

COUNCIL MEMBERS INDUCTION AND TRAINING

As part of an ongoing programme of training the Executive is proposing to offer all Council members the opportunity of spending two days at Park House visiting all departments and meeting staff. The aim is that members will be fully acquainted with the operational side of the organization.

This programme has now been piloted and on 2 and 3 September Shaheen Chaudhry agreed to take part in a trial run. She spent time in all departments and gave some very useful feedback which is attached.

It is proposed that all new members joining Council undertake two days induction training at Park House, preferably before attending their first Council meeting. Existing members should also aim to undertake this training within the next year. Arrangements can be made through the Secretary to Council.

FEEDBACK

My aim in undertaking this exercise was to fill in the gaps in my knowledge regarding the operational side of the Health Professions Council and also to meet staff and share their achievements and concerns.

Over the course of 2nd and 3rd September, I visited each department at Park House. My first day started with attendance at the Executive Management Team Meeting. Senior Staff meet every Tuesday to share information, discuss problems and agree solutions. Notes of these meetings are made available to all staff via the HPC intranet. The meeting is chaired by each member of the management team on a rotating basis. Attendance provided an insight into current issues under debate.

Following the meeting I visited the Finance Department. As I am not a member of either the Finance and Resources Committee or the Audit Committee, finance is rather a mystery to me!. During my time there I met all four members of staff and discussed the HPC accounting process and the duties of individual members of the finance team. My impressions are that this is a very well run department and that there are sufficient checks and balances in place with regard to HPC finances.

Visits to other departments followed a similar pattern. The Human Resources Department explained the complexities of the partner recruitment process. The next priority for this department is the preparation of a staff handbook. The HPC will also be applying for ISO accreditation and the Investors in People award. The International Registration Department is feeling the pressure of working with applications which are being processed under the CPSM system and those who have applied under the new system. A positive feature of this is that the new procedures are working very well and should in the long term make life easier for applicants and staff. The new IT system should also help applicants and staff and it was a relief to be told that a complete back-up system is in place in case of complete loss of all information stored at Park House. The new legal processes are in place and ready for the first case under the new Rules. The Legal Team are more than able to face the new challenges!

General questions which I raised with all staff were what Council members could do to help the organization run smoothly and more efficiently and also questions around the internal communication at Park House. In general staff welcomed Council member's interest and support for what they do. Internal communication is thought to be good but is kept under review and will be discussed and developed at the next senior staff 'away day'.

I was tremendously impressed by the work of all staff in particular those working in the Registrations' Departments, dealing with constant calls from registrants in a helpful and cheerful manner.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Following on from this I have arranged through the Education and Policy Department to go on an approval visit to a University. I will also be visiting a professional body and will attend the next finance training course. I strongly recommend that all Council members take the opportunity to spend time at Park House.

I would like to express my thanks to all the staff for their time, patience and their honesty in answering my questions.

My special thanks to Marc and Niamh for arranging this and for the hospitality!