Minutes of the Council meeting held on Thursday, 05 February 2015 at 25 Canada Square, London, at 11:00am

Minutes of the public session

Present
Nigel Clarke – Chair
Alan Kershaw (from item 81)
Berwyn Owen
Digby Emson
Evelyn McPhail
Judy Worthington
Liz Kay
Mary Elford
Mohammed Hussain
Samantha Quaye
Sarah Brown
Soraya Dhillon
Tina Funnell

Apologies
David Prince
Vivienne Murch, Head of Organisational Development & People Strategy (non-member)

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)
Lyn Wibberley (Head of Executive Office)
Matthew Hayday (Head of Governance)
Paula Woodward (Council Secretary)
Priya Warner (Head of Standards & Fitness to Practise)
Lynsey Cleland (Director for Scotland)
Mark Voce (Head of Inspection Team)
Chris Alder (Head of Professionals Regulation)

73. ATTENDANCE AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
73.1. The Chair welcomed members, staff and observers to the meeting.
73.2. Apologies were received from David Prince and Vivienne Murch (non-member).

74. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
74.1. There were no declarations of interest.
75. **MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SESSION OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

75.1. The minutes of the public session of the meeting held on Thursday, 13 November 2014 were agreed as a true record.

76. **ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING**

76.1. In relation to minute 55.8, the text in the actions comments box was incomplete and should read “…receive the outcome in writing within the same timescale.”

76.2. In relation to the rising number of complaints (minute 55.5), the Chair reported that a number of health regulators would be attending a symposium which had been arranged to discuss the issue.

77. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

77.1. This item was taken out of turn.

77.2. In relation to fitness to practise, Claire Bryce Smith (CBS) drew members’ attention to the improvements that were becoming evident since the new structure for case management work came into effect in June 2014. She reported that the focus was to sustain the improved throughput of these newer cases while continuing to work through cases that were more than twelve months old.

77.3. In response to a member’s question, Chris Alder (CA) reported that the links between fitness to practise and premises standards were being improved.

77.4. In relation to inspections, Mark Voce (MV) reported that when visiting a registered pharmacy as part of an investigation into a concern, inspectors were also now combining this with a more detailed inspection where appropriate. He also reported that the focus was now on four areas of work: prioritising the inspection of premises which had not been visited in recent months; acting on complaints and local intelligence; building relationships with other bodies; and engaging with multiples in order to utilise their own management information.

77.5. In relation to complaints that were noted as out of jurisdiction, CBS reported that the categories used for these cases were being reviewed to allow more detail to be provided in future. This more detailed information would be reported to Council in due course.

77.6. Duncan Rudkin (DR) reported that the Audit and Risk Committee would be conducting a repeat assurance review of the management of fitness to practise cases later in the year.

77.7. The Council noted the report.
78. CORPORATE PLAN 2015-16

78.1. Lynsey Cleland (LC) introduced the item by saying that this year’s plan was much more outward facing. Following its development, the plan now incorporated both an efficiency review and equalities considerations. The plan would be used by teams and directorates to develop more detailed workplans for their areas.

78.2. Members discussed the plan and suggested that the success measures should also be more outward facing, with a distinction made between short term and longer term successes.

78.3. The Council approved the corporate plan 2015-2016, subject to the above amendments being approved by the Chair.

79. BUDGET AND FEE PROPOSALS 2015-16

79.1. Agenda item 6 (budget 2015-16) and item 7 (fees consultation) were taken together.

79.2. In relation to the budget, Bernard Kelly (BK) drew members’ attention to the issues that had been taken into consideration during its preparation.

79.3. In response to a member’s question about the reserves, BK reported that the current position was to maintain reserves that would cover about nine months’ of expenditure.

79.4. ACTION: DR said that there was no definitive guidance for reserves levels, but that it was a matter of judgement about what level was prudent. A review of the position would be considered in the context of fee-setting discussions.

79.5. Members commented that it may be helpful to consider setting targets as part of the forthcoming efficiency and productivity review. Members noted that the budget contained a provision for the payment of fees to the Professional Standards Authority.

79.6. In relation to the consultation document itself, members made a number of suggestions to improve the clarity of the wording.

79.7. The Council approved the budget for 2015-16 and agreed:

- to consult on a proposed fee increase for pharmacists of £10 to £250.
- to consult on a proposed fee increase for pharmacy technicians of £10 to £118.
- to consult on a proposed fee increase for pharmacy premises of £20 to £241.
- to consult on a proposal to adjust all related application and restoration fees as detailed in the fees consultation paper;
that, subject to any changes that may result from the consultation, these changes are to be implemented with effect from 15 October 2015.

- that fees for the pre-registration year and the pre-registration exam are frozen for the foreseeable future. A reduction in these fees will be considered in February 2016.

80. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND REGISTRAR’S REPORT**

80.1. In relation to the anticipated Department of Health consultation on aspects of the rebalancing programme, DR reported that a background paper would be prepared and published in due course,

80.2. Members noted that many of the issues raised by the IPSOS/Mori survey could only be addressed by the wider profession and were not issues for the GPhC alone.

80.3. In relation to the revised requirements of the Welsh Language Standard, members noted that a meeting with the Welsh health minister had proved very helpful.

80.4. Following a suggestion by DR, members agreed that future reports would not include a detailed list of consultations. This information would instead be included in the monthly updates to members.

80.5. **The Council noted the report.**

81. **PHARMACY TEAM WORK PROGRAMME: AN UPDATE**

81.1. Alan Kershaw joined the meeting.

81.2. LC summarised the three areas of work described in the paper:

- education and training requirements for non-registered support staff;
- guidance on prescribing for pharmacist prescribers
- annotations to the register.

81.3. During the discussion, members noted that effective training of the whole pharmacy team was crucial to ensuring patient safety.

81.4. In relation to pharmacist prescribers, members noted that it was important to discuss common issues with the regulators of other prescribers. In relation to annotations, members noted that these had to be meaningful and relate to qualifications and training.

81.5. **The Council noted the report.**

82. **REVIEW OF THE GPhC INDICATIVE SANCTIONS GUIDANCE**

82.1. Priya Warner (PW) outlined the development of the guidance and the reasons for the format of the proposed guidance.
82.2. During the discussion, members noted that it was difficult to strike a balance that suited the needs of all the different audiences. In response PW said that the engagement work carried out so far had indicated that setting out the guidance and advice in one place was more appropriate than in separate documents.

82.3. Members also made a number of suggestions for clarity.

82.4. The Council agreed the draft guidance for consultation.

83. Audit and Risk Committee Minutes (22 January)

83.1. The Council noted the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 22 January 2015.

84. Council Appointments Progress Report

84.1. Judy Worthington, chair of the appointments working group, outlined the key points set out in the paper. She reported that the aim had been to provide a helpful framework for use in various circumstances rather than a rigid step by step approach to recruitment for Council and associate roles.

84.2. During the discussion, members made a number of suggestions to clarify the wording of some points in the guidance documents.

84.3. The Council noted the report of the Council appointments working group and, subject to approval of changes approved by the Chair, agreed:

- the summary of common aspects of Council and associate appointments; and
- the structure and terms of reference of the selection panel for 2016 Council appointments.

85. Policy and Procedure Reviews

85.1. The Council approved the Governance Policy.

86. Deputising Arrangements for Chair of Council

86.1. The Council noted the deputising arrangements.

87. Any Other Public Business

87.1. There being no further public business, the part of the meeting that was held in public closed at 2:45pm.

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 16 April 2015