Public business

Performance review of the Council and appraisal of Council members

Purpose
To agree the appraisal process of Council members for 2012 and 2013 and to confirm the approach to annual review of the Council’s performance as a governing board.

Recommendations

The Council is asked to agree:

i. to continue with the current system of appraisal for Council members; and

ii. to confirm that the Council should review its performance as a governing board on an annual basis using a variety of tools.

1.0 Appraisal of Council members

1.1 In 2011 Council members used an appraisal process involving a self-assessment form followed by a one to one meeting with the Chair.

1.2 The self-assessment form measured the seven core competencies that Council members were appointed against;
  • Public interest
  • Effective relationship building and team working
  • Intellectual flexibility and sound judgement
  • Accountability
  • Effective influencing and communication
  • Strategic direction
  • Self belief and drive.
If the Council wishes to use this method again, members might also wish to assess their performance against some of the development themes identified previously by the Council, such as constructive challenge between members and contributing on areas outside individuals’ particular expertise. Longer term, appraisal might be linked to a behavioural framework, which could be produced as part of the Council development strand within the wider organisation development programme in the corporate plan.

1.3 The self-assessment form is then sent to the Chair and discussed at the one to one review meeting. The aim is for agreement to be reached on the performance review of the Council member. Once agreed, the record of the review meeting is signed by both the Chair and the Council member.

1.4 In the rare event that the record of the review meeting is not agreed by both the Chair and the Council member then moderation from an external reviewer would be sought.

1.5 In part 2 of the self-assessment form, Council members can indicate any learning and development needs they have, as well as suggestions for the Council as a whole.

1.6 The Council decided in February 2011 to reject other types of performance review for individual members, such as a customised 360 review, due to concerns about cost and complexity. The Council is now asked whether it would like to revisit the proposals put forward in February 2011 or to remain with the system outlined above.

1.7 A 360° appraisal was undertaken for the Chair of Council in 2011. This seems the most appropriate method for the Chair and it is proposed that this be continued in future years. In addition, the Chair led a 360° appraisal process for the Chief Executive & Registrar in 2011. A summary of the process followed and the key results will be reported to Remuneration Committee in March.

2.0 **Reviewing the Council’s performance as a governing board**

2.1 The Council has already made a commitment to reviewing its collective performance as a governing board, as part of its governance and assurance framework.

2.2 There are a number of methods that the Council uses to review its own performance. Examples include: reflective meetings practice; surveys and interviews; group exercises, external observation, or a combination of these.
2.3 During 2011 the Council committed time to three performance review activities:
- Independent observation of a Council meeting by a board development consultant, with feedback provided both orally and in writing
- An independently-facilitated performance review workshop which identified a number of key learning and action points.
- Regular questionnaires on the business and outcomes of Council meetings

2.4 On the basis that no single method of review is perfect, it may be helpful to use different methods at different times to bring out a full range of views and to address particular needs. It is therefore proposed that, rather than committing to a single set mechanism, the Council should affirm its intention to review its own performance on an annual basis, and to develop its current practice of using a range of tools to provide a rounded view of performance and options for improvement. A summary of key points arising from the review would be brought to the Council annually.

3.0 Equality and diversity implications

3.1 The strengths and competencies assessed during appraisals would be consistent with the GPhC’s commitment to promoting equality and valuing diversity.

4.0 Communications implications

4.1 The appraisal system forms part of the GPhC governance and assurance framework and is publicised through the website.

5.0 Resource implications

5.1 The current system of self-assessment followed by a one to one meeting with the Chair is a low cost option. If Council wanted to reconsider a 360° appraisal with an external provider, costs excluding travel and subsistence would be expected to be around £4,000-£6,000. The costs of reviewing the Council’s collective performance as a board would vary according to the method chosen and would need to be accommodated within budgets.

6.0 Risk implications

6.1 A robust approach to appraisal of Council members and performance review of the Council as a whole helps maintain a high standard of governance within the GPhC and demonstrates that the Council is taking its responsibilities seriously.
6.2 An appropriate appraisal system is necessary to ensure that the potential reappointment of Council members is carried out in an informed manner.

Recommendations

The Council is asked to agree:

i. to continue with the current system of appraisal for Council members; and

ii. to confirm that the Council should review its performance as a governing board on an annual basis using a variety of tools.

Martyn Schofield, Council Secretary
General Pharmaceutical Council
martyn.schofield@pharmacyregulation.org, tel 020 3365 3522

Christine Gray, Head of Governance
General Pharmaceutical Council
christine.gray@pharmacyregulation.org, tel 020 3365 3503

25 January 2012