

MINUTES

A Meeting of The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland was held at 7 pm on Thursday 18th May 2011, in the Society House, 73 University Street, Belfast. BT7 1HL

Present

Ms A Bowen (President)
Mr M Nelson (Vice-President)
Mr P Kelly (Hon. Treasurer)
Mrs M Singleton
Mr R Anderson
Mrs R Tasker
Mr D Byrne
Dr L Byers
Dr G Fleming

Apologies

Prof G Linden
Mrs H Buchanan

In Attendance

Mr T Patterson (Chief Executive)
Ms C English (Clerical Officer)
Mr M Neale (Head of Public Affairs)

Public Attending

None

1. Introduction and Welcome, Apologies.

The President welcomed everyone to the meeting, and presented the apologies received .

2. Dr Norman Morrow, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, Department of Health, to address Council on Confidence in Care Consultation

Dr Morrow thanked Council for the opportunity to discuss the Confidence in Care Consultation before the closing of submissions on the 22nd June 2011. Dr Morrow explained that two public meetings had been held recently, with positive results. He then detailed the next steps in the process, including reviewing and amending the document, submission firstly to Mr Edwin Poots, the Minister of Health and then to the Assembly. He went on to say that there are some complexities to be addressed e.g. those surrounding the CPD process. Any agreed changes will not affect the fundamental fitness to practise process. Implementation of the legislation is currently expected in January 2012.

The Registrar, Chief Executive and the Department have recognised the scale of the task, and some initial concerns remain as to the burden this will place on the organisation.

Some key points are:

- The new legislation does not annul the dual status of the Society
- The impact of the new legislation will make the Society more specifically, a regulator, with public safety as paramount concern
- The most fundamental change will be to the newly appointed Council designed to provide regulatory assurance by serving the public interest, not to represent professional interests. The constitution will consist of 50% lay and 50% pharmacist representation.
- Members will therefore lose any interests in the assets of the Society
- Whilst the CPO is aware of the Professional Forum, to which leadership issues should be delegated, it is difficult to see how any decisions are independent of Council
- Can the Professional Forum speak independently of Council?
- How will fees be distributed between the functions?
- A single UK wide system is preferred for regulation
- A strong collegiate voice for the profession is worthwhile in terms professional advocacy and leadership

Dr Morrow went on to explain that maintaining the dual functions of the Society may be difficult for the following reasons

Integrity of continued dual role – CHRE principle is to separate and not co-exist. Sometimes the functions of providing public assurance and professional leadership do not coincide, independence of both functions provides assurance to the public and the profession.

Credibility of the Professional Leadership body – This function must operate authentically, with authority and with independence from the regulator. It would be more akin to a Royal College.

Integration with practice – The professional leadership function must have the ability to drive new practice and retain its locus in practice, not regulation. Best example CPO can think of is UK Community Pharmacy Association.

Capacity – to perform the task intended, the Professional Forum will always be overshadowed by Statute. It must retain independence and freedom to speak.

Degree of Support and credibility of ownership – There may be resistance from members to pay dual fees. Members are members by default and not choice.

Resources and Results – The Society will lose the legacy claim to PSNI resources, and possibly the ability to deliver results that provide benefit. Should Council consider giving 50% of resources to Forum?

From a government point of view, and speaking as CPO it would be immensely helpful to have an authoritative pharmacy voice. This is vastly more important than regulation.

Mr Kelly asked for elucidation of the above point around resources. Dr Morrow added that the new composition of Council will mean registrants have less control over the assets of the Society, due to the appointment of 50% lay Council members. He explained a concern for the financial stability of the Professional Forum, and the importance of sharing the legacy across the dual function.

Dr Morrow expressed some concerns about the future of the profession, and reemphasised that whilst creating a robust system of regulation is necessary, there is a risk of stagnation without an authoritative professional driving force, akin to the system in place in the Royal College.

Dr Morrow stressed the importance in Pharmacists retaining their stake in the Community and Health and Welfare and bring critical thinking, skills and ability to Health and Social Care.

Dr Byers had a query about whether the Department envisage a strong professional voice for Northern Ireland. Dr Morrow advised that the Department regarded bringing critical thinking to the profession as vastly more important than regulation which will be robust through the new legislation

Mr Anderson discussed the points raised by Dr Morrow and asked how these difficulties could be remedied and still keep the organisation in Northern Ireland. Dr Morrow stated that the Department have always been in favour of a strong voice of the profession in lobbying and shaping policy, however he could see difficulties in maintaining both functions for the reasons outlined.

Mr Kelly expressed concerns for the Profession as being at risk of becoming high volume, high intensity with low resourcing and low return. Dr Morrow agreed, adding that it is for these reasons that a professional leadership function is necessary, as well as an established provision in the community.

Action Point: A synopsis of the above discussion to be drawn up and forwarded to Council members for discussion at the next meeting.

Actioned by: Chrisanne English

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of 24th February 2011

- Matters of Accuracy
There was a correction to the spelling of Dr Byers name.

Minutes accepted as true record.
- Adoption of Minutes
The minutes were proposed by Mr Anderson and seconded by Mr Kelly
- Matters Arising - Action Points

1. Context: Letter: CHRE Proposals for calculating the statutory levy, 11th March 2011 & Proposal: CHRE Proposals for calculating the statutory levy, 11th March 2011

Key Decision: Council were in favour of the CHRE Levy per registrant, option 1.

Action Point: The Chief Executive to respond to CHRE.

Completed by Chief Executive

2. Context: HSSPS: NI Committee for Postgraduate Pharmaceutical Education and Training. 15th March 2011: There was a discussion about potential nominations, Ms Bowen proposed and Mrs Tasker seconded that Dr Byers take up the role. Council agreed.

Action Point: The Chief Executive to write to HSSPS confirming this nomination.

Completed by Chief Executive

3. Context: A report on '*Assessing risks associated with contemporary pharmacy practice in Northern Ireland*' presented by Michelle McCorry

Action Point : A report to be brought to a future Council meeting suggesting next steps in revalidation - M McCorry

Completed

4. Motion to Council: Council are asked to discuss content of appendix 1 and agree document to take forward to GPhC for development.

<p>Key Decision: All agreed for document to be taken forward to GPhC for development.</p> <p>Proposer: Mr Anderson with the condition of acceptance of the Chief Executives amendments to costing.</p> <p>Action Point: The Chief Executive to take forward document and propose amendment.</p> <p>Completed by Chief Executive</p>
<p>5. Context: Voluntary Register of Technicians – Action Point from previous meeting</p> <p>Key Decision: Council agreed that the next step would be gain further legal advice on the subject.</p> <p>Action – The Chief Executive to seek Legal Counsel advice and revert to Council with proposed next steps</p> <p>Completed by Chief Executive</p>
<p>6. Context: Modernising Pharmacy Careers</p> <p>Action point – Julie Greenfield to be informed of meeting at QUB on 6th May and invited to offer two PFB delegates – Chrisanne English</p> <p>Completed – Update given by Chief Executive</p>

4. Tabling of Any Other Business

Dr Byers informed Council of an item to be discussed.

5. Correspondence

- i. **Email from Pharmacy Health Link – Possible Closure of Charity– 12th May 2011**
- ii. **Email from Pharmacy Health Link – Register of Organisational Members – 12th May 2011**

The President explained that Pharmacy Health Link is due to close due to a cut in government funding. They are looking for a similar charity to transfer current funds. The Chief Executive stressed that the objectives of the Charity must be very close to that of Pharmacy Health Link. Please email Chief Executive with any recommendations.

6. Staff Reports

i. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive updated Council on recent meetings with the following points:

- **Confidence in Care** the Registrar will provide an update under his report
- **Enabling Excellence** – One of the suggestions therein was a project by the Law Commission to explore the possibility of creating a single legislative framework under which all 9 healthcare regulators would operate. This would allow greater autonomy to the regulators, for example creating powers to write their own rules but bring greater accountability to parliament(s) and responsibility for actions. In the event of an EU infraction at least a portion of any fine being paid by the regulator.
- **Law Commission and Law Commission NI meeting** - The Commissions accepted the Society's accountability to the Assembly only and recognised the need to look at other regulators responsibilities in this area – accepting that the Society had no requirement for additional accountability to Westminster. They propose to create an advisory group and bring forward a document for consultation in spring 2012 with a view to having a Bill for approval during 2014.
- **DHSSPS Consultation event on the new draft legislation legislation** – Belfast–This was well attended with many questions from the audience
- **Inter-regulatory revalidation meeting** –GMC progressing with pilots, all other regulators advancing proposals to create formal systems, may or may not be called revalidation, generally based upon development of CPD
- **Chief Executive Steering Group** –The Chief Executive updated Council on NMC cross border regulation, and discussed the following points:
 - GMC provided a report showing the increase in FTP trends
 - ISA negotiations progressing
 - We are expecting to be able to recommend signing of draft MOU at next meeting
 - CHRE looking at future of regulators forum

- CHRE are expecting to commence project on costs with an interim report in September and final one in December
 - CHRE are expecting to have initial suggestions on QA of Council Appointment Process by end May
- **CHRE – re legislation – A brief update was provided to CHRE on the current consultation – they discussed issues around appointments to Council and considered technician registration**
- **DH/ RPS – Responsible Pharmacist project – DH London –** agreed final MOU, invitations to tender have gone out to three parties and final interviews are on 10th June where we have been invited to join the selection team.
 - **GPhC – MOU discussions** - This meeting with Duncan Rudkin CEO of GPhC revealed that the GPhC are keen to work productively and look at all possible options for accreditation. Three options were discussed:
 - **Do nothing – not ideal**
 - **Invite GPhC to do all accreditation with us operating a QA mechanism, perhaps through observation of some GPhC accreditation**
 - **We provide accreditation for Northern Ireland, they provide for Great Britain and accreditation status is mutually accepted**

Mr Anderson enquired whether there is capacity for the final option. The Chief Executive responded that it wouldn't involve much more than already exists, and the benefit of working with other regulators would be significant in relation to the Enabling Excellence paper

The Chief Executive further updated Council on the following points:

- CPD discussions and an invitation to a revalidation stakeholder event to discuss policy development.
- Fitness to Practise– GPhC agreed to co-operate
- Issues experienced with non EEA applicants – The possibility of buying into an established process with the GPhC
- The potential benefits of outsourcing Committee Member appointments. Possibility of coming to a mutually beneficial arrangement with the GPhC, whereby their Appointments Committee, for a fee, makes appointments to our Statutory Committees. – This cooperation would be

in line with Enabling Excellence requirements around sharing resources to reduce cost

Priorities (appendix 1)

The Chief Executive discussed a projected list of priorities over the next 6 months to ensure that the organisation is ready and capable to take on the change in legislation. An appendix setting out the project plan for legislative change was provided. Council were invited to contact the Chief executive for further information.

Technicians

The Chief Executive advised Council that Cleaver Fulton Rankin have quoted the Society £1000 for the requested information and will take 14 days to complete.

Action Point: Chief Executive to update Council at the next meeting.

CHRE Performance Review (appendix 2)

The President thanked all staff for their contribution and effort towards producing this successful report.

Action point: Email to be sent to all staff thanking them for their contribution towards the CHRE report

ii. Head of Public Affairs Report

The Head of Public Affairs updated Council on the following political issues:

- Mr Edwin Poots MLA, has been appointed Health Minister. Previously he was Minister for the Environment and before that Culture Arts and Leisure. Ms Michelle Gildernew MLA, has been appointed Chair of the Health Committee and Mr Jim Wells MLA has been appointed Vice Chair.
- The new Health Committee will be appointed in the next few days and when this becomes available Council members will be notified .
- Over the next few weeks, meetings will be sought with the Chair and Vice chair of the Health Committee and representatives of all parties on it..

The Head of Public Affairs updated Council on the following Media issues:

- Media coverage has been concentrated on the changes in the legislation and the current consultation process. We have contacted the trade press to encourage member's responses.
- Over the next period we will also be engaging with the trade and potentially the regional press, regarding issues relating to the Society
- Over the past month the Professional Forum's endorsement of the "Stop the Spread" campaign has been carried by the local daily papers and was promoted at the Balmoral Show.

The Head of Public Affairs updated Council on the following consultation evenings:

- As previously noted the Society in conjunction with the Department held two consultation evenings with regard to the consultation on our new legislation. The event in Belfast was well attended with over 30 members being present and the event in Omagh was attended by 8 members.
- Overall these events were very successful with a significant engagement with registrants. In general the concerns were raised around issues such as CPD and the potential costs of increased sanctions and hearings.
- In relation to the consultation, the Professional Forum sent via email a short briefing document to all members outlining the changes and describing the rationale behind what is currently proposed. The Professional Forum and the Public Forum are currently preparing their own responses. A Chair and Vice Chair were appointed, Ms Anne McAlister and Mr John Hamill respectively. The Professional Forum manager met with Msrs Jonathan Lloyd and Peter Wright of the UCA who will be appointing a representative shortly.

The Head of Public Affairs updated Council on the following key meetings:

- 11/4 Consultation evening in Belfast
- 12-13/4 Discussions regarding new website
- 19/4 Sinn Fein Election seminar
- 22/4 Meeting with Heather Moorehead, CEO of the NI Health Confederation
- 10/5 Attended the launch of "Stop the Spread" campaign

- 11/ Health Service Commissioning Seminar (attended by Julie Greenfield)
- 12/5 Meeting with Law Commission
- 18/5 Regulator's Equality and Diversity meeting plus meeting with CHRE

Mr Anderson asked what the future relationship with the Health Confederation would be. Mr Neale advised that the Professional Forum will most likely take this on.

Mr Neale left the meeting

iii. Registrar's Report

The Registrar was absent from the meeting as he was attending a meeting with the GPhC in London. His report was accepted as read.

6. Report from Committee Meetings

i. Education Committee minutes from meeting 18th May 2011

Mrs Tasker updated Council on Education Meeting held the day before, advising that detailed minutes would be available for the following Council meeting.

There were no major issues noted.

The next meeting of the Education meeting will be 4th August 2011.

ii. Finance and House minutes from meeting of 17th January 2011

Mr Kelly noted several large payments in April, advising that the projected surplus is £109,290 however this may change as new posts are appointed.

Mr Kelly discussed three letters between Mrs Duffy and Ms Savage relating to Premises Retention Fees. There remains a possibility of full reimbursement of retention fees.

Minutes proposed: Mr Nelson

Seconded: The President

iii. Legislation, Standards and Practice Committee minutes from 6th April 2011

Mrs Singleton had updated Council on these minutes at the previous Council meeting and had nothing further to add.

Minutes Proposed: Mrs Singleton

Seconded: The President

10. Any Other Business

- The President offered congratulations to Mr Anderson who has been appointed as the President of the Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Association. Mr Anderson drew attention to his report on the Commonwealth Health Ministers meeting: Geneva 15th May 2011- Theme: Non-Communicable Diseases – A Priority for the Commonwealth.
- The President discussed the issue of time in lieu, and asked whether it may be possible to change the time of meetings to during the day, and reimburse pharmacists for locum expenses where necessary.

See note below

11. Date of Next Meeting – June 30th 2011

CONFIDENTIAL

The Chief Executive and Clerical Officer left the meeting at 8.30pm in order that a confidential matter could be discussed.