Minutes of the **Council** meeting held on **10 April 2014** at 129 Lambeth Road, London, at 11:40am

**Present**

Nigel Clarke – Chair  
Alan Kershaw  
Berwyn Owen  
David Prince  
Digby Emson  
Evelyn McPhail  
Judy Worthington  
Liz Kay  
Mary Elford  
Mohammed Hussain  
Samantha Quaye  
Sarah Brown  
Soraya Dhillion  
Tina Funnell

**Apologies**

Gary Richardson (Interim Director of Knowledge & Insight)

**In attendance**

Duncan Rudkin (Chief Executive and Registrar)  
Hugh Simpson (Director of Policy and Communications)  
Bernard Kelly (Director of Resources and Customer Services)  
Claire Bryce Smith (Director of Inspection and Fitness to Practise)  
Vivienne Murch (Head of Organisational Development & People Strategy)  
Damian Day (Head of Education and Registration Policy)  
Lyn Wibberley (Head of Executive Office)  
Matthew Hayday (Head of Governance)  
Paula Woodward (Council Secretary)

**Public business**

1. **ATTENDANCE AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

1.1. The Chair welcomed new Council members Evelyn McPhail, Digby Emson and Alan Kershaw to their first meeting.

1.2. The Council gave a vote of thanks to the previous Chair, Bob Nicholls, for his service to the GPhC.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2.1. The following interests were declared.
i. In relation to item 8, (Developing new standards for initial education and training), Soraya Dhillon, Liz Kay and Digby Emson declared interests because of their roles in training and education.

ii. All members declared an interest in item 10, Council performance review.

iii. All members except those not eligible for reappointment declared an interest in item 11, Council member appointment process review.

3. MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SESSION OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

3.1. The minutes of the public session of the meeting held on 6 February 2014 were agreed as a true record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1. In relation to minute 103.8, Duncan Rudkin (DR) informed members that the Corporate Plan had been formally signed off by the previous Chair as agreed by the Council.

5. CORPORATE PLAN: MONITORING AND REPORTING

5.1. Damian Day (DD) introduced the paper by reminding members that this was the first year of the new approach to corporate planning. The paper set out the work being undertaken to develop effective means of reporting progress against the Corporate Plan agreed by Council in February.

5.2. DD reported that Council would be presented with specific reports on the organisation’s progress against the Corporate Plan at its meetings in June and November, followed by a new Corporate Plan in February.

5.3. In response to a member’s question, DD informed the Council that the focus was to develop a robust reporting framework over the coming months. For some areas of work, such as fitness to practise, this depended on other systems improvements. DR reported that this would support the organisation’s aspiration to use the information it collects as a learning source to help improve professional practice.

5.4. The Council welcomed the new approach, particularly the plan to integrate the information provided in the regular Performance Monitoring report in due course. The Council also noted that staff were being recruited to build capacity in the organisation in relation to monitoring and reporting.

5.5. The Council also noted that the focus of this work should continue to be on how the outcomes contribute to patient safety, rather than simple key performance indicators.

5.6. The Council noted the work being undertaken to develop the monitoring and reporting scheme.
6. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

6.1. The Council discussed the report section by section. In relation to a member’s question regarding registration, Terry Orford informed members that the difference in numbers of trainees reflected those who had completed a degree but who had not started or completed a placement. He outlined the stages of the registration process and where there may be a delay to individuals moving on to the next stage, such as a failure to pay fees or the need for references.

6.2. In relation to fitness to practise, Claire Bryce Smith (CBS) informed members that the numbers of concerns reported to the organisation had increased by over 20% compared to the previous period. This was in line with the experience of similar regulators and the increase could not be attributed to a particular source.

6.3. In response to members’ questions, CBS informed the Council that the impact of the increase was mitigated to an extent by the improvements to be made to the handling of cases as a result of the lean review. CBS also reminded members that the impact of the changes being made to the FtP teams would only be seen over time.

6.4. The Council noted that while further developments to streamline processes and increase capacity were continuing, the target of closing 95% of cases within twelve months would prove particularly challenging and should be monitored closely.

6.5. In relation to education matters, DD reported that efforts were being made to ensure that the exam took into account religious observations.

6.6. **ACTION:** During the discussion, the Council asked that, where available, the Performance Monitoring report should include figures for the same period in the previous year for comparison and:

i. Registration: an explanatory note relating to those who have completed their degrees but have not yet started or completed a training placement.

ii. Registration: show the budgeted number of registrants alongside actual numbers.

iii. CPD: information about the results of the sampling of submissions.

iv. Fitness to Practise: figures to illustrate the trajectory of any changes from month to month, accompanied by an explanatory note covering causes of any delays and capacity issues.

6.7. **ACTION:** A further paper providing an update on the ethnicity issues highlighted in last year’s Board of Assessors report would be presented in June.

6.8. **The Council noted the report.**
7. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE & REGISTRAR’S REPORT**

7.1. The Council discussed the report. In relation to memoranda of understanding (MoUs), such as that recently agreed with the Care Quality Commission, DR informed the Council that these were being published on the website as they became available.

7.2. In response to a member’s question, Hugh Simpson (HS) reported that the issue of the role of pharmacies in providing services such as blood tests was being considered as part of the development of MoUs. However, he informed the Council that organisations commissioning those services played a role in setting standards as well as the various health and care regulators.

7.3. DR informed members that the issue illustrated how important it was to work with others to build a framework to ensure public safety and confidence in pharmacy services. He explained that while the GPhC had a clearly defined role as a regulator, the GPhC was increasingly working alongside other bodies to identify gaps and manage issues collaboratively. As an example, he drew members’ attention to the report on RPS professional standards set out in the paper.

7.4. **ACTION:** Circulate the link to MoUs on the website to members.

7.5. **The Council noted the report.**

8. **DEVELOPING NEW STANDARDS FOR INITIAL EDUCATION & TRAINING**

8.1. DD summarised the paper and drew members’ attention to the proposed next steps. He informed members that the new standards would have to take into account the different requirements for hospital and community pharmacy, and the different types of pharmacy technician roles.

8.2. In response to a member’s question, DD reminded members that the current standards for pharmacy technicians had only been in place for two years. It was important to ensure any changes were introduced so as to not affect students’ access to funding.

8.3. DD assured members that input from non-pharmacists such as patients would contribute to the development of the standards. He also reported that the standards for tutors would be a key part of the project.

8.4. During the discussion, members suggested that it would be better to review outcomes of both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians together to ensure that the standards took account of their work together as a pharmacy team. Members also suggested that the impact of new developments such as genomics and “personalised medicine” should be taken into account.

8.5. DD informed members that Health Education England (HEE) and Modernising Pharmacy Careers (MPC) as well as equivalent bodies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland would be included in the development of the standards.
8.6. The Council welcomed the proactive approach and agreed:
   i. that a consultation on new learning outcomes for the initial education and training of pharmacists (IET) should be carried out.
   ii. a programme of standards development for the IET of pharmacists and a plan for revising the current accreditation methodology.

9. UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF REMUNERATION COMMITTEE, 27 FEBRUARY 2014

9.1. Liz Kay, chair of the Remuneration Committee, highlighted the issues discussed at the meeting.

9.2. The Council noted the minutes.

10. COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

10.1. During the discussion, the Council suggested that it would be helpful to see feedback from staff and stakeholders on the performance of the organisation to inform the discussion on the Council’s performance as a governing body.

10.2. The Council noted the completion of the Council’s performance review and agreed that the review would be discussed at a forthcoming Council workshop.

11. COUNCIL MEMBER APPOINTMENT PROCESS REVIEW

11.1. Judy Worthington (JW) summarised the main points discussed by the working group and reminded members that the proposals were for the 2016 recruitment round.

11.2. JW informed the Council that the working group had discussed in detail the benefits of reappointment versus open recruitment and had concluded that both approaches were needed to ensure that the Council maintained stability as well as having a good mix of skills and backgrounds.

11.3. During the discussion, the Council noted that the proposal gave the organisation a measure of flexibility that would allow it to make changes based on the business needs of the organisation.

11.4. The Council agreed:
   i. that future Council vacancies should generally be filled using a combination of open competition and a reappointment process;
   ii. the terms of reference for the Council appointments working group as set out in the paper.
12. **REBALANCING UPDATE**

12.1. This item was taken out of turn. Priya Warner (PW) drew members’ attention to the main points in the paper. She reported that the plan was to carry out a review of the standards as a suite of policies rather than as a series of piecemeal exercises. She also reported that the intention was to do this alongside the expected Department of Health (DH) consultation so as to avoid any unnecessary delay.

12.2. In response to members’ question PW reported that the timetable for any consultation was in the hands of the DH, as was the wording of the consultation document. However, the GPhC was working closely with DH and the Rebalancing Board to contribute to its development.

12.3. During the discussion members noted that early engagement with stakeholders would be very welcome.

12.4. The Council noted the update.

13. **APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL**

13.1. The Council welcomed Elizabeth Filkin (EF), Chair of the Appointments Committee who introduced the report to the Council.

13.2. During the discussion, EF reported that a number of improvements had been made during the year to the handling of cases and this had been noted by the committees concerned.

13.3. In response to a member’s question, EF informed the Council that any matters of concern relating to the conduct or decisions of the committees or their members could be reported to her. Where reports had been made, she had spoken to the individuals concerned and was satisfied that they understood where they needed to learn and improve.

13.4. In relation to appraisal of members, EF reported that the system was being reviewed and developed in light of the report from Internal Audit last year.

13.5. In relation to the recruitment of new members, EF reported that a good range of high quality candidates had been interviewed, with appointments due to be made shortly. The Council noted that the diversity of the candidates would be reviewed in due course and suggested that exit interviews be conducted with outgoing members.

13.6. ACTION: The Council asked that figures setting out the numbers of committee members currently serving on the committees who had been transferred from the RPS.

13.7. The Council noted the report.

14. **ANY OTHER PUBLIC BUSINESS**

14.1. The Chair confirmed that the meeting was moving into confidential business since some matters to be discussed were commercially confidential.
There being no further business, the part of the meeting that was held in public closed at 2:20pm.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 12 June 2014