

Standing Orders of non-statutory committees of the General Pharmaceutical Council

1. Application and Interpretation

- 1.1 Meetings of any non-statutory committees of the General Pharmaceutical Council are regulated in accordance with these Standing Orders which the Council shall agree from time to time. Amendments to these Standing Orders may be made only by the Council.
- 1.2 These Standing Orders, together with the provisions of the Pharmacy Order 2010 and the General Pharmaceutical Council (Constitution) Order 2010 (together, 'the Orders'), establish the basic rules about how the committee conducts its proceedings.
- 1.3 Unless the context otherwise requires, terms used in the Standing Orders have the same meaning as in the Orders.
- 1.4 If a procedural point arises during a meeting of the committee which is not covered by these Standing Orders or the Orders, the common law rules concerning the conduct of meetings will apply.
- 1.5 The Chair of the committee is the final authority as to the interpretation of these Standing Orders.

2. Frequency of Meetings

- 2.1 The committee shall meet as necessary for the transaction of its business, normally between two and four times a year.

3. Notice of Meetings

- 3.1 The Secretary shall normally give members not less than seven clear days' notice of the time and place of a meeting.
- 3.2 If for any reason a meeting is convened at shorter notice, then the Secretary shall give members notice of the time and place of the meeting at the time that the meeting is convened.
- 3.3 Failure to provide notice of a meeting to a member shall not invalidate the proceedings of that meeting.

4. Agenda

- 4.1 The Secretary shall issue an agenda for each meeting. The Chair shall determine the content of the agenda, having consulted with the Secretary.
- 4.2 Except in cases of urgency or where circumstances make it impracticable to do so, the agenda for a meeting and any accompanying papers shall be sent to members not less than seven days before the meeting.

4.3 Any member wishing to raise any matter at a committee meeting shall notify the Chair and Secretary not less than 14 days before the meeting.

4.4 No business other than that which has been included on the agenda, or of which notice has been given under para 4.3 above, shall be discussed at any committee meeting, with the exception of urgent business which may be discussed with the consent of the Chair.

5. Meetings using remote conference facilities

5.1 At the discretion of the Chair, meetings of the committee may be held in the form of a teleconference or using other remote conference facilities which allow all members participating to hear and address one another. Such meetings will be deemed to take place at the location of the Chair.

6. Chair

6.1 The Chair of the committee shall be appointed by the Council or by a person, group, body or committee to whom the Council delegates this function.

6.2 The Chair shall preside at any meeting of the committee.

6.3 If the Chair is absent from, or otherwise unable to preside at, a meeting, the members present shall nominate one of their number to serve as chair at that meeting.

6.4 In these Standing Orders, references to the 'Chair' include a member presiding at a meeting of the committee in place of the Chair.

6.5 In the event that the Chair is likely to be absent for more than one meeting of the committee or to be unavailable to perform the duties of the Chair for more than one month, the Secretary shall notify the committee accordingly and the committee shall proceed to nominate one of its members ('deputy chair') to serve as committee during the absence or unavailability of the Chair.

7. Quorum

7.1 The quorum at any meeting of the committee shall be as determined by the Council. No business shall be transacted at a meeting unless at least a quorum of members is present.

7.2 If a quorum is not present within 15 minutes of the time appointed for a meeting to commence, the meeting shall be dissolved and all business which should have been transacted at that meeting shall be held over until the next scheduled meeting, unless an additional meeting is called in the meantime for the transaction of that business.

7.3 If, during a meeting, it appears to the Chair that a quorum has ceased to exist, business will be suspended and the number of members present counted and, if:

(a) a quorum exists, the business will proceed;

(b) a quorum does not exist, the meeting will be dissolved and all remaining business will be adjourned to the next scheduled meeting, unless an additional meeting is called in the meantime for the transaction of that business.

7.4 If a member has been disqualified from participating in discussion of and/or voting on any matter by reason of a conflict of interest, that member shall not count towards the quorum. If a quorum is not available for the discussion of and/or voting on any matter,

that matter may not be discussed further or voted upon at that meeting. Such a position shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The meeting shall then proceed to the next item of business.

8. Interests of members

- 8.1 Members must ensure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between their position as a committee member and their personal interests, financial or otherwise.
- 8.2 All members of the committee shall complete, and keep up to date, a register of interests, gifts and hospitality. (A register of Council members' interests, gifts and hospitality is maintained separately and Council members on committees will not be asked to supply a duplicate register entry.) The Secretary of the committee shall keep the register of committee members' interests, which shall be available for Council and committee members to see on request.
- 8.3 A member who has a personal interest in any matter under consideration at a meeting, whether or not declared in the register of members' Interests, shall promptly declare that interest and, unless the Chair determines otherwise, the member shall withdraw from the meeting until the committee has concluded its consideration of the matter.
- 8.4 In any case of doubt the member should openly declare the possibility of interest.
- 8.5 All declarations of interest shall be recorded in the minutes.

9. Minutes of committee meetings

- 9.1 The Secretary shall produce minutes of each meeting which shall include a record of the members in attendance at that meeting.
- 9.2 At each meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting shall be confirmed, or confirmed as amended, by the committee.
- 9.3 The confirmed minutes of a meeting shall, unless the contrary is proved, be a correct and authoritative record of the meeting.

10. Secretary

- 10.1 The committee Secretary shall be appointed by the Chief Executive & Registrar.

11. Powers and accountability

- 11.1 The committee is accountable to the Council.
- 11.2 Subject to any statutory restrictions, the committee shall have such terms of reference and powers and shall be subject to such conditions as determined by the Council.
- 11.3 No committee may establish a sub-committee unless expressly authorised by the Council.

12. Conduct of committee members

- 12.1 Members shall comply with the seven principles of public life established by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (the 'Nolan Principles').
- 12.2 The Chair may order a member to withdraw from a meeting if, in the opinion of the Chair, that member has persistently disregarded the ruling of the Chair or is behaving improperly, offensively or in a manner which is obstructing the business of the meeting.

12.3 In the event of a general disturbance which, in the opinion of the Chair, prevents the orderly conduct of business, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for such a period as the Chair considers appropriate.

13. Members' education, training and performance

13.1 Members shall not, without reasonable cause, fail to undertake satisfactorily any education or training provided for members or to participate in any appraisal processes for members.

14. Voting and Recording of Votes

14.1 Decisions shall be taken by vote in the following circumstances:

a) When the Chair determines that no clear consensus has emerged;

b) When a member requests a vote to be taken and this is supported by at least one other member; or

c) When the Chair concludes that a vote should be taken.

14.2 Voting shall be by a simple majority of those members present and voting, unless specified otherwise in these Standing Orders or in the Orders.

14.3 Voting shall be by a show of hands or by any technological equipment provided.

14.4 The Chair shall have a substantive vote and, in any case of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote

14.5 The minutes shall record the numbers voting for and against the proposal and the number of abstentions, if any.

14.6 If a majority of the members present so request, the voting on any question may be recorded to show how each member present voted or did not vote.

14.7 In no circumstances may an absent member vote by proxy. Absence is defined as being absent at the time of the vote.

15. Suspension of a Standing Order

15.1 Except where this would contravene any statutory provision, the committee may suspend any one or more of the Standing Orders at any meeting, by resolution of the committee carried by not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting. The reason for the suspension shall be recorded in the minutes.

15.2 In proposing the suspension of one or more of the Standing Orders, the member making the proposal must state the number(s) of the Standing Order(s).

15.3 If such a proposal is agreed the suspension shall be for the duration of the item under discussion.

16. The Chief Executive & Registrar, Secretary and advisers

16.1 The Chief Executive & Registrar and the Secretary shall be entitled to attend and address meetings of the committee.

16.2 Any other person advising on the business before a meeting of the committee, including advising the Chair on matters relating to governance, may attend and, with the consent of the Chair, address the meeting.

17. Dealing with Confidential Matters

- 17.1 Meetings of the committee are not open to the public.
- 17.2 The proceedings of the committee are confidential to the members of the committee, the Council and staff, and any observers present at the invitation of the committee.
- 17.3 When discussing items relating to identifiable individuals or commercial items in confidence, the Audit, Remuneration and Appointments Committees will do so in confidential session, without observers present. The confidential agenda and minutes will not be circulated other than to members of the relevant committee.

Approved by Council designate
17.12.09