

Council Notes

A Meeting of The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland was held at 7:00PM on Thursday 16th October 2008, in the Society's House, 73 University Street, Belfast. BT7 1HL

Present

Mr R Anderson (President)
Ms A Bowen (Vice-President)
Ms J Dougan (Honorary Treasurer)
Dr L Byers
Ms S McGrath
Dr K McClelland
Prof J McElnay
Mr M Nelson
Mrs R Tasker
Mr P Kelly
Dr G Fleming
Mr W Wylie
Prof S Gorman

Apologies

Mrs M Smith
Mrs M Singleton
Ms A McCollum
Mrs H Buchanan

In Attendance

Mr T Patterson (Director)
Mr M Neale (Head of Public Affairs)
Ms N Ramsbottom (Clerical Officer)

1. Introduction and Welcome, Apologies

The President welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Mr William Wylie, a new member of Council. The apologies were noted

2. Minutes of the Council Meeting of 18th September 2008

These were presented to Council and were proposed by Professor J McElnay, seconded by Mr P Kelly and agreed by Council.

3. Matters of Accuracy

None.

4. Matters Arising

Confidence In Care Programme

The President reported that the Director had been formally nominated onto the “Confidence In Care Programme – Pharmacy Workstream” as was agreed at the last Council meeting.

Corporate Governance Handbook 2008/09

The President noted that the latest issue of the Corporate Governance Handbook was now completed and a copy was issued to each Council member.

Letter from Joyce Cairns, DHSSPS

A reply to the letter received from Joyce Cairns, DHSSPS as detailed in the last Council minutes will be discussed in the Head of Public Affairs report.

Council Appraisals

The President noted that all Council members should have replied to the office in relation to whether they would prefer telephone or face to face interviews at this stage, and that new Council member Mr W Wylie would be exempt from these.

CHRE Audit Plan

This will be discussed in the Director’s report.

Council Committees

The President asked the Vice-President for an update on the subject of committee membership. The Vice-President noted that she had received a copy of last year’s committee membership and had spoken to Council members regarding their time preferences and had sent a copy of this plan to Ms N Ramsbottom in the office.

The President asked Council if there were any other matters arising - none

5. Tabling of Any Other Business

None.

6. Correspondence

- (i) 03.10.08 A letter was received by the President from Dr Keith Ridge, CPO, DH regarding the establishment of a Pandemic Influenza Clinical and Operational Advice Group, (PICO) and naming two candidates for nomination to this committee.

The President reported that as there was no information on the individuals concerned, it was difficult to make comments on the suitability of the individuals but noted that it would be preferable if personnel from NI were represented. The President then asked Council for their views and asked the Council whether they would like to make any comments.

The Director suggested putting forward the name of a nominee residing in NI if they would be happy with this.

Action Point: This subject will be left with the Director to conclude.

- (ii) 03.10.08 A letter was received by the President from Sir Graeme Catto, President, GMC inviting him to attend a seminar which will be held in Belfast on 27th November 2008 at the Stormont Hotel on the subject of "Taking medical revalidation forward in Northern Ireland."

The President mentioned that if he does not attend, he will refer the invitation to The Registrar and Post-registration Facilitator as appropriate.

Action Point: To write back to the GMC to propose that Dr McAree, Post-Registration Facilitator will attend to represent the Society.

- (iii) 07.10.08 A letter was received by the Director from Mr William Rial, NCAS inviting the Society to nominate a representative to join the Stakeholder Advisory Group for the NCAS Pharmacists' Service.

The President suggested that the Registrar should sit on this committee and asked for agreement in this nomination. This was proposed by the President, seconded by Dr K McClelland and agreed by Council.

The President noted that he had received an email from Dr C Fitzpatrick regarding Mr William Rial as he would like to make a presentation at the next Council meeting. The President asked Council if they would be happy with this arrangement. Council concluded that they were in agreement.

7. Election of President

The President mentioned that it would be appropriate to hand the discussion over to the Director at this stage.

The Director discussed that there would be three elections –

- (1) election of the President
- (2) election of the Vice-President
- (3) election of the Honorary Treasurer.

He noted that the bye-laws and 1976 Pharmacy Order set out the arrangements for these appointments and that he would proceed with the elections and asked for a presidential nomination.

Dr K McClelland stated that a proposal had been made at the last Council meeting and suggested that the former proposal be reaffirmed.

The Director then explained the events at the July Council meeting where Council had unanimously agreed to ask the officer team to remain in post, subject to review in March 2009, to new Council member, Mr W Wylie and suggested that it would be helpful for all Council members to express their views.

Mr W Wylie agreed that this was a sensible strategy, given the circumstance.

The Vice-President asked that as it was agreed that the appointments be reviewed in March 2009, should the election be only for the period to March 2009? The Director stated that the Order and Bye-Laws set out the procedures for election and that they were on an annual basis, at the October Council meeting. He suggested that the elections be for 12 months but with the review in March 2009 determining what should happen thereafter. He then asked if anyone opposed this. Council were in agreement to this suggestion.

Nominations were again sought for President and Dr K McClelland proposed and Mr P Kelly seconded.

The Director asked if Council had any other nominations for the election of the President's role. Council did not.

The motion to re-elect Mr Raymond Anderson as President, was agreed. The Director noted that the President was duly re-elected.

8. Election of Vice-President

Ms A Bowen was proposed by Dr K McClelland, and seconded by Dr G Fleming for the position of Vice-President.

The Director asked if Council had any other nominations for the election of the Vice-President's role. Council did not.

The motion to re-elect Ms A Bowen as Vice-President was agreed. The Director noted that the Vice-President was duly re-elected.

9. Election of Honorary Treasurer

Ms J Dougan was proposed by Mr P Kelly, seconded by Ms S McGrath for the position of Honorary Treasurer

The Director asked if Council had any other nominations for the election of the Honorary Treasurer role. Council did not.

The motion to re-elect Ms J Dougan as Honorary Treasurer was agreed. The Director noted that the Honorary Treasurer was duly re-elected.

The Director stated that he was sure that he was speaking on behalf of the entire Council in thanking the Officers for agreeing to re-election.

The President thanked Council for their ongoing support and stated that he was looking forward to a prosperous and bright future for the Society

10. Appointment of (i) Auditors and Accountant (ii) Solicitors

Dr G Fleming declared a conflict of interest and left the Council chamber.

(i) Auditors and Accountant

The President proposed that Council re-appoint Baker, Tilly and Moore as the Society's Accountant and Auditors.

This was proposed by the President, seconded by Dr K McClelland and agreed.

(ii) Solicitors

The President proposed that Council re-appoint Cleaver, Fulton and Rankin as the Society's Solicitors.

This was proposed by the President, seconded by Dr K McClelland and agreed.

Dr G Fleming then returned to the Council chamber.

11. Staff Reports

(i) Director's Report

White Paper Work

The Director noted that there was one substantive item to be discussed which was the White Paper Work and the response to Joyce Cairn's letter and that this would be covered in the Head of Public Affairs report.

Key Engagements

The Director detailed a list of meetings he had recently attended on behalf of the Society, in particular the meeting with MSM, the contractor for the Renshaw hotel.

Action point: The Director to try and get access to the plans of the building work.

Relaunching Benevolent Fund

The Director updated Council on the recruitment details for the post of Benevolent Fund Manager. To date there have been 80 hits on the website and 2 job application packs were downloaded. The final interviews are expected to take place sometime in mid-November.

Code of Ethics

The Director updated Council on the ongoing work on the Code of Ethics and noted that he expected the work to be finished sometime around January or early February 2009. Costs to date are currently below budget and the extension of time into 2009 would push the final cost above budget by around £1500. The consultation responses to the Code of Ethics have been returned to the office and the stakeholder meeting was held on the 9th October.

The Director then asked Council if they would endorse the Code of Ethics as recommended by the Stakeholder consultation group. The President noted that this was a major issue and it was important that Council understand the implications of it. Some discussion then ensued.

A question was then asked regarding point 5 of the Code of Ethics. The Director noted that guidance would be issued which covered this and that the Code of Ethics would not be published until all guidance documents were completed and available.

The President suggested that any final comments on the Code of Ethics should be returned to the Office by Monday 20th October.

He then asked Council if they could agree the Code of Ethics in principle subject to everyone returning all comments and suggestions to the office.

This was proposed by Dr K McClelland, seconded by Ms S McGrath and agreed.

Annex B – Risk Assessment Tool

The Director highlighted the CHRE Performance Review, Annex B which was included in the packs and asked Council to take time to read the document which was very important. Some discussion then ensued on the new Council structure of CHRE.

Action Point: The Director to check on the structure of the CHRE Council and whether or not Healthcare Professionals were appointed and to relay the information back to the Honorary Treasurer.

(ii) Registrar's Report

The Director presented the Registrar's report in his absence.

Registration

The Director asked Council to confirm the registrations of four new pharmacists added to the register:

These registrations were proposed by the Vice-President and seconded by Dr K McClelland.

CHRE Audit Plan

The Director updated Council on the audit plan by CHRE which is in final stage development on initial fitness to practise investigations and which is in consultation with the 9 healthcare regulators.

The Director asked the permission of Council for a proposal to develop a "scrutiny committee," whose primary function would be to determine which cases progressed to a Statutory Committee and whose committee members would probably consist of one pharmacist and two lay persons so that he could bring suggestions and details to a later Council meeting.

It was pointed out that Council had previously approved an investigations committee whose function was similar and that there was no need to develop another proposal.

This was proposed by the Vice-President, seconded by Dr G Fleming and agreed.

The Director asked if there were any questions regarding the Registrar's report. There was not.

Dr Lisa Byers then left the Council meeting.

(iii) Head of Public Affairs's Report

Assembly Affairs

The Head of Public Affairs advised Council that he had attended the Alliance Party conference on the 20th September and would be attending the DUP conference on the 1st November. Pharmacy also had featured in both oral and written ministerial questions surrounding the Minor Ailment Scheme and that legislation was at a standstill in the Department at the current time.

Press Activity

Press activity has been very quiet recently and the Head of Public Affairs is currently working with various trade magazines. A meeting was held with the Editor and Publisher of the Ulster Chemist review following an article in the September issue. An apology was published in the last issue of the magazine.

Website

The Head of Public Affairs noted that the website and register needed to be in optimum working order as recent events had highlighted. A letter published in the Belfast Telegraph opposing free prescription charges was investigated and the individual, who claimed to be a pharmacist, was not on the Society's register nor the PSI's or RPSGB's.

Public Patient Involvement

An event will be hosted by the Society on Tuesday 25th November in the Radisson Hotel. The purpose of the event will be to discuss how best to create our Patient Forum. Invitations will be sent to all Council members.

Newsletter

The next copy of the newsletter will be posted out at the end of the month.

NHS 60

The Society received eight complimentary copies of the “60 years of the National Health Service.” The Head of Public Affairs proposed that we retain one copy for the office and make the other seven available for a donation initially to members of Council and then others if available. He then asked for bids in a sealed envelope – with the top seven bids to win a copy and the proceeds go to the Benevolent Fund.

White Paper Work

The Head of Public Affairs updated Council and provided a copy of the draft letter in response to Joyce Cairn’s (DHSSPSNI) letter to the Society outlining the Department’s position on this matter. He then asked for Council’s endorsement.

The agreement to the letter going out to the Department was proposed by the Honorary Treasurer, seconded by the President and agreed.

Fellows Update

The President asked the Head of Public Affairs on an update on the call for Fellows of the Society. The Head of Public Affairs noted that this would be detailed in the next newsletter and also added to the Society’s website.

12. Report from Committee Meetings

(i) Education

Dr G Fleming updated Council on recent developments for the Education Committee and noted that there were two items she needed to highlight.

Revalidation for Pharmacists

Dr Fleming stated that Dr McAree, Post-Registration Facilitator had been actively looking at revalidation. She had attended a meeting at the RPSGB on the 22nd September and distributed a briefing on the proposals for medical revalidation and its implications for pharmacy. The report from this meeting is still awaited and a meeting with Council to discuss these issues further would be needed.

GSK (Allen & Hanbury) Approach Regarding Educational Initiative for Pharmacists

Dr Fleming informed Council that Dr McAree had received a proposal from Allen and Hanbury who wished to establish a working relationship with the Society

which would be entirely non promotional. PSNI would then contact members to notify them of three respiratory workshops. The proposal outlined three workshops and detailed format, content and potential trainers.

A discussion then developed on the subject and it was agreed by Council that it would not be appropriate to endorse this or support any educational validation of such courses. Dr Fleming stated that she would contact Dr McAree to let her know the decision of Council and then Dr McAree would contact Allen and Hanbury of the decision.

Hospital Pre-Registration Project Presentations

Dr Fleming informed Council that Mrs L Smith, Pre-Registration Facilitator had received a letter from Miss Anne Friel to see if the Society would be interested in taking part in Hospital Pre-Registration project presentations this year. At the last Education Committee meeting it was agreed that Mrs L Smith would organise the details of this.

The minutes of the Education Committee were proposed by Dr G Fleming, seconded by the President and agreed by Council.

(ii) Ethics and Law

The President noted that in Mrs M Singleton's absence that this discussion would be postponed until the next Council meeting.

(iii) Finance and House

The Honorary Treasurer, Ms J Dougan briefly updated Council on the two motions regarding the draft business plan for 2009-2010 and highlighted the documents detailing the figures and explanations and budgets and projected expenditures.

The Honorary Treasurer explained that due to the current economic climate and unexpected inflationary increases, the Finance and House Committee had proposed a series of increases in fees. The proposed increase to the retention fee would be a 9.75% bringing it to £379.00.

Also, the Committee decided that the Society could no longer charge a discretionary fee for the over 65 age group as advice suggested that it contravened current age discrimination legislation. Some discussion then ensued on the subject.

The motion to increase fees by 9.75% was proposed by Mr P Kelly, seconded by Dr K McClelland and agreed by Council.

The motion to charge the full fee to the over 65 age group on the register was proposed by Ms S McGrath, seconded by Dr K McClelland and agreed by Council.

The Director asked Council if they were happy with the details of the draft business plan for 2009-2010 and noted that Council had agreed the fees and the Officers were to sign off the consultation documents. The information would then be distributed to the membership. This was proposed by Ms S McGrath, seconded by Dr K McClelland and agreed by Council.

The minutes of the Finance and House Committee were proposed by the Honorary Treasurer, seconded by Mr P Kelly and agreed by Council.

(iv) Practice

Mr M Nelson briefly updated Council on Practice Committee issues.

Review of Cardiovascular Service Framework Consultation Response

This review is now concluded and the Policy Advisor, Mr R Price has drafted a response to the DHSSPS.

Review of Bamford Vision Consultation Response

The Practice Committee have reviewed a draft response to this DHSSPS consultation.

Pharmacy in England Consultation

Mr R Price will draft a response for consideration at the next practice Committee meeting.

Update on Responsible Pharmacist Regulations

The Registrar gave an update on this issue at the last practice Committee meeting and will keep the Committee informed of progress on the regulations and implications for the Society and the profession.

Update on European Prescriptions

The Registrar will arrange guidance to be sent to the membership on this matter.

Whistleblowing Policy

The Practice Committee will endeavour to develop some guidelines on this matter.

The minutes of the Practice Committee were proposed by Mr M Nelson, seconded by Dr L Byers and agreed by Council.

13. Report from the 83rd Annual General Meeting

The President updated Council on the 83rd AGM which took place on the 2nd October in the Society. He stated that there was a disappointing turnout in numbers but noted that the comments from the people who attended were generally very complimentary on the way the Society's progressing.

14. PGEU Update

Dr K McClelland updated Council on the special meeting of the PGEU UK delegation on the 8th October 2008. She stated that further information would follow after the November meeting.

15. Any Other Business

None.

The President thanked everyone for attending.

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 20th November 2008 at 7pm in the Society House.

The Council Meeting concluded at 9.25pm