

**Council**

**Minutes of the 96th meeting of the Health and Care Professions Council as follows:-**

**Date:** Wednesday 11 February 2015

**Time:** 2pm

**Venue:** The Council Chamber, Health and Care Professions Council, Park House,  
184 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU

**Present:** Anna van der Gaag (Chair)  
Elaine Buckley  
Stephen Cohen  
Sonya Lam  
Eileen Mullan  
Joanna Mussen  
Robert Templeton  
Graham Towl  
Joy Tweed  
Nicola Wood  
Stephen Wordsworth

**In attendance:**

John Barwick, Acting Director of Fitness to Practise  
Guy Gaskins, Director of Information Technology  
Andy Gillies, Director of Finance  
Abigail Gorringe, Director of Education  
Michael Guthrie, Director of Policy and Standards  
Teresa Haskins, Director of Human Resources  
Jacqueline Ladds, Director of Communications  
Louise Lake, Director of Council and Committee Services  
Greg Ross-Sampson, Director of Operations  
Marc Seale, Chief Executive and Registrar

## Public Agenda – Part 1

### **Item 1.15/13 Chair's welcome and introduction**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Council members and those seated in the public gallery to the 96<sup>th</sup> meeting of Council.

### **Item 2.15/14 Apologies for absence**

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Richard Kennett.

### **Item 3.15/16 Approval of Agenda**

- 3.1 The Council approved the agenda.

### **Item 4.15/17 Declaration of Members' interests**

- 4.1 No interests were declared.

### **Item 5.15/18 Minutes of the Council meeting of 16 January 2015 (report ref:- HCPC05/15)**

- 5.1 The Council considered the minutes of the 95<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Health and Care Professions Council.
- 5.2 The Council agreed the minutes subject to amending Eileen Mullan's name (from Elaine Mullan) under the list of attendees.

### **Item 6.15/19 Chair's report (report ref:-HCPC06/15)**

- 6.1 The Council received a report from the Chair.
- 6.2 During discussion, the following points were made:-
  - The Chair had run a workshop on governance for the Irish regulator (CORU) at a training event held in Dublin in December;
  - The Council noted that the Chair had been invited by the Australian regulator (AHPRA) to give presentations to a range of stakeholders in Melbourne and Sydney. This was also an opportunity to learn from the experience of regulators in other countries;
  - The Chair had attended the International Care Ethics Observatory Advisory Group meeting. This group was a collaboration between Oxford and Surrey Universities and they were carrying out some analysis work for the PSA;

- The Council noted that the meeting with Dr Shereen Hussein on 27 January 20-15 was an opportunity for the Chair to discuss HCPC's approach to regulation;
- In response to a question about how meetings are prioritised, the Council noted that the Chair and Chief Executive have an 'open' policy whereby they do try to accommodate the majority requests for meetings. However, sometimes it is either more appropriate for another member of the Executive to meet with the individual or representatives from an organisation or simply that it is not possible owing to diary limitations.

6.3. The Council noted the report.

### **Item 7.15/20 Chief Executive's report (report ref:-HCPC07/15)**

7.1 The Council received a report from the Chief Executive.

7.2 During discussion, the following points were made:-

- The meeting held on 15 December with the representatives from Oxfordshire County Council was in relation to an ongoing investigation in relation to social workers. It was expected that there would be formal findings;
- The Council noted that the Chair and Chief Executive offer to meet with every professional body each year. This is their opportunity to provide their agenda items and raise any issues in a formal way; and
- The Council noted the role of CLEAR.

7.3 The Council noted the report.

## Departmental reports

### **Item 8.15/21 Human Resources report (report ref:-HCPC08/15)**

8.1 The Council received a report from the Executive. The Council noted that the report set out the main activities of the HR Department since the December meeting of Council.

8.2 During discussion, the following points were made:-

- That January and February were particularly busy as a result of recruitment for both employees and partners, the employee performance reviews and the annual pay rounds;
- With reference to a slightly higher number of vacancies than usual (page 9), the Council noted that we tend not to start recruitment campaigns in

December and so this number was slightly higher as a result of a delay in initiating recruitment;

- In response to a question about retention of staff as a result of wage inflation, the Council noted that wage inflation was not moving radically as yet, at least not in the public sector. The findings of exit interviews were that employees tend to leave as a result of career progression or pay;
- The Council noted that it would be useful to see statistics in relation to those employees with flexible working arrangements. It was further noted that those employees on flexible working arrangements tend to do reduced days rather than reduced hours i.e. compressed hours.

8.3 The Council discussed the paper and noted the contents therein.

### **Item 9.15/22 Finance report (report ref:-HCPC09/15)**

9.1 The Council received a report from the Executive. The Council noted that the report set out the main activities of the Finance Department since the December meeting of Council.

9.2 During discussion, the following points were made:-

- The 9 month reforecast showed that income and expenditure were on track and the 2014/15 outturn was positive;
- The draft budget for 2015/16 had now been put together;
- That a review of the outsourced payroll arrangements would be carried out to ensure integration with the new HR system;
- That the fluctuation in non-payroll costs of £799k as seen on page 5 of the report was as a result of phasing and in all likelihood the gap would be closed by year end;
- That the majority of social workers in England had now moved to paying by direct debit;
- That whilst the variances in income and expenditure were very small (approximately 1% and 5% respectively), we were moving towards the FAST standard which would make the budgeting process more robust and less susceptible to error;
- That it was down to the Council to agree the budget and any projected surplus or deficit that they were comfortable with. There is nothing set down in legislation which states what is an acceptable deficit or surplus might be.

9.3 The Council discussed the paper and noted the contents therein.

**Item 10.15/23 Education Report (report ref:- HCPC10/15)**

10.1 The Council received a paper for discussion from the Executive. The Council noted that the report set out the main activities of the Education Department since the December meeting of Council.

10.2 During discussion, the following points were made:-

- That whilst December and January were relatively quiet, the department were just entering a busy period with a high number of planned visits, most of which were to social work programmes. It was noted that these were the last of the programmes which were transferred over from the GSCC, approval for which has been conducted over the last three years;
- In response to a question, it was noted that education providers are expected to inform us if far reaching changes are made to programmes. However, since there is a degree of flexibility within the standards, minor changes can be made. It is hoped that we would be notified of changes before they are made although it was acknowledged that this was not always possible, for example, in relation to staff turnover or student numbers;
- The Council noted that if a concern was raised in relation to a registrant then the Fitness to Practise department would conduct their proceedings prior to any action by the Education department;
- That within the departmental workplan for 2015/16, a review of social work programmes would be carried out and this would be shared with education providers and stakeholders.

10.3 The Council discussed the paper and noted the contents therein.

**Item 11.15/24 Operations Report (report ref:-HCPC11/15)**

11.1 The Council received a paper for discussion from the Executive. The Council noted that the report set out the main activities of the Operations Department since the December meeting of Council.

11.2 During discussion, the following points were made:-

- That the registration renewal of social workers in England saw significantly fewer transactions in terms of telephone calls and emails. This was as a result of communications work and less queries since this was the second time the profession had renewed their registration with HCPC;
- In relation to website usage, the Council noted that whilst we do not have 'google analytics' and cannot see how far registrants progress in terms of

online renewals before logging out, approximately 80% of registrants renew online and approximately 10% of registrants never engage with HCPC using the website;

- That there has been an increase in the number of international applications. These are cost neutral. In terms of workload, this increase has been dealt with by existing staff on overtime;
- It was noted that fewer applications than expected had been received from paramedics from Australia and New Zealand. The London Ambulance Service had been thorough in their recruitment drive which had resulted in straightforward applications which could be considered 'in block';
- There was some positive news in relation to operational performance but the way it is presented did not highlight this. The suggestion was made that this be reviewed.

11.3 The Council discussed the paper and noted the contents therein.

#### **Item 12.15/25 Information Technology (IT) Report (report ref:- HCPC12/15)**

12.1 The Council received a paper for discussion from the Executive. The Council noted that the report set out the main activities of the IT Department since the December meeting of Council.

12.2 During discussion, the following points were made:-

- In relation to external provider contracts, due to their relatively low value, the contract does not include a method to commercially penalise the external provider responsible for the telephone outages described in the report;
- That the organisation was moving to 'secure printing' and the project is expected to complete by the end of March with the replacement of all printers and photocopiers (multi-functional devices).

12.3 The Council discussed the paper and noted the contents therein.

#### **Item 13.15/26 Communications Report (report ref:-HCPC13/15)**

13.1 The Council received a paper for discussion from the Executive. The Council noted that the report set out the main activities of the Communications Department since the December meeting of Council.

13.2 During discussion, the following points were made:-

- That the new 'MyHCPC' 'App' for registrants had been well received with over 1500 downloads;

- The original 'HCPC Check' 'App' which is aimed at members of the public and allows them to check the public register is still operational;
- That communications work was ongoing in relation to the renewal of practitioner psychologists due to commence on 1 March 2015;
- The Council noted that a process is in place to determine when it is appropriate to take a proactive or reactive approach to negative comments made in the media.

13.3 The Council discussed the paper and noted the contents therein.

**Item 14.15/27 Secretariat Report (report ref:-HCPC14/15)**

- 14.1 The Council received a paper for discussion from the Executive. The Council noted that the report set out the main activities of the Secretariat Department since the December meeting of Council.
- 14.2 The Council noted the ongoing work in relation to the recruitment of the new Chair of Council.
- 14.3 The Council discussed the paper and noted the contents therein.

**Item 15.15/28 Policy and Standards Report (report ref:-HCPC15/15)**

- 15.1 The Council received a paper for discussion from the Executive. The Council noted that the report set out the main activities of the Policy and Standards Department since the December meeting of Council.
- 15.2 During discussion, the following points were made:-
- The requirement for our professions to have professional indemnity insurance comes into force on 1 April 2015 and all registrants, with the exception of social workers in England, will have to make a declaration to say they have cover in place at the time of renewal;
  - QA research are undertaking the CPD perceptions and experiences study and have received 650 responses, 300 from people whom have previously been audited;
  - The Report on the Freedom to Speak Up review had just been published and there would be a report submitted to the next meeting of Council.

15.3 The Council discussed the paper and noted the contents therein.

### **Item 16.15/29 Fitness to Practise Report (report ref:-HCPC16/15)**

16.1 The Council received a paper for discussion from the Executive. The Council noted that the report set out the main activities of the Fitness to Practise Department since the December meeting of Council.

16.2 During discussion, the following points were made:-

- There had been fewer complaints received in December and January which was to be expected because of the Christmas holidays. Of the complaints received, 58% related to social workers;
- Progress had been made in terms of bringing the caseload back in line with forecasted figures;
- Changes had been made to how temporary staff were deployed which resulted in more experienced case managers dealing with a higher number of cases but with assistance from temporary staff;
- The 'protection of title' cases were now being dealt with by a dedicated case team manager and significant progress was being made;
- The length of time from receiving a complaint to a case being heard was broadly stable;
- The guidance for employers in relation to when they should refer a case had been reviewed. Amongst other things, this will enable the case managers to make a more expedient assessment of potential risks;
- In response to a question about balancing resources and how quickly a case is progressed, the Council noted that legislation dictates to a certain extent how long a case takes to progress at each stage;
- The workload given to a case manager was dependent upon how long they had been in post, how much support they were receiving and the complexity of the cases they were dealing with.

16.3 The Council discussed the paper and noted the contents therein.

### **Items to Note**

#### **Item 17.15/30 Chief Executive's Summary of key issues**

17.1 The Council received an update from the Chief Executive. This update covered current legislation, projects being undertaken, ISO27001, the Fitness to Practise process.



17.2 The Council noted the update.

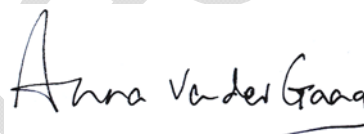
**Item 18.15/31 Reports from Council representatives at external meetings  
(report ref:-HCPC17/15)**

18.1 The Council noted the report.

**Item 19.15/32 Any other business**

19.1 There were no additional items for discussion.

Chair: ...



Date: ...25.03.2015.....

Confirmed