Protecting Registering Regulating

Minutes of the Council Public Meeting
Remote – Via Zoom
23 November 2021 @ 09:30

| | Agenda Item - Present | Council Members:
Dr Jim Livingstone (President)
Mr Jonathan Patton (Vice President)
Mr Mark McCrudden
Ms Alison Ragg
Ms Carol Moore
Prof Patrick Murphy
Mr Brendan Garland
Mr Philip Knox
Ms Chanel Jones
Mr Barry Mimnagh
Mr Scott Gill
Mr Gary McMurray
Ms Sandra Cooke

Visitors:
Ms Lynsey Alphonso – Boardroom Apprentice
Ms Roisin Lacey – UU Post-Grad Student (CPANI Mentor Scheme)
Ms Siobhan Carson – PSA

In Attendance:
Mr Trevor Patterson (Chief Executive & Interim Registrar)
Ms Joan Duffy (Head of Business Operations)
Mr Mark Neale (Head of Public Affairs)
Mr Peter Hutchinson (Policy Standards & Engagement Lead)
Mr Laurence Fay (IT Manager)
Ms June Alexander (Executive Assistant) | Apologies
Ms Colleen Duffy |

			Action
1.0	Welcome & Apologies	The President welcomed Council members to the meeting and also welcomed guests:	
2.0	Deputations	The President was in attendance throughout. No deputation required.	
3.0	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts of interest were raised.	
4.0	Tabling of Any Other Business	No other business was tabled.	
5.0	Minutes & Key Actions from last meeting **For Approval**	Minutes: Council approved and adopted the Minutes of the Public meeting of 16 September 2021 as a true and accurate record of events. Actions: **Key Decision / Action:** Council approved and adopted the Minutes of the Public meeting of 16 September 2021 as a true and accurate record of events.	Proposed by: Brendan Garland Seconded by: Jonathan Patton
6.0	Budget 2022/23 **For Approval**	The HBO advised Council that, when looking at the budget, the team takes the prior year's budget into consideration as well as current projection. The following was highlighted: Income • Retention income – forecast to increase on the prior year (2847 registrants) to 2752 registrants. It is expected that around 45 registrants will be removed for non-payment of retention fees or non-compliance with the CPD Framework and a further 50 are expected to withdraw by request.	

- New registrants from pre-reg, Pre-reg students and exam students - forecast to be in line with the prior year.
- Premises retention – remaining steady at 553 premises.

Expenditure
- Staff salaries – increase of £11k on the prior year. This includes the usual 2.75% increment assumption which is reviewed in the light of inflation in-year.
- Fitness to Practise expenses – decrease of £25k on prior year. There are 28 cases currently in the pipeline partly due to Covid and complexity of case causing a backlog, and it is hoped that these can be progressed during this financial year but this will be reflected in the following year's budget.
- Facilities & office expenses – decrease of £17k on prior year.
- IT expenses – decrease of £18k on prior year. There has been a lot of investment into IT over the past two years and should result in savings year on year.
- Governance costs – remaining steady at £40k.

New Projects
These new projects have not yet been approved and some are dependent on external agency decisions. They will go to the Finance & Performance Committee and feed into Council with a business case for approval.
- The review and update of The Code - £11k.
- IET reform, the design of the accreditation scheme and support for the transition - £15k.
- IT – total of £65k comprising:
  CRM ROL2 - £20k; Pharmacy Technicians' Register module - £15k; Team Rooms (blended hearings/meetings) - £30k.

Budgeting £1.34m income against £1.39m expenditure resulting in an operating deficit of £149k.

In relation to Fitness to Practise costs, the HBO advised that the organisation has fixed capped costs with its current provider for each stage of the process.

		However, the number of cases can't be predicted. For example, since the last Finance & Performance Committee meeting, three further cases have come in. . In addition, the organisation has an in-house Legal Officer. . At present, cases are becoming increasingly complicated so the capped fees are of great benefit. There are three cases that involve multiple registrants and multiple agencies such as the Police, HSCB, MRG, etc. The organisation has been successful in working collaboratively with these agencies to bring cases forward but they have necessarily taken longer. He noted that there has been an increase in the underlying number of cases which is perhaps a result of Covid-19 as people are frustrated with the services, access to medical professionals, etc. Many cases initially take a lot of time and effort but often transpire to be customer service issues. In terms of the operating deficit, the CEO advised that the organisation is running in accordance with its Reserves Policy. Non-recurring expenses such as CRM investment, education and training, etc, are taken out of reserves. The organisation has reserves over and above what it would like to hold so it is right and proper to use reserves for investment rather than increasing fees. Council approved the Draft Budget 2022/23. <table><tr><td>**Key Decision:** Council approved the draft Budget 2022/23.</td></tr></table>	Proposed by: Scott Gill Seconded by: Jonathan Patton
7.0	Communications Strategy 2021 **For Approval**	The HPA advised that the Communications Strategy is linked to Council's Corporate Strategy 2017-21. As Council is appending an addendum to the Corporate Strategy, the review of the Communications Strategy is an interim review with a full review taking place at the end of 2022. An internal audit of the Communications Strategy was undertaken in May 2021 and recommendations included a review of the Strategy, taking into account the	

impact of Covid-19 and resultant changes to communications activities. Provisional updates to the Strategy have been made pending in line with audit recommendations. A further review will be undertaken to ensure that the Strategy is aligned with the Corporate Strategy Addendum.

The main change has been in relation to situational analysis and update regarding outreach to the public and registrants. It is all based on the effects of Covid-19 and how the organisation has moved from face-to-face meetings to online meetings. Earlier in 2021, a survey was carried out and the registrant feedback indicated that online was considered better and more interactive. We have recently held two major stakeholder events in relation to PRET and IET, both well attended and very positive.

The HPA directed Council's attention to changes on pages 5&6 re situational analysis; page 11 in relation to communication methods; page 12 in relation to pressures; and page 14 in relation to objectives for next year.

A report will be presented at the Finance & Performance Committee's January 2022 meeting to give an update on the Communications Strategy which will then feed into the Council agenda.

Council members noted that, due to a rapidly changing environment, the Strategy will require regular updates; the Strategy is not the sole responsibility of the HPA; and that the Strategy is a two-way process with the first priority being that the organisation is willing to listen and respond to stakeholders.

Council approved the Communications Strategy.

Key Decision:

Council approved the Communications Strategy.

Proposed by:
Jonathan Patton
Seconded by:
Mark McCrudden

8.0	Corporate Strategy Addendum **For Approval**	The President advised that, given the circumstances over the last two years and the impact of the pandemic, the best way forward was to undertake a limited review of the Corporate Strategy rather than a fundamental review, and to add one year to the life of the Strategy by way of an addendum. The Council paper provided detailed how that would be conducted and he proposed to invite members to form a Task & Finish Group with Brendan Garland as Chair. The Group would be charged with presenting a proposed addendum to the Corporate Strategy at Council's March 2022 meeting to take effect by April/May 2022. Council members were asked to email the President with their interest in participating in this group. Council approved the President's proposal to form a Task & Finish Group to undertake work on the Corporate Strategy Addendum. **Key Decision:** Council approved the President's proposal to form a Task & Finish Group to undertake work on the Corporate Strategy Addendum.	Proposed by: Sandra Cooke Seconded by: Barry Mimnagh
9.0	Council Training & Development **For Approval**	The President proposed that a Task & Finish Group be formed, with Carol Moore as Chair, to undertake work on Council Training & Development. The Group would be charged with presenting proposals at Council's March or May 2022 meeting. Council members were asked to email the President with their interest in participating in this group. Council approved the President's proposal to form a Task & Finish Group to undertake work on Council Training & Development. **Key Decision:** Council approved the President's proposal to form a Task & Finish Group to undertake work on Council Training & Development.	Proposed by: Sandra Cooke Seconded by: Barry Mimnagh

| 10.0 | Interim Accreditation QUB **For Approval** | The HPA advised that the interim accreditation event for the QUB School of Pharmacy took place in Spring 2021. The joint PSNI/GPhC accreditation team were satisfied that the MPharm degree should continue to be reaccredited until the next full accreditation event in two years. Accordingly, Council was asked to approve the accreditation of QUB.

In response to a Council query, the CEO advised that currently there is no Fit and Proper Person or Knowledge of English regulation.   However, the organisation is working with DoH on both. Currently, pharmacists must be on the Register before the organisation can act upon such concerns through the Fitness to Practise process. To prevent a pharmacist joining the Register can only be done in accordance with legislation which is outdated.

In relation to the level at which Independent Prescribers were permitted to perform, the CEO advised that, in order to be able to prescribe, a pharmacist must have an IP annotation on the Register based upon successful completion of an accredited course. NICPLD run an 18-month IP course and the IP certificate states that the pharmacist is qualified to prescribe within their area of knowledge; that area of knowledge will have been identified during the course. However, as pharmacists' skills and knowledge develop, they can extend their field of practice and the Code states that this must be within their competency. Should a pharmacist step outside the IP Standards and/or Code, they would be subject to Fitness to Practice investigation. As more Day 1 pharmacists will be Independent Prescribers, a Framework will be developed for more widespread prescribing.

Council approved the interim accreditation of Queen's University Belfast.

Key Decision:

Council approved the interim accreditation of Queen's University Belfast. | Proposed by: Mark McCrudden Seconded by: Philip Knox |

11.0	President's Report **For Information**	The President advised that he had remotely attended the Ulster University Awards. It was an inspiring event in terms of the quality of students coming out of both universities.	
		The President advised that he had received a response from the Department's Public Appointments Unit to advise that they will be launching a recruitment competition in January 2022 to recruit replacements for the President and Sandra Cooke whose tenure terminates at the end of September 2022.	
12.0	CEO's Report **For Information**	The CEO advised that all matters were within the agenda.	
13.0	Cash Projection **For Information**	Council reviewed the Cash Projection papers within the budget discussions at point 6 and had nothing further to add.	
14.0	Update on IET Reform **For Information**	The CEO advised the matters arising from the Education Reform Implementation Group would be dealt with in the In Committee meeting.	
		Aligned to the Implementation Group, the Comms team set up a stakeholder event at which the CPO, Colin Adair (NICPLD) and CEO presented. The paper presented to Council has the questions and comments raised and this will be brought back to the Implementation Group. The event was well attended and the mood was supportive of Council, the development of the profession and the role of the regulator in driving forward those changes at a sustainable pace.	
		Both NI universities are working in the background; they have to teach out their existing courses and then, before they start teaching the new 5-year programme, they have to be accredited again against the new Standards. Some valid points were raised at the event such as the capacity of community pharmacy to provide placements for IP training when so few IPs will already be working in community pharmacy.	

15.0	Report on Progress against Strategy **For Information**	The CEO advised that two strategic objectives had moved to green, trending towards green, which means that we are confident that these will remain as such. Strategic Goal 1(c): Registration of Pharmacy Technicians: a paper regarding this is in the In Committee agenda. The Department is minded to seek ministerial approval for a Pharmacy Technician Register. It is hoped that this approval will be forthcoming before Christmas. It will unlock a series of projects in the background. Strategic Goal 1(f): Rebalancing – Section 60 Order: a paper regarding this is in the In Committee agenda. The CEO advised that rebalancing was about the rebalancing of powers between governmental regulations and regulatory regulations to provide more agility to regulators. Once of the successes has been that there is now a defence for dispensing errors in community pharmacy but there is no parallel defence for hospital pharmacy. This is in one of the Section 60 Orders. The other is Standards for Responsible Pharmacists and Superintendent Pharmacists. The organisation will get the powers to write these Standards and to appoint a Deputy Registrar. Further details re implementation is in the In Committee agenda. Council requested that the HPA review and align the wording of Strategic Goal 6(c) with the Communications Strategy. **Action:** Council requested that the HPA review and align the wording of Strategic Goal 6(c) against the Communications Strategy.	
16.0	CRM Update **For Information**	The ITM advised that the initial platform of the CPD module will be launched within a few days.	

		This will be followed by the Fitness to Practise module covering all FtP processes and addressing matters raised at previous PSA audits. The module will issue a case reference number, facilitate tasks and move cases from administrator to the Legal Officer and then to the Registrar. He advised that it is a very large and complex piece of software. In relation to costs, the Registrar will be able to look at data to assess how long a case will run and the associated costs. He advised that it will be a more robust system and will be launched in early to mid-December. ROL: because of changes in Pre-Registration and NICPLD, the student module will be launched first in January 2022 followed by retention. This will be ready by May 2022. Each user will have a dashboard giving an overview and they will be able to access detailed reports relevant to their department. The Registrar will also be able to assign work to members of staff. The ITM gave a brief demonstration to Council.		
17.0	Correspondence Log **For Information**	Council was asked to review the content of the attached correspondence:		
18.0	Any Other Business **For Information**	None.		
19.0	Date of next meeting **To Note**	The next Public Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 25 January 2022 @ 09:30.		

The Meeting closed @ 10:45