Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13 January 2011 at 129 Lambeth Road, London SE1 7BT at 11.30am

Present

Bob Nicholls - Chair  Keith Wilson
Cathryn Brown  Tina Funnell
Sarah Brown  Soraya Dhillon
Kirstie Hepburn  Celia Davies
Ray Jobling  Lesley Morgan.

In attendance

Duncan Rudkin (Chief Executive & Registrar)
Christine Gray (Head of Governance)
Michele Savage (Council Secretary)
Bernard Kelly (Director of Resources and Corporate Development)
Elaine Mulingani (Head of Private Office)
Hugh Simpson (Director of Policy and Communications)
Hilary Lloyd (Director of Regulatory Services)
Gavin Perkins (Head of Finance)
Aidan Vaughan (Interim Head of Communications)

ATTENDANCE & CHAIR’S INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The Chair welcomed the Council members, members of the press and members of staff Gavin Perkins, Head of Finance and Aidan Vaughan, Interim Head of Communications to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Judy Worthington, Peter Wilson and John Flook. The Chair put on record the Council’s appreciation for the huge effort made by staff to achieve the impressive figures for renewal of registration. The Chair informed Council that he had recently met with Earl Howe.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair asked members whether they had any interests to declare in respect of the agenda items. Liz Kay declared an interest on paper 01.11/C/02 Statutory Committee Appointments as a former member of the RPSGB Appointments
Committee. Kirstie Hepburn, Cathryn Brown and Liz Kay as employers of pharmacy technicians declared an interest on paper 01.11/03 on the Work Experience requirements for the initial registration of Pharmacy Technicians. Lesley Morgan declared an interest in the same paper in relation to her previous involvement in pharmacy technician education.

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

377 The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2010 were agreed as a true record of the meeting subject to the below amendments being made.

377.1 Minute 359.2, remove extra full stop in mid sentence

377.2 Minute 353 add in that Chair of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society Welsh Board, Nuala Brennan and Secretary of the National Association of Women Pharmacists, Hazel Baker were there as observers to the meeting.

377.3 Minute 361.1 add in ‘be’ in second sentence.

377.4 Minute 365.4 should state that the best available information would be reported in February.

**MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ACTION POINTS**

378 Minute 353 The Chair informed the Council that the re-run of the recruitment campaign for the Council member in Scotland was underway with a closing date of the 27th January. Interviews would take place in March.

379 Minute 348 – should read April, not June.

380 It was confirmed that the Spring 2011 items were anticipated for the April Council meeting.

**REVIEW OF COUNCIL VALUES**

381 Duncan Rudkin (DR) presented paper 01.11/C/01 requesting the Council to confirm the continuation of the values in Appendix 1. DR highlighted that the values referred to were the values adopted by the Council for itself in January 2010. The values for the whole organisation were set out in the Council’s Vision and Strategy document.

381.1 The Chair told the Council that this was a scheduled review of the Council’s values after 1 year. The recommendation was that there was no change.
382 The Council confirmed its continuation of the current values and undertook to apply them in the exercise of its role as the governing board of the GPhC.

STATUTORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

383 Kirstie Hepburn (KH) introduced paper 01.11/C/02 asking the Council to agree to retain the existing structure and nature of membership of the Appointments Committee. KH explained that the Council had asked the group to review and make recommendations on how the GPhC statutory committee members should be appointed in the future. The report before the Council was an interim report with initial recommendations. Further work would be undertaken at the next meeting. The report proposed continuance of appointments by an arm’s length structure. KH told the Council the group agreed that it was important to reinstate appraisal and training of Committee members and appointees, and appropriate reporting to the Council. KH told the Council that there was an error in paragraph 6.2: where it said 17 were appointed, it should say 20 appointed, so the cost per appointee was lower.

383.1 The Council agreed that it was important that the appointments process for the statutory committees was by an arm’s length body. The Council agreed that it was important that the Council set the culture of how the statutory committees worked and wanted to be assured that the processes for training and performance management of members of the Appointments and statutory committees were robust. The Council also discussed the frequency of the reports to the Council and agreed that it should be six monthly reports for the next year then a review to see if annual reporting was sufficient.

384 The Council agreed, subject to any further detailed considerations that may arise from the Group’s remaining work, to retain the existing structure and nature of membership of the Appointments Committee (AC), subject to:

a. timely completion of satisfactory appraisal of all AC members, including the Chair;

b. reinstatement of training & appraisal of statutory committee members; and

c. reporting of AC activities every six months for the first year to the Council and then a review as to whether annual reporting is sufficient.
WORK EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR INITIAL REGISTRATION OF PHARMACY TECHNICIANS

385 Hugh Simpson introduced paper 01.11/C/03 asking the Council to consider proposed changes to the initial registration criteria for pharmacy technicians, previously agreed by the Council. HS explained to the Council that what was proposed was a small change in policy to that agreed in September 2010, following notification to the GPhC of some significant concerns over the timing of the initial registration of pharmacy technicians in relation to the requirement for two years of work experience. HS went on to explain further that the principles of the policy were accepted but the issues were its practical implications. DR clarified that this would not change the requirement for (page 9 paragraph 7.1) two years’ work experience for UK applicants but the proposal was effectively to remove ‘but shall not include work experience prior to commencement of a pharmacy technician training programme’, where a two year training contract exists.

HS explained that the reason for the removal of the work experience requirement for overseas pharmacy technicians is that they would be required to have a non-UK pharmacist or pharmacy technician qualification and be qualified to practise as a pharmacist or pharmacy technician outside the UK, as well as obtaining the UK qualification. The two years’ work experience requirement was not considered to be proportionate in these circumstances.

385.1 The Council were asked to agree to a shortened consultation on the proposed changes over six weeks with approval of the consultation paper to be delegated to the Chief Executive and Registrar. Council were also asked to delegate approval of the revised initial criteria to the Chief Executive and Registrar, subject to the outcomes of the consultation.

385.2 The Council agreed that it was important to consult on this issue and the communication of this was important. The Council agreed that the proposed wording change should be shown as tracked changes on the current criteria and this wording should be discussed with Liz Kay, Lesley Morgan and Keith Wilson prior to the consultation paper being finalised.

386 The Council agreed to consult on the proposed changes to the initial registration criteria for pharmacy technicians. The Council further agreed that the Chief Executive and Registrar would approve the consultation paper and the revised criteria, subject to the outcomes of the consultation.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND REGISTRAR’S UPDATE

387 DR presented the Chief Executive and Registrar’s report paper 01.11/C/04. DR clarified that 4.1 referred to the fitness to practise report due in June 2011 and the Investigating Committee report due in June 2012.

387.1 The Council raised concerns about why there was not an Investigating Committee report to Council this year. DR explained that this was about trying to bring the timing of the two reports into line. Hilary Lloyd (HL) further explained to the Council that it is important for the Council to have a full report including cases that did not reach the Investigating Committee and describing what happened to cases post-investigating Committee. The fitness to practise report would cover the full process whereas the Investigating Committee report would cover only part of this. The Chair asked that a report from the Investigating Committee be provided in June 2011, while recognising that this would cover only part of the fitness to practise process over a defined period.

387.2 DR informed the Council that the list of those members appointed to the statutory committees were available publically on the website.

387.3 The Chair informed the Council that in addition to the meetings in the report he had also attended meetings of Medical Education England/Modernising Pharmacy Careers Board and related sub-groups

388 The Council noted the report.

REGISTRATION RENEWALS

389. DR presented paper 11.01/C/05 asking the Council to note the position in relation to renewals of registration. DR highlighted to the Council the high percentage of renewals. The inspectorate had also been checking to ascertain whether premises which had not been renewed were no longer operating. HL told the Council that there would be a full review of the renewals process to pick up learning points and this would include seeking external views from registrants and pharmacy owners.

389.1 HL informed the Council that there were still around 1400 pharmacy technician applications waiting to be processed and that it was anticipated that these would have been completed by the end of February 2011. Temporary additional resources were being recruited in to deal with the backlog. The guidance and forms were currently being reviewed to improve them.
390  **Council agreed to note the update**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1.00pm

Date of next meeting – 10 February 2011 - London