

NOT E S

A Meeting of The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland was held at 7:00PM on Thursday 15th January 2009, in the Society's House, 73 University Street, Belfast. BT7 1HL

Present

Mr R Anderson (President)
Ms A Bowen (Vice-President)
Mrs M Singleton
Prof. J McElnay
Mr M Nelson
Dr G Fleming
Mrs R Tasker
Ms S McGrath
Mr P Kelly
Prof. S Gorman
Dr K McClelland

Apologies

Dr L Byers
Mrs M Smith
Ms A McCollum
Mr W Wylie

In Attendance

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

Public Attending

Mrs Rosemary MacAlister Smith
Mr Conor Heaney

1. Introduction and Welcome, Apologies

The President welcomed everyone to the meeting including the members of the public in attendance. The two persons were introduced as Mrs Rosemary MacAlister-Smith, CHRE and Mr Conor Heaney, a lay member of the Scrutiny committee. The President noted that there were others from the public forum that would like to attend and may arrive later. The President then presented the apologies of Council members who were unable to attend the meeting.

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

The minutes of December's Council meeting were then presented to Council.

i. Matters of Accuracy

Mrs M Singleton stated that there were a few minor typographical errors in the final edition of the December's Council minutes. She had corrected a printed copy and passed this to Ms Ramsbottom for information. Ms N Ramsbottom will amend the minutes.

ii. Adoption of Minutes

December's Council minutes were proposed by Ms A Bowen, seconded by Mrs M Singleton and agreed by Council.

iii. Matters Arising

The President detailed items of discussion from the December Council meeting and updated Council on any recent developments. He then asked Council if anyone had any items they wished to raise for discussion. There was none

3. Tabling of Any Other Business

None.

4. Correspondence

The President briefly detailed some items of correspondence which had been received at the Society and noted that a full list was available for information in the Council packs.

The President stated that the consultation on the Medicines Supply chain had been passed to the Registrar and Policy Advisor to progress. He also updated Council on the issue highlighted in a recent edition of the "Belfast Telegraph" regarding counterfeit medicines.

The Registrar noted that MHRA had been in consultation with the PSNI regarding the co-badging leaflets giving advice to the public on the importance of checking the authenticity of medicines supplied to them. The President asked that Dr K McClelland, as PSNI representative on the UK delegation to PGEU, does keep Council informed on this issue.

5. Staff Reports

(i) Director's Report

White Paper Work

The Director updated Council on recent developments within this area and noted the three main areas within the proposed legislative reform that remain contentious: Appointments to Council; Composition of the Statutory committee and CPD which were detailed in December's Council minutes. The Director noted that a letter had been sent to the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer in the Department and copied to Ms Gail Anderson setting out the Society's concerns and suggesting a way forward. (See appendix 1 – included in the packs.)

The Director noted that a Confidence in Care meeting was scheduled for early 2009 and that he hoped to come back to the February Council meeting to provide an update on progress.

Priorities

The Director stated that an updated spreadsheet (appendix 2) attached to his report detailed the priorities of the Society.

The issue of developing a comprehensive memorandum of understanding with Boards, Trusts and the Inspectorate of DHSSPS will be covered in the Registrar's report.

Code of Ethics

The Director noted that he had planned to bring the final version of the Code of Ethics and guidance documents to the Council meeting but the Society was still awaiting response to the consultation from the General Medical Council who had been very helpful in the development of the most recent guidance. This feedback was received on Thursday 15th December (the day of the Council meeting) and the final versions will be brought to February's Council meeting for adoption and agreement on an implementation plan.

Business Plan 09/10

The Director stated that an update on responses to the 09/10 business plan is contained within the Finance and House committee report. The F&H committee approved the new format of the Risk Register at their last meeting. They are currently reviewing the actual risks and management strategies and this will be presented to the February Council meeting for approval.

The Responsible Pharmacist

The Director noted that the Head of Public Affairs would address this subject in his report.

Long Term Strategy

A paper on this subject will be prepared for the February Council meeting.

The two other substantive issues to be discussed were:

Scrutiny Committee

The Director confirmed that the committee had been established and that terms of reference for their activities had been agreed, as directed by Council. The members had been independently appointed and trained. A copy of the terms of reference was provided at appendix 3 to the report and Council was asked to note them.

Professional Forum Proposal

The Director outlined the proposals for the Professional Forum which were detailed in appendix A of his report and which Council would be asked to approve.

The Director stated that we are moving towards a Council which would consist of 50% lay members and 50% pharmacists. When this Council was established the role of the forum would be essential in informing Council of matters of public safety from the perspective of the professionals.

A timeframe of approximately six months to complete the work detailed in the proposals has been set and there is a considerable amount of work to be done within this time. Sections two, three and four of appendix A have already been considered. Section seven, which details that the Officers of Council have offered to be the initial steering group and to oversee the recruitment of the members of the Reference Group and to consider any proposals for research and consultancy has also been progressed. There have been a number of meetings with the Officers to discuss this in detail.

The Director noted that he was asking Council for their authorisation to work with the Officers to bring a proposal back to Council in approximately three months which can then be sent out to consultation.

Motion: This Council authorises the Director to work with the Officers and bring a proposal back to Council regarding the professional Forum which will then be used as the basis of a consultation to then be sent out by the PSNI.

The President asked Council if they had any questions to ask the Director on this issue. A short discussion on this subject then developed.

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

PSI Proposal

The Director updated Council on the meeting with the PSI on 28th November 2008, which was detailed in appendix B of his report. It was a very positive meeting at which they went to great lengths to seek our co-operation and support for a range of ideas. They emphasised that they were looking N/S and E/W and expected to offer similar co-operation with RPSGB. Council had been presented with the paper at the last meeting and were asked to consider the proposals in it in the interim.

The Director then gave an overview of the suggested initiatives and drew attention to the supplementary comments detailed in the Head of Public Affairs paper:

Committees – PSI are keen to be involved in committee structures at PSNI and they would like to formally offer PSNI a place on all their active committees – they would fund expenses and would be open to a reciprocal offer.

Pharmacy 2020 – PSI would invite a representative from the Society, with a suitable vision for the future of pharmacy to join their committee.

Council – PSI would like a joint, summit style meeting of the two Councils, either in the North or South in 2009.

2010 – Wherever the summit above had taken place, they would like a repeat in 2010 in the other jurisdiction.

FIP – PSI are confident that they have secured 2012. This is to be confirmed in January 09. They would like to invite a PSNI representative to the organising committee. They are also hopeful of securing Hilary Clinton as an anchor speaker with high level US healthcare involvement.

Joint Educational Work – CPD is out to tender. An independent consultant is to recommend models of best practice.

Co-operation – PSI would like formal co-operation on registration and FTP activity.

Other ideas – were a possible joint veterinary committee, co-operation on road safety, joint inspectorate meetings and regular operational level meetings.

Point of action: the Director asked the Council to discuss the content of the paper having regard to the content of the Public Affairs paper and to agree the response to the PSI. Should Council decide to accept the offer of membership of committees it is also asked to identify the appropriate individuals for each post.

The Director noted that he would like to invite an open discussion on this subject.

A discussion then ensued on the issues surrounding cross-border relationships, the risks, cost and time constraints. It was generally agreed that there had to be tangible mutual benefit in all of the proposals and that a regular review would be required

The President then asked whether Council would agree in principle to the proposals on the following basis.

Committee membership – PSNI to accept observer status on relevant PSI committees and offer reciprocal status on PSNI committees. Expenses to be paid by each organisation for its members only.

Pharmacy 2020 – PSNI has observer status on this committee and offer information on Northern Ireland and UK initiatives and keeps PSNI Council updated on developments in the Republic. Expenses as above

Council – PSNI offer observer status on Council and seek a reciprocal arrangement. There were issues with joint meetings, particularly around access and accessibility of the public for meetings held outside NI but it was agreed that summits, addressing public safety related cross-border issues would be beneficial with Council members and others from both jurisdictions attending.

FIP – it was agreed that we accept the offer of observer status and develop ideas for PSNI involvement with associated risk analysis and budgets for approval by Council. It was agreed that in all cases, the observers would not be able to make commitment on behalf of PSNI but would seek approval for any proposals.

It was agreed that operational level co-operation should be encouraged.

Motion: This Council agrees to proceed with closer cooperation with the PSI as detailed by the Director

The motion was proposed by Mrs R Tasker, seconded by Prof. J McElroy and agreed by Council in principle.

A discussion then developed on committee structures. It was suggested that the relevant Chairs of the PSNI committees could sit as observers on the PSI committees or nominate their chosen representatives from their committees to take part in this initiative;

PSNI Education – PSI Education
PSNI Ethics and Law or Practise – PSI Standards and Practise

The Director stated that with regards to the Pharmacy 2020 perspective and Council of the PSI, he would suggest that either the President or Vice-President should act as observer.

The Director then suggested PSNI staff that would be better suited for certain functions: He suggested that the Head of Public Affairs should be the observer for FIP; The Registrar for Registration and suggested that he should be the observer for Inspection and Enforcement. It was suggested that the Society should not join FIP at this moment in time, until a clear proposal had been developed for involvement in 2012.

Council agreed on the above basis for allocating the positions and asked to be kept updated on progress

(ii) Head of Public Affairs Report

Assembly Affairs

The Head of Public Affairs updated Council on recent developments. The Minister for Health has replied to Mr Durkan MLA re pharmacy regulation. A meeting is being sought to raise this matter with Mr Durkan.

The Society will be represented at the SDLP conference in Armagh on 23rd and 24th January. We are waiting to see the arrangements for the Sinn Fein conference in Dublin as it is usually observers only. Then PSNI have attended all local Party Conferences.

Public Patient Involvement (PPI)

The Head of Public Affairs noted that the PSNI PPI event was a successful event which was well attended. He then directed Council to his paper and proposals (paper1) detailing how the Society might move forward on the formation of a Patient Public Forum. The organising/focus group would consist of a minimum of six individuals or organisational representatives. These individuals will come from a variety of backgrounds including but not exclusively from medical related charities, age sector groups and those from urban and rurally based organisations.

Motion: This Council approves the establishment of the forum.

This was proposed by the Vice-President, seconded by Mr P Kelly and agreed by Council.

Rules for Attendance of Members of the Public and Registrants as Observers at Council Meetings

The Head of Public Affairs directed Council to paper 2 of his report which detailed guidance notes for non Council members attending Society Council meetings. He stated that this report outlined rules of attendance and behaviour and was generally good practice. It was also on the PSNI website.

Motion: This Council accepts the written guidance notes for non Council members attending PSNI Council meetings.

This was proposed by the Vice-President, seconded by Ms S McGrath and agreed by Council.

Risk Register Update

The Head of Public Affairs noted that the Risk Register was currently under consideration by Finance and House and would be brought to Council in February.

Fellows' Dinner Initial Discussion

The Head of Public Affairs stated that he was seeking advice from Council with regards to the Fellows Dinner which will be held in June this year.. He asked for suggestions regarding the choice of both venue and guest speaker.. The Head of

Public Affairs noted that a small group of staff members in the Society would be developing this event.

The Director stated that what was currently being sought was a broad direction – should the venue be academic, commercial or political, should the prime speaker be professional or political?

After some discussion, it was decided by Council that the preferred venue for this event would be Stormont Castle and a political speaker would be their first preference. A firm proposal will be brought to a future Council meeting

The Pharmaceutical Journal – Tabled paper

The Head of Public Affairs detailed a tabled paper concerning “The Pharmaceutical Journal” for all members of the Society. The proposal of RPS Publishing offering to supply the “PJ” to all members of the Society for a standard fee, charged to the Society, with the costs varying with the options chosen was presented to Council.

A discussion on this subject then ensued. It was decided that due to the lateness of this offer in relation to our financial/consultation timetable it is proposed that the Society does not take up any of these offers at this point. The matter will be referred to the Finance and House committee for consideration in next year’s budget and fees discussion.

(iii) Registrar’s Report

Registration

The Registrar asked Council to note the registration of one new registrant and the restoration of two pharmacists.

Motion: This Council approves the registrations of the pharmacists listed.

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

Personal Registration

The Registrar noted that there were now 2023 pharmacists currently registered with the Society.

Annual Registration

Annual registration of pharmacy premises was currently being processed. Some 369 premises have fully completed the annual registration process.

Motion: This Council approve the action of statutory letters to pharmacy premises being sent out on 30/01/2009 to those pharmacies not having paid retention fees for 2009.

This was proposed by Dr K McClelland, seconded by Prof. J McElroy and agreed by Council.

Database

A meeting with the IT consultant is scheduled for the end of January 2009. A detailed report will follow to the next Finance and House committee meeting for presentation to February Council.

Complaints Management with DHSSPS

A further meeting has taken place with the DHSSPS regarding the development of a project initiation document for the management of complaints and concerns about pharmacists. This project is progressing satisfactorily and we are developing a secretariat to facilitate complaints allocations and information sharing to be hosted at the PSNI.

A Memorandum of Understanding will be developed by the 1st April 2009 and the next meeting on complaints is provisionally booked for 9th March 2009.

Complaints Portal

The uptake on requests for complaints leaflets and posters by pharmacies in December 2008/ January 2009 has increased. Also the volume of complaints that the Registrar has been dealing with from the public has been extremely significant. This is evidence that this portal is being recognised and used by the public.

CHRE Performance Review

The staff of the Society have been working to prepare the documentation for submission to CHRE by 20th January 2009.

The Responsible Pharmacist Regulations

The Registrar stated that there had been a substantial amount of work completed on this issue and that the Chair of the Practice committee, Mr M Nelson would report on this in the Practice report.

6. Report from Committee Meetings

(i) Education

Mrs R Tasker highlighted the key points from the Education committee meeting. As it had been three and a half months since the last meeting, the agenda was considerable, though there were no motions to bring to Council at the present time.

A Guide to Professional Behaviour and Fitness to Practise for Pharmacy Students

Mrs R Tasker updated Council on the Pre-Registration Facilitator, Mrs L Smith's agenda items and noted that "A Guide to Professional Behaviour and Fitness to Practise for Pharmacy Students" will be passed on for comment to the Ethics and Law committee for consideration.

Email Received by Dr C Adair

Mrs R Tasker also updated Council on Dr McAree's agenda items. The President had received an email from Dr C Adair, NICPLD regarding quality assurance of the CPD assessment system and the possibility of permitting access to the assessor data for controlled portfolios. The Education committee had previously considered a request by Ms S Haughey to access the CPD website to access portfolios and at that time the committee was not in favour of this. Dr McAree suggested that this data could be made available to an external researcher for the purpose of providing some external quality assurance in addition to that already conducted by the Society. There were no major objections from the committee. The President suggested that external researchers may prove valuable when the Society moves forward with Revalidation proposals.

Maternity Exemption and CPD

Mrs R Tasker updated Council on the rules around exemption for pharmacists on maternity leave. The Education committee had concluded that the arrangements already in place regarding deferral should be applied but that pharmacists should be aware that the onus is on the individual to make this information known. This message will be highlighted in a forthcoming issue of the Society's newsletter.

CPD Records and Public Safety

The Education committee had made the decision to address the issue of a public safety requirement within the portfolios and CPD legislation by putting a statement with regards to public safety on the Society's website.

Action point : add statement to website

CHRE Letter regarding Advance Practise

Mrs Tasker noted that the Society will respond to CHRE regarding Advanced Practise by early February 2009 and has asked the Policy Advisor, Mr R Price if he could help the Education committee in the drafting of a response

Action point : Mr Price [policy advisor] to aid in response

Return to Practise Course for Pharmacists

Mrs R Tasker updated Council on proposals for a new Return to Practise course. It was decided at the committee meeting that the governance of this must remain within the Society and that we need to develop a framework internally. Mrs Tasker noted that we are making progress with this and that the Registrar will respond to Dr Adair in writing.

Action point : Mr Kerr [Registrar] to correspond with NICPLD

Revalidation

Mrs R Tasker updated Council on the subject of Revalidation. She noted that this was a considerable issue and that she hoped to prompt thoughts and discussion on the subject.

Dr McAree will attend a Revalidation meeting on 27th January 2009. The Education committee will meet on 22nd January 2009 to discuss the principles of Revalidation in advance of this meeting, and then on the 9th February 2009 together with any additional members of Council who have read the papers and familiarised themselves with the issues to date for discussion and sign off at February's Council meeting. Mrs Tasker encouraged Council members to attend this meeting.

Action point : Meeting on revalidation to be hosted on 9th February

Adoption of the minutes of the Education committee was proposed by Mrs R Tasker, seconded by the President and agreed by Council.

(ii) Ethics and Law

The last Ethics and Law meeting was held on 6th October and the next meeting is to be confirmed.

Action point : Next meeting to be convened and date circulated

(iii) Finance and House

Benevolent Fund Manager Post

The Director updated Council. Following a meeting of the selection panel, a successful candidate had been selected and an offer has now been made. PWC are processing this.

Draft Business Plan 2009/2010 & Fee Consultation

To date forty-eight responses have been received. The majority of responses are positive regarding the consultation. The consultation response deadline closes at the finish of business on Monday 19th January 2009.

Adoption of the minutes of the Finance and House committee was proposed by Prof. J McElnay, seconded by Mr P Kelly and agreed by Council.

(iv) Practice

MHRA Consultation on Reclassifying Flomax from POM to P

Mr M Nelson updated Council on the MHRA consultation on reclassifying Flomax. The Policy Advisor, Mr R Price had drafted a response which was discussed at the committee, this will be further developed in advance of its

submission to MHRA addressing all additional points raised at the committee meeting.

DHSSPSNI Consultation on Mental Health Legislation

Mr R Price had drafted a response which was discussed at the committee; this will be further developed in advance of its submission to DHSSPSNI addressing all additional points raised at the committee meeting. He undertook to share with the committee the response in advance of its submission.

Responsible Pharmacist Regulations

Mr M Nelson noted that the discussion regarding the Responsible Pharmacist Regulations provided much debate at the committee meeting. The discussion revolved around the Society's initial response to DOH which was different to that of the RPSGB's given the differing views of each society on pharmacist's absence.

Following that meeting and after further discussion it was decided that the Society should contact a sample of public groups [PPI] to ascertain their initial views and to ascertain how they might be better involved in developing this issue. A decision on the content of the guidance was now to be delayed until the February Council meeting after seeking further views and opinions from the public and also the Practice committee members.

Mr M Nelson noted that a draft response on the guidance will be completed and circulated to the practice committee in advance of the next meeting on the 5th February. A formal consultation document and plan will then be presented to February's Council meeting. This will involve an eight week consultation period and hopefully will result in much fuller engagement with both the profession and the public groups.

Any Other Business

Mr M Nelson noted that there was a need for the Society to revisit the Community Pharmacy Standards previously presented to the PSNI and to see these sit alongside a set of Hospital Pharmacy Standards which are currently under consideration by the G5. This issue will be tabled at the next Practice committee meeting for further discussion.

Adoption of the minutes of the Practice committee were proposed by Mr M Nelson, seconded by Dr K McClelland and agreed by Council.

11. Recent and Coming Events

The President noted that the list of recent and upcoming events were included in the packs.

12. Any Other Business

The Vice-President suggested that it would be preferable if the Chairs of each of the committees could organise meetings to take place directly two weeks after the Council meeting to facilitate meeting management by administrative staff and allow adequate time for the distribution and prior reading of papers.

The President thanked everyone for attending, particularly Mrs. Rosemary-McAlister-Smith from CHRE and asked if there was any comment she wished to make after attending the meeting of Council

Mrs. R McAlister-Smith addressed the Council and thanked them for a most interesting meeting. She commended Council for opening the meetings to the public and also stated that the proposed development of a relationship with the PSI would be groundbreaking and that it would be a very good opportunity for all parties

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 19th February 2009 at 7pm in the Society House.

The Council Meeting concluded at 9.25pm