

Minutes of the Council Public Meeting

Remote – Via Zoom

Monday, 11 May 2021 @ 09:30

	Agenda Item	Present	Apologies
		<p>Dr Jim Livingstone (President) Mr Jonathan Patton (Vice-President) Ms Carol Moore Prof Patrick Murphy Mr Barry Mimmagh Ms Alison Ragg Ms Chanel Jones Ms Colleen Duffy</p> <p>In Attendance</p> <p>Mr Trevor Patterson (Chief Executive) Mrs Laura Hughes (Registrar) Mrs Joan Duffy (Head of Business Operations) Mr Mark Neale (Head of Public Affairs) Mr Peter Hutchinson (Policy & Standards Engagement Lead) Mrs June Alexander (Executive Assistant) Ms Sheena Kenny (Boardroom Apprentice) Ms Siobhan Carson (Professional Standards Authority)</p>	<p>Mr Mark McCrudden Ms Sandra Cooke</p>

			Action
1.0	Welcome & Apologies	The President welcomed the representative from PSA and all Council members.	
2.0	Deputations	The President was present for the entirety of the meeting – no deputation required.	
3.0	Conflicts of Interest	None	
4.0	Tabling of Any Other Business	None.	
5.0	Minutes & Key Actions from last meeting For Approval	<p>Council approved and adopted the Minutes of the 15 March 2021 Council meeting as a true and accurate record of events.</p> <p><u>Actions</u></p> <p>No actions outstanding.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #cccccc; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Key decisions Council approved and adopted the Minutes of the 15 March 2021 Council meeting as a true and accurate record of events.</p> </div>	<p>Proposed by: Barry Mimmagh Seconded by: Carol Moore</p>
6.0	Education Reform For Approval	<p>The CEO advised that Council had discussed and approved the Foundation Training Year proposed by NICPLD.</p> <p>Council was asked to reaffirm its decision and to approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).</p>	

	<p>The MOU is high level, setting out the process for PSNI and NICPLD working together, co-operating and data sharing.</p> <p>Council was advised that the Department of Health (NI) had asked that the organisation chair an Implementation Group for Education Reform. Papers provided are the out-workings of that group. There is an implementation group in each jurisdiction and all are trying to move at the same pace. The HPA advised that communications continue with GB universities to keep them informed of our path of travel.</p> <p>Paper IET2, the transition plan for the Foundation Training Year (FTY), sets out the stages, over a number of years, which will be required to reach the final establishment of the full FTY. The Regulations require that Council approves the course of training.</p> <p>The CEO introduced a paper by the two Schools of Pharmacy in Northern Ireland which addresses a continuum of training. It discusses what they plan to do and by when to introduce changes to the MPharm course in order that trainees will leave the FTY as prescribers. This will take a number of years and co-ordination will be required to ensure that transition from university to FTY is smooth each year until full establishment.</p> <p>It was confirmed to Council that an induction session will be held for new Educational Supervisors, formerly called tutors, and all will be accredited for the first FTY.</p> <p>IET4 is the operational framework and sets out responsibilities over the years – responsibilities will change each year as the programme develops. For example, Year 1 is a hybrid year involving both PSNI and NICPLD in aspects of course operation and, in Year 2, PSNI will provide</p>	
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		<p>only quality assurance of their programme. This year, quality assurance methodology is the same as for the pre-registration programme.</p> <p>IET4 also set out the significant changes in Year 1. Supervised Learning Events (SLEs) will be piloted with the Educational Supervisors and the current group of students. Next year, all tutors will be fully upskilled as Educational Supervisors.</p> <p>The CEO confirmed that there is general support particularly from the profession. For the universities, there are issues around funding, clinical placements, etc. One of the ambitions of this programme is that there will be multi-sector placements, further work is ongoing around how and when this will be delivered. The aim is to eventually produce trainees who will be fully equipped to be Day 1 pharmacists and prescribers.</p> <p>There will be a need to consider development of the legacy workforce with different qualifications and training experiences as the profession develops. Part of this will be delivered through accredited NICPLD and QUB IP courses for these pharmacists.</p> <p>In response to a question about pharmacists' cross-border working, the Registrar advised that ROI do not have independent prescribers and there is no move to introduce the training in ROI. Therefore, NI trained pharmacists working in ROI will unlikely be able to use their IP skills. Mutual recognition of qualifications continues to be considered for the future but may be affected by any requirement for NI pharmacists to be IP qualified.</p>	
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7.0	<p>Registration Assessment & Procedures For Decision</p>	<p>The CEO updated Council in relation to the Registration Assessment as follows:</p> <p>The original plan was that the first Common Registration Assessment (CRA) would be conducted in June this year. Unfortunately, GPhC have run into capacity-based difficulties associated with the pandemic and have had to defer their CRA to the end of July 2021. This would have delayed registration of NI new pharmacists coming into the workforce until September 2021. In negotiation with GPhC, and with Council approval, it was decided to bring forward a NI bespoke registration assessment to June 2021. The CEO advised that GPhC have been very helpful in the development of this assessment.</p>	

		<p>The Registrar advised that Council had approved the move to a paper-based examination in January 2021. In terms of quality assurance, the Examination Committee has been reformed and are supported by the services of the CRA quality assurance contractor, Alpha+.</p> <p>As the NI registration assessment differs from the CRA it requires different procedures, which must be approved by Council</p> <p>Council was asked to approve the registration assessment and the associated procedures, to be held on 08 June 2021, based on the quality assurance processes in place as set out in the papers.</p> <p>Council approved the holding of a paper-based registration examination on 08 June 2021.</p> <div data-bbox="734 807 1704 963" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px;"> <p>Key Decisions Council approved the holding of a paper-based registration assessment and the associated procedures on 08 June 2021.</p> </div>	<p>Proposed by: Jonathan Patton Seconded by: Chanel Jones</p>
8.0	Reserves Policy For Approval	<p>The HBO advised Council that the organisation had operated a reserves policy for many years, last years audit identified the benefits of having a formal written policy which sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the amount or range of amounts of reserves to be held; • how reserves are used to manage any financial uncertainties; • the circumstances in which reserves will be spent; and • the process when reserves are outside the range set out in the policy. 	

		<p>To that end, Council was asked to approve the Reserves Policy, as presented.</p> <p>The proposal is to hold between £1.4M - £1.8M in reserves, preferably the upper limit, including an amount to cover contingent liabilities. The budget for 2021/2022 takes account of the reserves policy and includes project spending from reserves, which maintains them within range.</p> <p>The HPO confirmed that a report on reserves will be presented to the Finance & Performance Committee once a quarter and the policy will be reviewed annually.</p> <p>Council approved the Reserves Policy.</p> <div data-bbox="689 802 1655 922" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #cccccc; padding: 5px;"> <p>Key Decisions Council approved the Reserves Policy.</p> </div>	<p>Proposed by: Patrick Murphy Seconded by: Jonathan Patton</p>
9.0	<p>Budget 2021/22 For Approval</p>	<p>The HBO advised Council that it had approved the Draft Budget in principle in November 2020 and the Draft Budget Variance paper presented sets out the reasons for the variances of that previously approved budget. She highlighted the following:</p> <p><u>Variances</u> Increase in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure £38.5k • Project costs £13.8k <p>Operating deficit before projects £78k Operating deficit after projects £221k</p>	

		<p>Council approved the draft Budget 2021/22.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #cccccc; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Key Decisions Council approved the Draft Budget 2021/22.</p> </div>	<p>Proposed by: Patrick Murphy Seconded by: Colleen Duffy</p>
<p>10.0</p>	<p>DHSC Consultation – Initial Response For Approval</p>	<p>The Policy, Standards & Engagement Lead (PSEL) advised Council that, since mid-2019, the organisation has been working with other regulators, the PSA and HSC on legislative reform of the regulators of healthcare professionals. They are looking to give all regulators the same powers with greater flexibility to write their own procedures and processes in exchange for greater accountability.</p> <p>Council was provided with the consultation document and the initial high-level responses to the consultation questions and invited to comment and give direction in respect of the responses ahead of submission before determining how the final response would be signed off.</p> <p>The PSEL took Council through all questions and the organisation’s initial responses.</p> <p>Council discussed the overall response and decided that a Task & Finish Group should be instructed to review the consultation document and initial responses and then to report back to Council with their recommendations. The Task & Finish Group will comprise: Alison Ragg (Chair), Jonathan Patton and Colleen Duffy. The Group will liaise with the PSEL and take comments from Council.</p>	

		<p>The CEO advised Council of a matter related to the DHSC consultation. Some time ago a White Paper was produced which proposed that Section 60 Orders would, in the future, be used to direct the merging of regulators, the closure of regulators and potentially removing various professions from regulation. The final paper presented to Council is a DHSC tender document seeking organisations to conduct research into the current structure of regulation. PSNI has been excluded from this exercise at the request of DoH</p> <p>Notwithstanding exclusion, it is noted that Section 60 Orders are subject to minimal scrutiny, being laid for negative resolution at Westminster, and for new professions since 1998 at Holyrood. The absence of scrutiny by the Northern Ireland assembly given the fully devolved nature of healthcare regulation had previously been discussed by Council and concerns had been raised with DHSC and DoH. He advised that the organisation would continue to work on this with the Department.</p> <p>The HPA advised that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Health Committee are keen to have an initial informal meeting with the organisation followed by a formal meeting with other committee members present. Updates will be provided to Council re meeting arrangements.</p> <div data-bbox="719 1094 1688 1270" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 5px;"> <p>Key Decisions Council instructed a Task & Finish Group to review the consultation document and initial response and report back to Council with recommendations ahead of the June 2021 meeting.</p> </div>	<p>Proposed by: Alison Ragg Seconded by: Jonathan Patton</p>

11.0	<p>IT Strategy For Approval</p>	<p>The HBO advised that since the last IT strategy document, the organisation has met all its targets and has completed the successful migration to the Cloud. This strategy document shows the current status and makes recommendations for further work as follows:</p> <p><u>Short-term</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT controls and processes It is recommended that laptops should all have encryption – provided as one package. The Committee agreed that this was imperative due to home working. The Chair advised that the recommended processes would be in line with those used in the NHS. The HBO confirmed that there had been no breaches of IT security during the home-working period. • Back-up processes Currently, the organisation backs up its website, database and shared files to the Cloud and a 3rd party provider still backs up to the Cloud and on premise. It is recommended that 3rd party back-ups are terminated following testing of the cloud backups. • IT Security Policy It is recommended that the organisation develops an IT Security policy. • Vulnerability The need to run penetration tests at least every year has been highlighted. The first of these quarterly tests has now been completed. 	
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		<p><u>Medium-Long term</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased collaboration Post Covid-19, the organisation will have a blended working arrangement for the foreseeable future. Collaborative working will be enhanced by the use of MS Team Rooms with a fully interactive video screen to include file sharing and white board facilities. The final recommendation is to develop a roadmap with our external IT suppliers to move to a more managed engagement meeting on a quarterly basis. <p><u>Next Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A grid board will be developed and populated with recommendations, actions and timelines and will be brought to the Committee at an agreed frequency The HR Strategy comes to the Committee once each year and the Finance Strategy twice each year. <p>The HBO advised that the Finance & Performance Committee had approved the IT Strategy for recommendation to Council.</p> <p>The President advised caution as there was so much detail to the strategy that it was difficult for Council to be adequately across all the detail. As approval of the strategy was not time critical, he advised that it should come back to Council at a future 2021 meeting. The delay would give Council members time to fully understand the strategy and to review the outcome of the IT internal audit.</p>	
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		<p>Key Decisions IT strategy to be brought back to the Council at a future 2021 Council meeting for decision</p>	
12.0	President's Report For Information	The President advised that the interviews for new Council members had been completed with the PAU and recommendations for appointment sent to the Department. Ministerial approval is awaited.	
13.0	CEO's Report For Information	None.	
14.0	Progress Against Strategy For Information	The CEO advised that the format of the report presented as a review of current status rather than the usual traffic light report and noted the areas where legislation change is required to progress.	
15.0	Correspondence Log For Information	Council reviewed the content of the correspondence presented.	
16.0	Any Other Business For Information	None.	
17.0	Date of next Council Public Meeting	The next public meeting of Council is scheduled for 09:30 on Tuesday , 29 June 2021. This meeting will be conducted via Zoom.	

The Meeting closed @ 10:55