of policy the matter is to be referred to the LMC Office.

ADMINISTRATIVE

3. All members are expected to:

- a. Attend regularly at full meetings of the LMC and, if appointed, to a specific sub-group and speciality group meetings.
- b. To give their apologies in advance of the meeting to the office if unable to attend a meeting.
- c. Read all the relevant papers prior to attending the meeting. The office will ensure wherever possible to send out all papers in advance of the meeting.
- d. Keep abreast of issues affecting their constituents.

4. If papers are tabled at the meeting, members have the right to request time to digest the contents before they comment.