General Dental Council

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A meeting of the Council of the General Dental Council

10.00am on Friday 18 September at

Colmore Square, Brimingham

Members:

Helen Phillips (Chair)

Reshard Auladin

Ilona Blue

Donald Burden

Mike Driver

Bill Gunnyeon

Angie Heilmann

Serbjit Kaur

Mike Lewis

Timea Milovecz

Simon Morrow

Laura Simons

The meeting will be held in public. Items of business may be held in private where items are of a confidential nature.[1]

If you require further information or if you are unable to attend, please contact Rebecca Ledwidge as soon as possible:

Rebecca Ledwidge, Head of Governance, General Dental Council

Email: rledwidge@gdc-uk.org

[1] Section 5.2 of the General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business of Council and Committees 2022

Public Council Meeting

Questions from members of the public relating to matters on this agenda should be submitted using the form on the Council meeting page of the GDC website. When received at least three working days prior to the date of the meeting, they will usually be answered orally at the meeting. When received within three days of the date of the meeting, or in exceptional circumstances, answers will be provided in writing within seven to 15 working days. In any event, the question and answer will be appended to the relevant meeting minute and published on the GDC website.

Confidential items are outlined in a separate confidential agenda; confidential items will be considered in a closed private session.

PRIVATE COUNCIL SESSION ONLY – 09.30 – 09.50

PART ONE - PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1.	**Welcome and apologies for absence**	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council	10:00 – 10:05 (5 mins)	Verbal
2.	**Declarations of Interest**	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council		
3.	**Questions Submitted by Members of the Public**	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council		Verbal
4.	**Minutes of Previous Meetings** To note approval of the full minutes of the public meeting and the abbreviated minutes of the closed session held on 19 June 2026	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council		Paper
5.	**Matters Arising and Rolling Actions List** To note any matters arising from the public meeting held on 19 June 2026 and review the rolling actions list	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council		Paper
6.	**Decisions Log** To note decisions taken between meetings under delegation	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council		Paper

PART TWO - ITEMS FOR DECISION AND DISCUSSION

No	Item & Presenter	Tabled for?	Time	Status
7.	**Assurance Reports from Committee Chairs** 1) Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee – 3 September 2026 2) Finance and Performance Committee – 29 July, 24 August and 8 September 2026	Noting	10:05 – 10:15 (10 mins)	Papers

No	Item & Presenter	Tabled for?	Time	Status
8.	**Chief Executive's Report** Tom Whiting, Chief Executive	Noting	10:15 – 10:35 (20 mins)	Paper
9.	**Organisational Performance Report Q2 2026** David Criddle, Head of Business Intelligence and PMO	Discussion	10:35 - 10:55 (20 mins)	Paper
10.	**Scheme of delegations – financial and people delegations** Samantha Bache, Associate Director Finance Lee Avery, Associate Director, People and Organisational Development	Approval	10:55 - 11:15 (20 mins)	Paper
11.	**Non-Statutory Committee and Senior Independent Council Member appointments 2026** Helen Phillips, Chair of Council	Approval	11:15 - 11.25 (10 mins)	Paper
12.	**Any Other Business**	Helen Phillips, Chair of Council	11.25 -11.30 (5 mins)	Verbal
13.	**External Stakeholder Discussion** *To discuss matters raised by the invited external stakeholder.*	Helen Phillips, Chair of Council	11:30 - 12:00 (30 mins)	Verbal

PART THREE - CONCLUSION OF BUSINESS

14.	**Date of Next Meetings** 30 October, 50 Paddington, London	
Close 12:00		

Appendix 1 - Items considered via correspondence

Note:

- *These papers will not be discussed during the substantive Council meeting unless there is a request, no later than 48 hours before the meeting, for a specific item to be added to the agenda.*
- *The deadline for comments on papers circulated via correspondence is outlined on the individual item.*

No.	Item	Authors	For	Closed /Public	Deadline
C1	External Communications and Engagement: Quarterly Review and Insights (Q2 2026)	Joanne Rewcastle	Noting	Public	16 September 2026

C2	Council Forward Plan	Rebecca Ledwidge	Noting	Public	16 September 2026

Reading Room items

The following items contain additional papers that are provided in the Council Reading Room in the Resources section of Board Intelligence.

No.	Item	Authors	For	Closed/Public
R1	**Item 9** – Organisational Performance Report Q1 2026 – Appendix 1	David Criddle	Approval	Public

Board Charter

Our organisational values guide how we operate. Acknowledging their respective roles and responsibilities, Council Members and the Executive Leadership Team have agreed ways of working (a 'Board Charter') that aim to embed the GDC's values of fairness, transparency, responsiveness, and respect within our discussions, decision-making and leadership of the GDC.

The GDC's purpose and overarching objective when exercising its functions is the protection of the public. In order to achieve this, the GDC must:

- pursue, promote and maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of the public;
- promote and maintain public confidence in the professions, and;
- promote and maintain proper professional standards and conduct for members of those professions.

The Council and the Executive team are committed to:

- Working together in a respectful, inclusive, honest, transparent and open-minded way to achieve the best outcomes for the public.
- Bringing the views of the public, the profession, and our wider stakeholder group into decision-making.
- Being well informed, prepared and contributing constructively to the discussion.
- Welcoming constructive challenge.
- Drawing on evidence as appropriate to make informed, rational and fair decisions.
- Looking ahead, whilst learning from experience.

This Board Charter will be used:

- As a foundation for discussion on Council and Committee agendas.
- To inform discussion at Council Member and Executive appraisals.
- In meeting reviews.
- In communication with our internal stakeholders e.g. through a weekly newsletter and/or message from the Chair and the new Chief Executive.
- In the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024/25 to highlight work in respect of Board development.

Confirmed Minutes of the Meeting of the General Dental Council held at 9:30 on Friday 19 June 2026 in Open Session at the Radisson Blu, Glasgow

Council Members present:

Helen Phillips (Chair)
Reshard Auladin
Ilona Blue (via Teams)
Donald Burden
Mike Driver
Bill Gunnyeon
Angie Heilmann
Serbjit Kaur
Mike Lewis
Simon Morrow
Laura Simons

Executive Team Members in attendance:

Stefan Czerniawski	Executive Director, Strategy
Gurvinder Soomal	Chief Operating Officer
Katie Spears	Executive Director, Legal & Governance

Staff in attendance:

Samantha Bache	Associate Director, Finance
Clare Callan	Associate Director, FtP
David Criddle	Head of Business Intelligence, Delivery and PMO
Manjula Das	Head of Education and Quality Assurance (via Teams)
Tania Dosoruth	Head of Legal Presentation Services
Rachael Gilleard	Deputy Head of Governance
Rebecca Ledwidge	Head of Governance
Joanne Rewcastle	Associate Director, Communications & Engagement
Jenny Stewart	Senior Counsel and Associate Director, Legal
David Teeman	Head of Regulatory Intelligence

Others in Attendance

Members of the public and other GDC staff attended online and in person as observers.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that apologies had been received from Timea Milovecz, Tom Whiting and Theresa Thorp.

2. Declaration of interests

2.1 The following declarations were received:

a. Registrant Council Members in relation to FtP improvements (item 11) and Agreed Panel Determinations (item 12).

b. Angie Heilmann in relation to the dental nursing education and training review (item 13).

3. Questions Submitted by Members of the Public

3.1 No questions had been received before the meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

4.1 The full minutes of the public meeting and the abbreviated minutes of the closed meeting held on 24 April 2026 had been **approved via correspondence.**

5. Matters Arising and Rolling Actions List

5.1 The Council **noted** the action updates.

6. Decisions Log

6.1 The Council **noted** that no decisions for Public Council had been taken between meetings.

7. Assurance Reports from the Committee Chairs

The Council heard from the Committee Chairs in respect of the assurance taken from work conducted in Committee since the last Council meeting.

Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee (SPC)

7.1 The Chair of the SPC informed the Council that:

a. The Chair of Council had attended the Committee's meeting on 18 May 2026.

b. The Committee strongly supported the introduction of agreed panel determinations, and the FtP improvements work and there was an ambition to go even further.

c. The Committee had asked the executive to support them with mechanisms to scrutinise EDI and this work would be taken forward.

Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)

7.2 The Chair of the ARC informed the Council that:

a. The Committee had a meeting on 21 May 2026.

b. The Annual Report and Accounts (ARA) 2025 – the Committee had scrutinised the final draft. Appropriate due diligence had been carried out, suitable accounting policies had been used, judgments had been made in a reasonable way and applicable accounting and standards had been followed. The accounts were ready to sign off as planned. The Chair of ARC complemented the finance team on the

diligent work undertaken. It was noted that there were still opportunities to make the ARA more accessible to stakeholders, using the narrative to tell the story.

c. Internal audit – the Internal Communications audit had received reasonable assurance, and the risk management audit had received substantial assurance. The EDI audit would be completed soon.

d. Quarterly compliance reporting – one issue had been raised around a special payment for a mutually agreed severance agreement. A robust process had been followed and the GDC was effectively managing public money in this regard.

Remuneration and Nomination Committee (RemNom)

7.3 The Chair of the RemNom informed the Council that:

a. The Committee had a meeting on 4 June 2026. The Committee had received an update on the implementation of phase one of Total Reward and received assurance around manager readiness and support for managers.

b. Pay gap data was discussed and the Committee noted that GDC 'workers' could skew the data so encouraged the team to report as required but also keep separate data for employees and workers to provide a full understanding.

c. The Committee's terms of reference and scope had been discussed.

Finance and Performance Committee (FPC)

7.4 The Chair of the FPC informed the Council that:

a. The Committee had a meeting on 9 June 2026 which included constructive discussions on four of the substantive items on the Council agenda.

b. Organisational Performance Reporting – it was noted that a lot of progress had been made on the reporting approach but that it was still a work in progress that would feed through into the quarterly performance reporting.

c. Investment Policy - the Committee had asked for some further work around ethical investments and investment management arrangements (including different investment horizons and asset classes) to ensure value for money from the approach.

d. FtP improvements – the Committee recognised the progress that had been made and was keen to make sure that the teams were focused on the areas that would have most impact on timeliness without impacting the quality of decision making.

7.5 The Council noted that the performance report suggested sickness data was stable, but it appeared to be rising. There was also a relatively high number of live employee relations matters. The Chief Operating Officer clarified that sickness absence had risen but had now plateaued and the People and Organisational Development (POD) team was supporting line managers and trying to understand the reasons for absence.

7.6 The Council **noted** the assurance reports.

8. Chief Executive's Report

8.1 The Chief Operating Officer provided an update on key areas of organisational delivery, focussing on matters that might not otherwise be captured in other reports and for discussion with the Council. It was outlined that the Total Reward outcomes had been communicated earlier in the week and the SharePoint migration had completed and was in the final stages of testing before going live.

8.2 The Council was pleased to see the number of stakeholder engagement activities and events that had taken place.

8.3 The Chief Operating Officer confirmed that the MyGDC platform had been rolled out in a gradual way and was performing as expected. The DCP ARF collection, due by the end of July, was on track. It was clarified that a technical issue preventing payment would be distinguished from those who had not attempted to pay. The approach was designed to be supportive of registrants rather than punitive. A fix had gone into the system for one of the two bugs that needed to be resolved. They were working with PWC (as in period of hypercare) to replicate and resolve the other one.

8.4 The organisation was in the process of commissioning a provider to deliver further strategic and operational EDI training. The intention was to evidence clearly where the GDC currently was, where the organisation wanted to be (with a focus on meeting the PSA standard) and the activity that would be undertaken to make the desired progress.

8.5 The Council **noted** the update.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation for Strategy Delivery

9.1 The Executive Director, Strategy outlined that the approach aimed to measure outcomes and the consequences of actions more clearly. The development had included workshops with a working group (which included staff and Council Members) and oversight from the FPC. It was still a work in process which would be iterative and would become visible through performance reporting. It would provide evidence to show whether activities were making progress towards the objectives and high-level ambition of the strategy, enabling the opportunity to change course if required.

9.2 The Council discussed the following:

a. The FPC supported the direction of travel which provided clarity about the strategic impact areas whilst maintaining BAU delivery. It noted that there would be a period of adjustment while the organisation shifted to more strategic outcome measures.

b. The Council was pleased with the collaborative approach taken and the quality of the work produced, noting that it was simple and sophisticated.

c. There was a need for clear baseline measures as well as clarity of the ambition, setting out what success would look like, from the perspective of those the GDC serves, at the end of the strategy period.

d. It was observed that a conclusion could not be drawn from the EDI data, so caution was required when publishing and explaining that information.

e. It was noted that there were some aspects that the GDC was not in control of, such as access to NHS dental care, but it was important for the organisation to play the part it could and use the levers it had to influence. Collaboration with Chief Dental Officers around key measures for outcomes might be beneficial as there could be an opportunity for shared reporting.

9.3 The Council **approved** the design of the initial monitoring and evaluation framework. It was noted that the Executive would work with Committee Chairs to align discussions to the right outcome measures with a focus on risk.

10. Organisational Performance Report Q1

10.1 The Head of Business Intelligence and PMO introduced the Q1 report which was the first report in relation to delivery of the new strategy.

10.2 The Council **discussed** the following:

a. The Council liked the way the report was presented and indicted that it provided the right level of detail for the Council.

b. It was noted that 70% of registrants and informants thought improvements were required – this reinforced the importance of the FtP improvements work.

c. There was a concern around the pace of the IT and digital strategy as this was important for supporting other projects. The Council heard that the IT team was procuring a partner to look at the work planned over the next three years, identify any gaps and ensure the plan was appropriately resourced. The Council sought assurance that the use of GDC data and the organisational approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) would be captured in the work. It was confirmed that this was being built into the plan and would include a session with the Council on Board engagement with AI.

d. Progress on the International Registration work was discussed, and it was noted that Council would receive an overview of the position in October.

ACTION: The Associate Director, Registration to provide an update on the ORE waiting list via correspondence – this should set out the best estimate of the numbers on the list that are likely to be 'active' candidates and a forecast of when the list would be cleared.

11. Fitness to Practise improvements programme update

11.1 The Executive Director, Legal and Governance introduced the item.

11.2 The Council **discussed**:

a. There was broad support for the aims, priorities and direction but there were concerns around pace.

b. In terms of risk, it was noted that the reputational risk of not moving fast enough (for informants or registrants) was a bigger risk than reflected in the paper. The Council queried whether the teams were doing as much as they could to send concerns back to local resolution. The Executive Director, Legal and Governance confirmed that re-routing concerns was a priority focus area. The Council asked for more detail on that point to be included in the October paper.

c. Engagement with stakeholders would be needed to support more local resolution. This could include strengthening resolution of complaints amongst student cohorts.

d. The Council noted the importance of having a costed plan with a range of options for investment in the investment case that would be presented in October. This should include the anticipated impacts.

e. The FPC had identified a need to balance the ambition to make progress against a realistic view of the challenges due to the volume of concerns being received. There was a need to make changes, or the FtP work would become unaffordable / undeliverable in the longer term.

f. At the risk workshop in July, the Council wanted to see a costed proposal and business case with options, projected workloads and timescales. The pace should be as quick as possible short of compromising on quality. The plan should outline when the approach would make the GDC compliant with its own KPIs and the PSA's standards.

11.3 The Council endorsed the direction of travel and next steps.

12. Agreed Panel Determinations (APD)

12.1 The Head of Legal Presentation Services introduced the proposed approach which stretched the boundaries of the GDC's legislation and introduced a less adversarial mechanism resulting in fairer outcomes. This represented a positive step in terms of advancing the Strategy and reducing fear.

12.2 The Council **discussed** the proposals including the following:

a. The Council was very supportive of APD but was concerned that the timescales were too slow. There was a desire to streamline (including reducing listing windows) and move straight into the pilot phase.

b. The training of panellists would be crucial to effective implementation and reducing the time required for hearings for APDs.

c. It was confirmed that APD was a voluntary process which limited risk and it was clarified that unrepresented registrants would have the option to use the process.

12.3 In light of the risk of not moving quickly on FtP improvements, the Council **approved** a pilot of APD without formal consultation. An informal engagement approach would be undertaken with targeted stakeholders (e.g., the PSA, defence unions and panellists).

12.4 The team confirmed implementation plans would be drawn up including drafting and socialisation of guidance, training of panellists, staff training, and engagement with stakeholders.

13. Dental Nursing Education and Training Review

13.1 The Head of Education and Quality Assurance (EQA) introduced the review.

13.2 The Council **discussed** the report including the following:

a. There was a view that dental nursing training produces safe practitioners and the risk that they carry was quite low in dental practice. Ideally there would be standardisation of provision but there was a need to be pragmatic about what could be achieved.

b. A concern was raised that the quality assurance approach did not engage directly with tutors or students. However, it was noted that the scale of such activity would be a very different demand on the EQA team and would have resource implications.

13.3 The Council agreed to publish the report and use as a platform for a conversation with stakeholders about the GDC's intentions to strengthen its approach in relation to dental nurse training EQA.

Item 18 was taken at this point prior to the lunchbreak, with items 14 – 17 dealt with after lunch.

14. Review of Delegations Framework

14.1 The Senior Counsel and Associate Director, Legal and the Head of Governance introduced the proposed delegations framework.

14.2 The Council noted the importance of the principles and governance rigour around them to facilitate cultural change and make the GDC a more empowered organisation. It was noted

that the Finance and People delegations would be presented to Council in September and these would continue to underpin the cultural shift.

14.3 The Council **approved** the principles, **made** the Rules and the Council scheme of delegations and **noted** the Registrar delegations.

15. Committee Terms of Reference

15.1 The Head of Governance outlined the key changes being proposed to the Committee Terms of Reference (ToR) in line with the recommendations of the Board Effectiveness Review (BER).

15.2 The Council **discussed** the following:

a. The Council was comfortable with the proposed changes to the ARC, FPC and SPC ToRs.

b. It was noted that health and safety was currently overseen via an annual report to ELT and ARC. It was agreed that the reporting should be broader than 'slips and trips' and should be specific about statutory requirements. It was agreed that the ARC would consider whether the health and safety reporting and system of control was fit for purpose and whether it was an area that merited deployment of internal auditors.

c. There was a divergence of views on the RemNom ToRs with some Council Members advocating a broader People Committee remit and others advocating the proposed approach with Council overseeing EDI and culture. The Council felt slightly unsighted on the totality of People issues (such as capacity, capability, and support for colleagues aligned with their wellbeing) which contributed to the divergence of views.

ACTION: The Associate Director, POD to provide Council with an update on progress against the People Strategy, with appropriate metrics from the outcomes work. This should focus on more difficult areas such as ambitions for staff survey engagement levels, sickness levels, employee relations matters and the impact of Total Reward. This would help determine the most appropriate reporting forum and matters that required escalation.

15.3 The Council **approved** the proposed ToRs and new Standing Orders to effect these changes.

16. Investment Policy

16.1 The Associate Director, Finance introduced the policy outlining the changes that had been made to address points raised by the FPC.

16.2 The Council discussed the following:

a. The policy outlined that gains would usually be invested in transformation programmes rather than BAU activity, but it was framed to avoid binding the GDC.

b. The principles in relation to ethical investment had intentionally been framed broadly – to 'minimise' rather than 'prohibit' because it was very difficult to avoid items linked to sugar (e.g., supermarkets) when investing in large funds. The main sectors that would be excluded were defence/arms, oil, tobacco and sexual entertainment. The GDC had also barred itself from investing in dentistry and was seeking to minimise investments linked to sugar.

c. It was suggested that it would be beneficial to periodically have an external organisation benchmark the GDC's investment management. In the future it might be appropriate to assess whether the current approach was the right model and consider a move away from investment, adopting a pure funds approach.

d. It was clarified that the target listed was after fees.

e. The Financial Delegations coming to Council in September 2026 would clarify the approval forum for the Investment Policy going forward. The Council was content with the approach of Council overseeing the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and FPC approving the Investment Policy.

16.3 The Council **approved** the investment principles and the Investment Policy.

17. Any Other Business

17.1 There was no other business.

18. External Stakeholder Discussion – CDO Scotland

18.1 Gillian Leslie, Scotland's Chief Dental Officer, introduced her team and outlined some of the key challenges that they were encountering including limited clinical experience of some international dentists and associated safety issues, the wellbeing and support of registrants, the handling of low-level FtP concerns, and dental nursing training. The culture change from the GDC, reducing fear, was welcomed and facilitated greater engagement and collaboration on significant issues.

18.2 The Chair thanked Dr Leslie for attending the meeting and sharing these important insights with the Council.

19. Date of Next Meetings

13.1 The Council **noted** the date of the next meeting – 18 September 2026 in Birmingham.

The meeting closed at 13:30

Abbreviated Minutes of the Meeting of the General Dental Council held at 13:30 on Friday 19 June 2026 in Closed Session at the Radisson Blu, Glasgow

Council Members present:

Helen Phillips (Chair)
Reshard Auladin
Ilona Blue (via Teams)
Donald Burden
Mike Driver
Bill Gunnyeon
Angie Heilmann
Serbjit Kaur
Mike Lewis
Simon Morrow
Laura Simons

Executive Team Members in attendance:

Stefan Czerniawski	Executive Director, Strategy
Gurvinder Soomal	Chief Operating Officer
Katie Spears	Executive Director, Legal and Governance

Staff and Others in attendance:

Samantha Bache	Associate Director, Finance
Sam Clements	Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit
Rachael Gilleard	Deputy Head of Governance
Rebecca Ledwidge	Head of Governance
Colin Mackenzie	Head of Nations and Engagement
Joanne Rewcastle	Associate Director, Communications and Engagement

Apologies

Timea Milovecz	Council Member
Tom Whiting	Chief Executive and Registrar
Theresa Thorp	Executive Director, Regulation

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1.2 It was noted that Timea Milovecz, Tom Whiting and Theresa Thorp had sent apologies.

2. Declaration of interests

2.1 The following declarations of interest were received:

a. Item 8 – Annual Report and Accounts - all Council Members and staff present in respect of the disclosures in the remuneration report.

b. Item 9 – Consultation on draft GMC Order – all Council Members and staff present in relation to the structural proposals which could influence plans for GDC legislation.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

3.1 The full minutes of the closed meeting held on 24 April 2026 had been **approved via correspondence**.

4. Matters Arising and Rolling Actions List

4.1 In relation to action 84 on the Investment Policy, it was noted that this policy had been discussed in the Public Council meeting and the action would be closed.

5. Decisions Log

6. Chief Executive's Report

6.1 The Chief Operating Officer and the Executive Director, Strategy provided an update on the following areas:

a. Lord Mann Review – the Council would be kept informed of progress.

b. Overseas Registration Examination (ORE) - there was a need to consider the important points that had been raised by external stakeholders in the public meeting.

6.2 The Council **noted** the update.

7. Strategic Risk Register (SRR)

7.1 The Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit introduced the paper and the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) confirmed that the committee was supportive of the proposed approach.

7.2 The Council welcomed the clarity of the paper and the proposals.

7.3 The Council **approved** the addition of risks to the SRR.

8. Annual Report and Accounts (ARA) 2025

8.1 The Associate Director, Finance and the Head of Nations and Engagement introduced the final version of the ARA 2025 outlining some minor changes that had been agreed with the National Audit Office (NAO).

8.2 The Council thanked colleagues and the ARC for their work on the ARA 2025.

8.3 The Council **approved** the ARA 2025. It was noted that the Chair and the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer would sign the ARA after the meeting.

9. Consultation on draft GMC Order

9.1 The Executive Director, Strategy provided an update on the GDC's consultation response, following the sessions that Council Members had attended.

9.2 The Council **noted** the draft response to the consultation

10. Any other business

10.1 There was no other business.

11. Date of Next Meetings

11.1 The Council noted the date of the next Council meeting on 18 September 2026, in Birmingham.

The meeting closed at 14:55.

Public Council Actions Log								
Action No.	**Date of Meeting**	**Minute no.**	**Subject**	**Action**	**Due date**	**Owner**	**Update**	**Status**
41	27/02/2026	12.3	Sustainability Strategy	Associate Director, Finance to amend the Sustainability Strategy to reflect Council's comments before it is circulated via correspondence for approval.	31.05.2026	Sam Bache	Approved by Council via correspondence on 26 June 2026.	Suggest closed
42	19/06/2026	10.2.d	Organisational performance report	The Associate Director, Registration to provide an update on the ORE waiting list via correspondence – this should set out the best estimate of the numbers on the list that are likely to be 'active' candidates and a forecast of when the list would be cleared.	18.09.2026	Jonathan Harris	Update sent to the Council on 14 July.	Suggest closed
43	19/06/2026	15.2.c	Committee Terms of Reference	The Associate Director, POD to provide an update on progress against the People Strategy, with appropriate metrics from the outcomes work. This should focus on more difficult areas such as ambitions for staff survey engagement levels, sickness levels, employee relations matters and the impact of Total Reward. This would help determine the most appropriate reporting forum and matters that required escalation.	10.12.2026	Lee Avery	To be presented at the Council meeting on 10 December.	Live

Item 6 - Decisions Log – PUBLIC Council – 18 September 2026

Date decision taken (confirmed)	Decision taken by	Agenda Item	Purpose	Outcome
26 June 2026	Council	**Sustainability Strategy**	To approve the Sustainability Strategy, initially considered by the Council on 24 April 2026. At its meeting on 24 April, the Council agreed that the Associate Director, Finance would amend the Sustainability Strategy to reflect the Council's comments before circulation via correspondence for approval.	The Sustainability Strategy was approved on 26 June 2026.

Assurance Report of the Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee

3 September 2026

Committee Chair	Sir Ross Cranston
Governance Manager	Polly Button

1. Meetings

1.1 Since the last meeting of the Council, the Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee (SPC) has met once, on 3 September 2026.

2. Dental Professionals Hearings Service (DPHS) Operational Update

2.1 The Committee received an update on the performance of the DPHS during Q2 2026 and was informed that progress against the KPIs in relation to complex cases was positive. It was noted that improvements in other areas were expected.

2.2 The Committee noted the impact of the increase in the number and lateness of Rule 6e applications resulting in the delays and adversely affecting panel utilisation. The Committee was informed that a workshop with defence unions had taken place and the work to address the issue formed part of the wider Fitness to Practise (FtP) improvement programme.

2.3 The Committee received an update on the work underway for Agreed Panel Determinations (APD), with the aim of starting a pilot in Q1 2027, and production of guidance later in 2026. The Committee strongly encouraged the work to be progressed as swiftly as feasible, especially preparation of the guidance which could be adapted from that of other regulators.

3. Fitness to Practise (FtP) Improvement Programme Update

3.1 The Committee received an update and overview of the FtP Improvements programme together with an outline of next steps in the Business Planning cycle for 2027-29. The work on case management improvements had been subsumed into the FtP improvement programme, and the Committee would receive updates on an ongoing basis.

3.2 The Committee discussed the priority areas relevant to hearings including fast tracking for serious cases, work on cases earlier in the process and APD. The Committee was supportive of the approach and requested to be sighted on the sexual misconduct cases pilot evaluation due later in the year.

4. Panellists Learning and Development Update

4.1 The Committee noted an update on learning and development including the now completed panellist training where feedback was noted as positive. The Committee was informed that the development for the 2027 training plan was underway and would align with key pieces of transformation work across the organisation.

4.2 The next FtP Chair's development day would take place on 19 October, and members of the Committee would be in attendance.

5. Progress of Professional Standards Authority (PSA) EDI Standard for the Hearings Service

5.1. The Committee received an update on EDI matters for those areas that fall within its Terms of Reference and was informed that evidence relating to areas of SPC scrutiny was provided by the GDC to the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) against Standard 3, as part of its review submission:

5.2. The Committee was pleased with the wide range of EDI activities, reviews and reporting taking place within the hearings service. The Committee was informed that provisional feedback from the PSA in relation to standard 3 would be shared with the Committee shortly.

6. Quality Assurance Reports

Quality Assurance Group

6.1 The Committee received QAG report for Q2 2026. The Committee requested a summary of the concerns raised by QAG in their June meeting.

Decision Scrutiny Group (DSG)

6.2 The Committee was informed that the Q2 report would follow at the next meeting. The next DSG meeting would take place in October, and preliminary reviews had taken place which showed no current concerns.

7. PSA Learning Points and Appeals Update

7.1 The Committee noted the feedback provided by the PSA on FtP decisions received since the last meeting, and information on both PSA and registrant appeals.

8. Guidance for dealing with complaints or concerns about Statutory Committee Panellists and Hearings Associates and Associate Code of Conduct

Guidance

8.1 The Committee noted the updated guidance document which primarily focused on streamlining the internal investigation phase, providing clarity on the role of SPC and aligning with the new GDC values.

8.2 The Committee noted that the guidance provided a good set of procedures and suggested the inclusion of a point of contact for confidential discussions.

Associate Code of Conduct

8.3 The Committee noted the updated code of conduct, following changes to the Associates' worker status, which outlined principles of behaviour and aligned with the new GDC values. The Committee noted the need for further work on the underpinning and enforcement of the code.

8.4 Both documents may be further updated in due course to reflect the requirements of the Public Office Accountability Bill.

9. AOB

9.1 Following the meeting, the Committee held a private meeting in its capacity as an adjudicating body.

Ross Cranston

Chair of the Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee

Assurance Report of the Finance and Performance Committee
29 July, 24 August, 8 September 2026

Committee Chair	Ilona Blue Donald Burden (Acting Chair for 8 September 2026 meeting)
Governance Manager	Polly Button

1.1 Since the last meeting of the Council, the FPC has met three times on 29 July, 24 August and 8 September 2026.

1.2 On 29 July, the Committee held a meeting to discuss the Fitness to Practise (FtP) Investment Cases and the first draft of the Business Plan 2027-29. The Committee provided steer and comments to support subsequent drafts.

1.3 On 24 August, the Committee held a meeting to review the status of the Business Plan 2027-29. The Committee provided further comments to support the development of the second draft.

1.4 Substantive agenda items for the **8 September 2026** meeting included:

a. Organisational Performance for Quarter 2
b. FtP Investment Cases
c. Business Plan 2027-2029 Second Draft
d. Finance and People Decision-Making Framework

2. Organisational Performance

2.1 The Committee received a summary of the Q2 2026 reconciled budget, headcount and performance, and the latest month end status for progress in delivery of business plan activity.

2.2 The Committee discussed several specific points, seeking assurance on actions being taken:

a. The Committee noted that the Overseas Dental Care Professionals (DCPs) backlog was cleared, and this was now visible in reporting.
b. The Committee requested the figures within the Education Provider standards for 2025/26 be further reviewed and additional narrative provided.
c. The Committee discussed sickness absence and received further assurance that close monitoring, in particular of long-term sickness, was underway with ongoing support provided to people managers. Additionally, the Senior Management Team (SMT) was actively reviewing all the relevant policies and developing supporting guidance. The Committee requested that the Council be provided with further detail of the new mitigations in place in this area.
d. The Committee suggested that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) sections of the GDC website be reviewed and enhanced to further highlight work achieved.
e. The Committee noted that the additional detailed information provided in a supporting appendix was very helpful in providing assurance.

2.3 Subject to comments made, the Committee agreed that the Organisational Performance Report should be presented to Council on 18 September.

3. FtP Investment Cases

3.1 The Committee was presented with a recommended approach to future investment in FtP, to meet the demands of an increasing caseload and improving FtP timeliness, in support of the GDC's strategic objectives. This focused on maintaining current performance, delivering efficiencies and progressing selected high-impact improvements in advance of any longer-term commitment.

3.2 The Committee suggested that the recommendation to the Council should provide further clarity on the investment scope and supporting narrative on the development process and analysis undertaken. Additionally, to include further detail about the substantive work due in 2027.

3.3 Subject to the comments provided, the Committee endorsed the recommended approach to Council for approval.

4. Business Plan 2027-2029- second draft

4.1 The Committee discussed the second draft of the Business Plan 2027–29 ahead of the Council's initial review. The Committee was informed that the draft plan had been reviewed, with some resultant refinement and reprofiling, but continued to deliver the current GDC strategy and strategic direction.

4.2 The Committee discussed the report in detail, noting their previous two meetings, and provided comments to support further development of the Business Plan.

a. The Committee discussed the GDC's investment strategy and the application of investment funds, with the potential for this to be used for transformation purposes.

b. The Committee requested further narrative on the development of the FtP caseload forecast models. The Committee also discussed the FtP caseload sensitivity analysis and requested further clarity on the baseline figures.

c. The Committee noted that the infographic on the overall increase in the business plan did not sufficiently highlight that the amount attributable to the Overseas Registration Examination (ORE) will be redeemed from fees. Additionally, the Committee suggested further narrative of the risks and opportunities presented by the ORE.

d. The Committee was informed that further work was required on the investment cases, and that it was anticipated that the financial position would improve following this.

e. The Committee was comfortable with the direction of travel and that the second draft of the Business Plan, subject to refinement to reflect comments made, should be presented to the Council

5. Finance and People Decision-Making Framework

5.1 The Committee received the updated Finance and People decision-making framework supported by Financial, People and Procurement and Contracting authority schedules.

5.2 The Committee was informed that the new framework had been developed to allow proportionate decision making, and accountability to support and empower staff. The framework would take time to embed, however work was underway on assurance mapping

and a training and development plan and implementation would be phased to ensure that it was manageable for the organisation.

5.3 The Committee queried the proposed timing of the new framework in light of large pieces of work currently in progress across the organisation and the financial considerations outlined in the business plan. The Committee was informed that transparency and appropriate decision making was an important issue that was raised in the last staff survey, which the framework would help to address. It was also anticipated that in the longer term decision-making would be quicker. The need to balance various considerations was acknowledged.

5.4 The Committee was supportive of the framework and was assured that related staff policies on anti-fraud, bribery, corruption and whistleblowing were closely monitored by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC).

5.5 The Committee recommended the Finance and People decision-making framework to the Council for their approval.

6. Any other business

6.1 The Committee and staff provided reflections that the meeting was well chaired and allowed a collaborative and honest discussion on significant topics.

6.2 It was also noted this was the first meeting in the new boardroom in the Paddington office and had run smoothy.

6.3 The next meeting would be held on 23 November 2026.

Ilona Blue

Chair of the Finance and Performance Committee

Donald Burden

Acting Chair for 8 September meeting

Chief Executive Officer Update Report

Executive Director	Tom Whiting, Chief Executive & Registrar
Author(s)	Tom Whiting, Chief Executive & Registrar
Type of business	To provide Council with an update on key areas of work for the Chief Executive and Registrar, that may not otherwise be captured in other reports and for discussion with Council.
Purpose	The Chief Executive and Registrar gives a regular written update report to Council.
Issue	To update the Council on the work of the Chief Executive.
Recommendation	To **note** the update.

1. Update on Chief Executive's Priorities

1.1 I have structured this update with a focus on matters that are not otherwise covered on the agenda but provide timely updates on important areas of interest to Council, or progress on work that is key for delivery of the strategy and business plan.

1.2 **People**

a. **The People Strategy**- People and Organisational Development (POD) have produced a detailed plan for delivery of the strategy (approved by Council in April). Key services and initiatives have been prioritised and initial progress will be discussed at Council in December to help guide the work and focus of the Remuneration and Nominations Committee in 2027.

b. **Digital transformation and change management**- We are currently recruiting an Interim Associate Director, Change & Transformation role, anticipated to last 4-6 months presently. We envisage that the successful candidate will be able to start soon and one of their first priorities will be supporting the Fitness to Practise (FtP) Improvement programme. We have appointed Gatenby Sanderson to support with the recruitment of a permanent Associate Director, Change & Transformation, in September-Q4, and anticipate a permanent postholder will be in place in early Q1 2027.

c. **Your Voice Survey**- The People Forum held two listening sessions in Colmore Square, focussed largely on peoples' concerns about workload and communication- which are two of the three focus areas identified from the survey results (the third being learning and development). POD and Internal Communications colleagues are progressing actions emerging from those sessions, and directorate specific plans are owned by Executive Directors with support from HR business partners. Plans are progressing for a Pulse Survey in Q4 this year followed by a full survey in October 2027.

d. **Open Doors**- A new engagement initiative where colleagues from both sites were invited to meet informally with me and ELT representatives ran across June and July.

Themes and questions were noted for follow up by Internal Communications and included discussions about Total Reward, learning & development, recruitment and resourcing, business planning and strategy, organisational culture, Council engagement and leadership visibility.

e. I am also attending a series of team meetings and away days to meet with colleagues across the GDC- providing updates and taking questions.

f. **Total Reward** (TR)- Phase 1 was successfully implemented in July with the creation of 9 new pay levels to which colleagues were assimilated. Support for colleagues included briefings about the rationale for the framework, manager and colleague communications and a mechanism to challenge placement on the new framework. Six colleagues requested a review, resulting in two job roles moving up the scale. July payroll increased by 2.63% against June's which was marginally higher than the projected increase of 2.59%.

g. A proposal for Phase 2 of Total Reward, contribution based pay progression, is in draft form with feedback provided from ELT to help shape the approach.

h. **New L&D initiatives**-

- An **Introduction to Dentistry programme** for colleagues in FtP, CAIT, Policy and Legal was designed in collaboration with the Clinical Advisory team to increase knowledge and understanding of the dental industry, clinical procedures, and common concerns raised by the public. The objective is to offer improved Registrant and Patient experience.

  (i) **360 Feedback sessions** to support leaders with the process will be launched across the senior management population beginning with ELT in September.

  (ii) We are launching a new **Aspiring Leaders programme** in September for colleagues with the potential and desire to progress to a management role.

  (iii) Following a successful pilot with the Leadership Community Network, **Transforming Wellbeing Conversations** training will be offered to managers via two additional sessions

.

i. **Staff Network activity**- Facilitated by the Head of EDI and the Culture and EDI Partner, Network Chairs have been offered a monthly coaching session to support them in the delivery of their role, they will also attend a group Network Chairs Development Day in November. Recent network events include a celebration of Equal Parenting Week, Carers Week, Pride Month, and Staff Network Day. I continue to meet with the Network Chairs on a quarterly basis. There is further activity planned up until the end of the year.

1.3 External Relationships

a. **DLN**- We held a successful meeting in June on theme of 'Supporting internationally qualified dental professionals'. There was good engagement in the room, hearing from speakers with lived experience, employers who are providing support, and learning about the broader issues in the sector, such as the needs of internationally qualified dental professionals (clinical, practical, cultural), and access to an NHS number. Our next meeting will be held on 24 November- the theme is still to be decided.

b. **Four nations**- Helen and I are due to meet the new Welsh Cabinet Minister for Health and Care and the new Scottish Cabinet Secretary and Minister for Health

when we visit Edinburgh in October. We will also meet with the CDO, Scotland and representatives from the Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh. Helen is due to meet with the new Dean of the Faculty of Dental Surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. We have written to James Frith MP, the new Minister in Westminster with responsibility for Dentistry and will be inviting him to the DLN.

c. **Framework for Professionalism** – We held around 20 stakeholder engagements either online or in person to gather views as part of the consultation throughout July and August. We met with senior dental leaders across the four nations, NHS leads, professional associations for dentists and DCPs, students and EDI groups representing minority groups within dentistry.

d. **Good Practice event**- In July, the Education Quality Assurance team held the first Good Practice event, drawing together 58 preregistration education providers to share a wide range of good practice developments across different dental professions and countries. Themes covered included assessment, Artificial Intelligence, well-being, cultural humility and monitoring behaviours. We were lucky enough to be joined by Angie Heilmann who supported the event which we intend to run annually.

e. **Upcoming stakeholder events** - Various members of ELT are representing the GDC across a busy programme of events in Q4 including the Fear Factors in Dentistry summit which will also be attended by Helen. This is an entirely new initiative that will inform the Improving Fitness to Practise work as well as using our convening role to support cross partner action to tackle fear.

f. Helen and I are also due to meet with the new Chair of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

1.4 **Registration**

a. **ORE**- Following a period of intense activity, we are finalising mobilisation for the new ORE contracts. The first Part 2 examination under the new contracts will have taken place from 10 to 13 September. The new candidate websites are now live, including the Part 2 website.

b. Further material will be added to the guidance documents, including candidate guidance videos and sample examination questions. This work is intended to improve the preparation and overall experience for candidates.

c. We have completed two booking windows for two Part 1 exams. These should be the last large booking windows using our existing booking process. For our next large part 1 exam we anticipate having the supplier portal in place and likely a ballot system for allocation of places and moving away from the time critical booking window.

d. We continue to monitor candidate numbers; ORE applications are starting to reduce and are averaging circa 187 per month in 2026, down from circa 250/300 applications per month in 2025. However, candidate lists are above 8,000 in total across both parts, as we move into the delivery phase of new contracts. We will continue to monitor and assess diet capacity through the lifetime of the contracts.

e. **MyGDC** – We have completed the first full renewal and application cycle since going live in March. The DCP renewal closed on 31 July with over 99 per cent of payments collected against the target (84,274) and 83,692 registrants renewed, matching the legacy process in outcome while moving it online. In light of technical issues with some of the renewals we publicly took the position that DCPs who were trying to renew and were having technical difficulties would not be removed from the register

so long as they had let us know. Our call centre performance was slow during this period given a significant increase in the number of calls coming in. Staff worked overtime to support addressing a backlog of contact.

f. Registration applications continued uninterrupted throughout, shifting from largely manual in March to almost entirely online by August. The defects encountered along the way were small in scale, affecting under one per cent of the register, with the majority resolved during the period.

g. Services are operating as expected in Registration with over 6,000 applications now completed via MGR since launch.

h. Hypercare closes in August with the platform stable, remaining fixes are scheduled through a managed backlog (with GDC IT), and PwC will be handing over to internal teams.

i. PwC will potentially be retained for a further couple of weeks to investigate performance issues experienced during peak periods. Some processes, such as renewal reminders, were run manually where defects prevented the system doing so, and permanent fixes for these are being delivered through the remaining backlog.

1.5 Strategy Development and Delivery

a. Mann review recommendations - We are working with our regulatory counterparts, the DHSC and the PSA to give effect to the recommendations made by Lord Mann in his recent review. We understand there is still a ministerial roundtable planned for October, although there is not yet a date fixed. Many of the recommendations seem to assume a structured NHS environment, so the policy team has done work to consider how these apply in the dental context. The team brought an update paper to the ELT meeting on 7 September and will present this to Council in October.

b. **Artificial Intelligence (AI)-** We are part of the PSA cross-regulatory task and finish group to develop high level principles to govern the use of AI in healthcare settings. These principles will be informed by the work of the MHRA, which has recently been published.

c. **Data Strategy work-** Workshops and one to ones with ELT and functional teams are being held with Carruthers and Jackson to help inform business case options and recommendations in time to be considered as part of the annual business planning process.

d. **Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework**- Council reviewed the outputs from the series of workshops held to develop the framework and we are mapping this analysis to our M&E outcomes, impacts and corporate strategy objectives.

e. We are developing new monitoring measures for performance reporting. The framework will be submitted to ELT and Council in Q4. We will align M&E developments with our programme plans for 2027.

1.6 User Experience and Information Security

a. **The migration from SharePoint** On-premises to the SharePoint Online was completed with 10.8 million items migrated successfully, alongside delivery of other linked objectives including CRM and document management enhancements, improved user experience and stronger governance and control improvements.

b. **The Digital Partnership engagement** invitation to tender was published to the market on 19 August, with a deadline of mid-September.

1.7 **Fitness to Practise and PSA Standards**

a. Fitness to Practise performance- While 6 of the 9 teams in end to end FtP continue to meet internal targets regularly, the Case Examiner Stage, ILPS/ELPS and Hearings are not yet meeting internal targets – fundamentally because we have seen a significant increase in caseload through the front door at Initial Assessment and this has translated into more cases at each stage of the process. An FtP Improvements Programme update will be offered as part of the Business Planning item on the agenda for this meeting.

1.8 **Estates**

a. London based colleagues moved from Wimpole Street to our new Paddington office in late August.

b. Works for the 3 hearing suites at Avon House, West Kensington were completed by 16th September with the first hearing to be held at Avon House will start on 21st September.

c. Progress reports are being received weekly and the next site visit is scheduled for 8th September.

d. Audio Visual installation and testing will take place week commencing 14 September

e. Following this the remainder of Wimpole Street will be decommissioned and the keys will be returned to Howard de Walden on 29th September.

2. Equality, diversity and privacy considerations

2.1 The EDI risk relating to the appropriateness of actions and processes to support implementation of our EDI Strategy is currently within appetite though must be closely monitored to ensure delivery of the business plan and an improved outcome when we are next appraised by the PSA where we are not currently meeting the EDI standard.

2.2 The EDI risk was reviewed and updated as part of the Council and ELT horizon scanning session. We have been in discussion with the provider of our EDI training for Council and ELT to provide us with some additional external challenge and support. We are now starting a further two phases of work with them to help further develop our governance of EDI and take some further external challenge.

2.3 We have received final audit report on EDI from RSM who have given us a Reasonable assurance and are having follow up discussions with them about the recommendations.

3. Risk considerations.

3.1 The report details areas of work where there is significant risk attached. This is intended to supplement corporate risk management activity and support timely communication with Council.

4. Resource considerations and business planning

4.1 Additional resourcing required to deliver the 2026-28 Business Plan was agreed by Council in 2025. Priority areas described in this report support the delivery of the business plan.

Lead Author: Tom Whiting, Chief Executive and Registrar
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10 September 2026

Organisational Performance Q2 2026

Executive Director	Gurvinder Soomal, Chief Operating Officer
Author(s)	Dave Criddle, Head of Business Intelligence & PMO Samantha Bache, Associate Director, Finance
Type of business	For discussion
Purpose	To present the Council with a summary of organisational performance for Q2 2026 illustrating progress towards delivery of the strategy and business plan for 2026-28.
Issue	The paper represents key considerations for organisational performance across delivery, resourcing and budget.
Recommendation	Council is asked to **discuss** the report.

1. Introduction

1.1 The main Q2 2026 report (provided in the Council reading room) is a summary of organisational performance and delivery against each objective of the strategy for 2026-2028 with updates towards progress of the active business plan roadmap goals provided and RAG rated. Key updates and issues are summarised in this paper.

1.2 For this report, the four impact areas identified within our monitoring and evaluation framework have been mapped against the charts provided in the main report as below, with a number of areas supporting multiple impacts:

IA1	We work efficiently & effectively	**IA3**	We are trusted and able to work effectively with stakeholders
IA2	Regulatory approaches are not a driver of unnecessary fear	**IA4**	People are confident that they can access safe oral care when they need it

1.3 Relevant and recent updates within each impact area will be presented to Council each reporting cycle to ensure a balanced view of progress is provided across stakeholder groups.

1.4 The Finance and Performance Committee (FPC) receive both the Council report and additional performance detail to support their scrutiny and assurance. The Committee reviewed Q2 2026 at their 8 September meeting and points discussed are summarised within their assurance report.

2. Budget & Workforce

2.1 **Free Reserves forecast** – At the end of Q2 the free reserves forecast for end 2028 is 1.5 months of operating expenditure which is outside policy range of between 2.5 to 4.5 months. This includes approvals and essential expenditure since the 2026-28 plan was approved. This is currently in review within the business planning for 2027-29.

2.2 **Workforce** – Retention overall in 2025 was improved year on year and continues into 2026. We currently are maintaining staff levels at our anticipated headcount, with turnover further reduced in Q2 to 9.9% for rolling 12 month average, which remains below the 17%-20% benchmark range.

2.3 **Sickness** – Average sickness days lost per employee over 12 months has increased incrementally, rising from 8.5 days in Q1 2025 to 9.5 days in Q2 2026 (9.4 being the 2025 CIPD

report benchmark). The increases continue to be proactively assessed through an ongoing action plan with People & OD. A revised sickness policy and supporting process has been developed and is being rolled out to assist line managers with managing the instances appropriately to the policy and support their team members throughout. Training is being initiated in Q4 with line managers in order to further guide them on how to proactively manage sickness and support staff.

Updates towards Business Plan roadmap goals and operational performance for each strategic objective within Trusted and effective: A strategy for dental regulation 2026-2028:

3. Objective 1 - Support dental professionals to provide safe and effective care for their patients

3.1 The consultation for the Principles Based Guidance framework closed on 31 August with the responses currently in review. Following review, the overall framework and supporting materials, along with the framework for sexual misconduct integrated is anticipated for implementation in mid-2027.

3.2 We have held multiple student engagement events for vocational and foundational training, which focused on explaining the GDC's role and priorities in a mix of virtual and in-person events as part of our work to build trust in regulation and raising student awareness.

3.3 GDC has been working with the Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners to develop a joint approach on cosmetic procedures in order to give effect to the legislation being introduced in Scotland and anticipated more widely across the UK. This has included being part of an ongoing expert group and responding to calls for evidence to support developing policy.

3.4 As part of our plan to address issues including innovation, professional/consumer relationships and remote treatment, we have prioritised development of positions on tooth whitening for under 18s, following a change in the legal framework and development of a position on use of AI in the dental sector. We are working with the PSA and other regulators to develop principles for use of AI in the health sector. Some key considerations in respect of consent and consumer relationships are also being incorporated into the framework on professionalism.

4. Objective 2 - Maintain high standards for registration, and register those who meet them in a timely and effective way

4.1 The Education QA team continue ongoing engagement with stakeholders for the implementation of new standards and are on target to be fully in place for the 2026/7 academic year.

4.2 For 2025/26 academic year, 21 of the 25 scheduled inspections were performed by end of Q2, with of 8 final reports completed, showing 96% of standards met or partially met. The Education QA team are following up on those not met for appropriate remedial actions.

4.3 The MyGDC platform launched in March has transitioned all applications, CPD and fee payment processes online. Increased resource to support users has delayed some other activity in the business plan. The Welsh language version of the platform is now due for release by end of year.

4.4 Following the MyGDC launch the application experience survey feedback has showed a slight (1%) reduction in satisfaction of information available on the registration process, which can be expected whilst new processes are embedded. Both satisfaction in customer service and timeliness of application handling are showing slight increases. There were fewer survey responses in Q2, compared to Q1 and we will continue to monitor response rates and sentiments.

4.5 Timeliness in Registration applications has been maintained across all routes, with the Overseas DCP applications also returning to timeliness following the conclusion of any appeals that were raised from overseas Dentists applying for registration as DCP. Restoration timeliness faced some slight delays with the levels of MyGDC support, but this is expected to be temporary.

4.6 We continue the evaluation of additional options for assessing internationally qualified dental professionals, to benchmark overseas regulators against GDC standards and to investigate alternative forms of assessment that could be used instead of or in addition to the ORE. The plan is to provide an update and early options to Council by the end of 2026.

4.7 The new ORE contract with UCL Consultants (UCLC) will have exam sittings from September 2026.

5. Objective 3 - Improve fitness to practise, maximising patient safety and reducing unintended impacts

5.1 With the consistent increase in new Fitness to Practise concerns seen in 2025 continuing, managing timeliness and caseload remains a significant challenge in all stages. Following a 26% increase in new concerns received in 2025 compared to 2024, a further 20% increase has been seen year on year from January to August 2026, compared to the same period in 2025.Of the nine teams in the end-to-end FtP process, six of the nine continue to regularly meet target, though Assessment in particular is now under particular pressure with the sustained increase through 2026.

5.2 The Council and the Executive are committed to maximise opportunities to address the strategic priorities across improving timeliness, reducing fear, improving participant experience in FtP. This requires both an FtP improvements programme to increase the efficiency and effectiveness throughout stages as well as manage the immediate caseload volumes in the existing process to be prioritised and budgeted for within the Business Plan 2027-2029.

5.3 Work is in progress for the Business Plan 2027-2029, with the plan and associated budget to be brought for Council approval in October.

6. Objective 4 - Work collaboratively to speak up on, influence, and address issues that affect patients and the public

6.1 As part of our goal to increase voice of influence for the dentistry sector, we have attended a number of key registrant stakeholder events, communicating our position on fear, and our new strategy. In addition, we have launched new designs for our monthly newsletters with the design and content revised using feedback from dental professionals. We continue to monitor performance and optimise content to increase our reach and engagement.

6.2 Contracts are in place for public and patient, student panels and the Registrant panel. The panels will ensure voices are used in Policy development and to gain insight into the requirements of each audience. Research with the public study group is underway, with a survey being tested with sample members of the public.

6.3 The Dental Leadership Network in June had the theme of supporting internationally qualified dental professionals, with dental corporates explaining how they support internationally qualified graduates to register and practise in the UK, and several internationally qualified graduates sharing their lived experience. The Executive Director, Strategy presented on the future shape of the dental workforce, with examples of how it will change as a result of the increasing numbers of places for internationally qualified graduates to register to practice in the UK.

6.4 The DHSC consultation on the reformed legislative framework for the GMC ran between March - June 2026. Following engagement with Council, we responded to the consultation in June, setting out our position and views. These were consistent with previously expressed positions on the direction of reform, taking account of the evolution of the proposals since reform plans were announced. Our response is published on our website.

7. Objective 5 - Maximise the effectiveness of our people, our culture and our systems

7.1 The planned move to the Paddington office location and separate hearings continues on track for the move to complete by Q4.

7.2 The revised pay and grading framework approved by Council in April has been implemented through Q2.

7.3 For our suite of supporting strategies, Council have to date approved those for External communications & engagement, Medium Term Financial, Research, Sustainability and People. The IT & Digital strategy has been agreed to be an output of a Digital Partner consultancy review to run across Q4 2026 to Q1 2027, with the subsequent strategy and delivery plan by Q2 2027. Similarly, a Data Strategy external consultancy review commenced in July and will complete end October, with the strategy and delivery plan expected for Q1/Q2 2027 to allow alignment with IT.

7.4 Training introductions for corporate governance is now included in the induction process as part of the Governance information and additional e-learning on managed interests is also added.

7.5 Initial analysis of requirements has been performed for replacing the GDC and DCS websites in 2027, which evaluated procurement, user needs analysis, user experience and content design.

8. EDI Focus

8.1 **EDI Website updates live from July:** The new EDI website pages are designed to provide a central hub across our EDI reporting and content, providing ongoing reporting against our 2026-2028 strategy, the regulatory lifecycle and towards the PSA Standards. They will be kept updated to highlight specific EDI-related initiatives and outcomes, and findings of EDI-related research we commission.

8.2 **PSA Standard 3 submission**: This standard is set out to ensure that regulators understand the diversity of their stakeholders and prevent unfair barriers or discrimination in their processes. The evaluation of the evidence matrix for the standard was submitted to the PSA on 5 June, with their response provided late August. This will be reviewed alongside the PSA annual review of GDC performance.

9. PSA Standards focus

9.1 The GDC annual review by the PSA is in progress with evidence submitted and the PSA's initial review in late August. The GDC response has been provided in early September for the PSA to then conclude their review against the standards, expected for publication in December.

9.2 The planning for the FtP Improvements programme as mentioned earlier in the report, has a focus on planning improvements to timeliness throughout the FtP process and achieving Standard 15.

9.3 Work on implementing of the new ORE contracts and developing additional options for the international registration framework, as well as the MyGDC registration application experience, all have a focus on sustaining timeliness in Registration and continuing to meet Standard 11.

10. Development, consultation, and decision trail

10.1 ELT/SMT quarterly performance review – 28 July with ELT reviews monthly

10.2 Finance & Performance Committee – 8 Sept 2026

10.3 Following Council review the report will be published on the GDC website.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Organisational Performance Report Q2 2026 (in the Council reading room)

Finance and People Decision Making Framework

Executive Director	Gurvinder Soomal, Chief Operating Officer
Author(s)	Samantha Bache, Associate Director, Finance Lee Avery, Associate Director, People
Type of business	For decision
Purpose	To seek Council approval of the Finance and People decision-making framework.
Recommendation	The Council is asked to: • Approve the Finance and People Decision-Making Framework.

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The GDC's current delegated authority arrangements no longer reflect how the organisation operates. The organisation has evolved, governance roles have become clearer and there is a greater need for proportional decision making, accountability and organisational agility.

1.2 The proposed Finance and People Decision Making Framework establishes the principles for how decisions should be made across the organisation. It is supported by separate financial, people and procurement authority schedules. These set out the operational detail of who may make particular decisions and under what conditions.

1.3 The central proposal is to separate the stable governance principles in the Framework from the more changeable operational authority schedules. This will allow the organisation to maintain clear governance while enabling delegated authority to evolve as structures, systems, capability and operational requirements develop.

1.4 The approach is intended to remove unnecessary escalation and approval stages, while retaining appropriate professional advice, internal control and assurance for decision making.

1.5 The Finance and Performance Committee discussed the proposed approach and endorsed the Framework for progression to Council. In doing so, the Committee considered both the benefits of greater delegation but also whether this is the right time to introduce the changes given the organisation's constrained financial environment.

1.6 FPC was assured that the proposed model is supported by the control frameworks, reporting and assurance arrangements already in place. The intention is not to relax financial stewardship or oversight. Rather, it is to make the controls more proportionate to the decisions being taken and to ensure that routine decisions can be made efficiently within clearly defined boundaries.

1.7 FPC recognised that greater delegation should not be introduced simply because the Framework is approved. A careful and phased approach is required, with appropriate training, practical support, clear guidance and time for the new arrangements to become embedded.

1.8 The Committee also reviewed the proposed underpinning Financial, People and Procurement Authority Schedules. They provide the detailed mechanism through which the Executive will apply

the principles approved by Council and will be maintained through appropriate governance arrangements.

2. Case for change

2.1 Our current Finance and People delegations were developed at a time when greater central oversight was appropriate. They provided an important framework for governance, financial stewardship and assurance during a period when decisions were intentionally retained at a more senior level.

2.2 Since then, the business has changed significantly. The Board Effectiveness Review clarified the respective roles of Council and the Executive, with Council focusing on strategy, oversight and matters reserved to it, and the Executive responsible for operational delivery. Council has also reviewed its approach to risk, recognising the need for a more proportionate approach that enables timely decision-making while maintaining appropriate assurance.

2.3 These governance changes sit alongside a wider ambition to strengthen trust, empowerment and accountability across the organisation. Staff engagement has consistently highlighted a desire for greater empowerment and clearer ownership of decisions. At the same time, there remains a tendency for decisions to be escalated unnecessarily, with additional approvals or advice sought where existing delegated authority already enables decisions to be taken at an operational level. This creates unnecessary delay, reduces organisational agility and can weaken accountability by separating decisions from those best placed to make them.

2.4 The proposed approach is therefore centred on ensuring governance is proportionate to the decision being taken; with authority matched to accountability and supported by appropriate professional advice.

3. Principle of the Framework

3.1 The core principles of the proposed Framework are:

a. Decisions should be taken once and at the appropriate level.
b. Authority and accountability must sit together.
c. Decisions should be taken by those closest to the impact of the decision.
d. Professional advice should strengthen decisions, not replace them.
e. Assurance should be proportionate to the level of risk.
f. Unnecessary approval stages should be avoided.
g. Budget holders remain accountable for managing their budgets.
h. Financial stewardship and good people management are shared leadership responsibilities.
i. Decisions should demonstrate value for money, affordability and appropriate use of public resources.
j. Leadership, capability and culture are essential to successful delegation.

4. Governance Architecture

4.1 The Framework provides the overreaching principles for the Authority Schedules and supporting policies, systems, procedures, guidance and capability. Council retains responsibility for governance, strategic oversight and matters reserved to it. The Framework establishes the principles and expectations that apply across the organisation.

4.2 The Authority Schedules then translate those principles into operational decision-making. They specify who may make particular financial, people and procurement decisions and the conditions that apply. This structure allows operational authority to change without requiring Council to revisit the overarching governance principles each time a delegation needs to be updated.

4.3 Nothing in the proposed approach changes Council's statutory responsibilities, matters reserved to Council, the Scheme of Delegation, the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer, procurement legislation or the organisation's obligations to consider matters addressed in Managing Public Money.

5. Benefits

5.1 The success and benefits realisation of the Framework will depend on visible and consistent leadership. Leaders will need to model the expected behaviours by making decisions within their delegated authority, reinforcing accountability and ensuring that professional advice is properly considered.

5.2 Responsibility for implementation therefore sits beyond Finance and People alone. The Executive Leadership Team and wider leadership community will need to create the conditions for success and hold managers to account where unnecessary escalation becomes the norm.

5.3 Our proposed approach is expected to deliver a number of benefits:

a. Better quality, consistency and transparency of decision-making.
b. Less unnecessary escalation and fewer routine approval stages.
c. Clearer ownership and accountability for decisions, resources and people.
d. Greater organisational agility, with decisions taken closer to the point of delivery.
e. Stronger financial and workforce management and longer-term planning.
f. A governance model that can evolve through the Authority Schedules while retaining stable overarching principles.

6. Implementation

6.1 Early implementation will focus on changes that can be introduced safely and quickly, including the removal of unnecessary approval stages and other operational barriers that do not add value. Subject to approval and completion of the necessary supporting work, the first changes are intended to be incorporated into an updated Financial Authority Schedule with effect from 1 January 2027.

6.2 More complex changes will take longer where they depend on amendments to policies, system configuration, operating procedures or organisational capability. Delegated authority should develop alongside capability and confidence, rather than being introduced at pace without the necessary safeguards.

6.3 The implementation approach therefore recognises that earned autonomy is dependent on people having the knowledge, confidence and skills to exercise authority effectively. Existing decision-makers and senior leaders will be expected to support new decision-makers through coaching, regular discussion and constructive challenge.

6.4 Approval of the Framework therefore is the beginning of our implementation rather than its completion. Delivery will require coordinated changes to governance, policies, systems, capability and leadership.

7. Recommendation

7.1 The Council is asked to:

- Approve the Finance and People Decision-Making Framework.

8. Legal, policy and national considerations

8.1 The proposed Framework has been developed to align with the governance arrangements established through the Board Effectiveness Review. It does not amend Matters Reserved to Council, the Scheme of Delegation or the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer.

8.2 Implementation will require consequential updates to supporting policies, procedures, guidance and system controls. These will be progressed through the organisation's existing governance arrangements.

9. Equality, diversity and privacy considerations

9.1 The proposed Framework establishes the governance principles for Finance and People decision-making. It does not introduce changes to employment policy, regulatory policy or the processing of personal data.

9.2 The Framework is intended to promote greater consistency, transparency and accountability in decision-making across the organisation. Equality, diversity and privacy considerations will continue to be addressed through the development of supporting policies, procedures and individual decisions consistent with existing organisational approach.

10. Risk considerations

10.1 The principal implementation risks relate to leadership and culture, organisational capability, pace of implementation, consistency of application and ongoing review. These risks are recognised in the proposed approach and will be managed through phased implementation, clear guidance, capability development, leadership oversight and regular assurance.

11. Resource considerations and Business Plan

11.1 Implementation will be delivered primarily through existing Finance and People resources, supported by the Executive Leadership Team and the Wider Leadership Community.

11.2 This is a significant programme of work that will be delivered alongside existing organisational priorities. As such, the work has been designed to be delivered in phases, allowing activity to be prioritised, aligned with existing work programmes and implemented at a pace that supports sustainable organisational change.

12. Monitoring and review

12.1 The effectiveness of the Framework will be monitored through existing governance, assurance and audit arrangements. Feedback from implementation, operational experience, internal audit and routine governance activity will be used to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

Appendices

1. Appendix 1 – Finance & People Decision-Making Framework

Samantha Bache, Associate Director, Finance
sbache@gdc-uk.org

11 September 2026

General Dental Council

Finance and People Decision Making Framework

Reference: FIN/ICPxx/v.001

Version: 1.0

Status	Final draft - awaiting approval	
Policy Owner	Finance & People Services	
Applicable to (tick all that apply)	☒ ELT only ☒ Staff only (not ELT) ☒ Council Members ☒ Independent Governance Associates	☐ Statutory Committee Members ☐ Associates ☐ Third Parties (state who)
Approving forum (tick all that apply)	☐ Chief Executive/Registrar/Accounting Officer ☒ Executive Leadership Team (ELT) ☐ Senior Management Team ☐ Head of Function ☐ Senior Information Risk Owner	☐ Audit & Risk Committee ☒ Finance & Performance Committee ☐ Remuneration & Nomination Committee ☐ Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee ☒ Council

First Published: 01/01/2026	**Reviewed by:** Associate Director, Finance	**Effective date:** 01 Jan 2027
Last reviewed/revised: 01/01/2027	**Review frequency:** Every 3 years	**Next review due by:** 01/01/2030

1. Purpose

1.1 The Finance & People Decision-Making Framework sets out how financial and people decisions are made across the General Dental Council (GDC). It establishes the governance principles that support better decisions, strengthen accountability and ensure authority sits with those best placed to make decisions.

1.2 The Framework is intended to support a culture of trust, empowerment and stewardship. It provides a clear and consistent approach to decision-making while recognising that good governance should enable delivery rather than create unnecessary barriers.

1.3 The Framework has been approved by Council and forms part of the GDC's governance framework. It provides the governance principles that underpin the supporting Authority Schedules, policies, procedures and system controls.

1.4 The Framework should be read alongside the supporting authority schedules. Together they establish how financial and people decisions are made across the organisation.

2. Scope

2.1 This Framework applies to everyone exercising delegated financial or people authority on behalf of the GDC.

2.2 It establishes the governance principles for Finance and People decision-making. It does not replace legislation, Matters Reserved to Council, the Scheme of Delegation, the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer or any other statutory obligation.

2.3 The Framework explains how decisions should be made. The Authority Schedules set out who can make those decisions. Supporting policies, procedures and systems explain how those decisions are implemented in practice.

3. Related legislation and other supporting information

3.1 Related legislation and other supporting information are documented within the separate significant policy documents.

4. Governance context

4.1 Council is responsible for setting the organisation's strategic direction and governance. The Executive Leadership Team is responsible for delivering the GDC's objectives within that governance framework.

4.2 Authority may be delegated, but accountability remains with the individual making the decision. Delegated authority enables decisions to be taken closer to the point of delivery while maintaining appropriate governance and stewardship.

4.3 Some responsibilities cannot be delegated. These include responsibilities established through legislation, the Accounting Officer role, Matters Reserved to Council and the Scheme of Delegation.

4.4 This Framework reflects the governance arrangements established through the Board Effectiveness Review and supports the GDC's wider ambition to strengthen accountability, improve decision-making and create a more agile organisation.

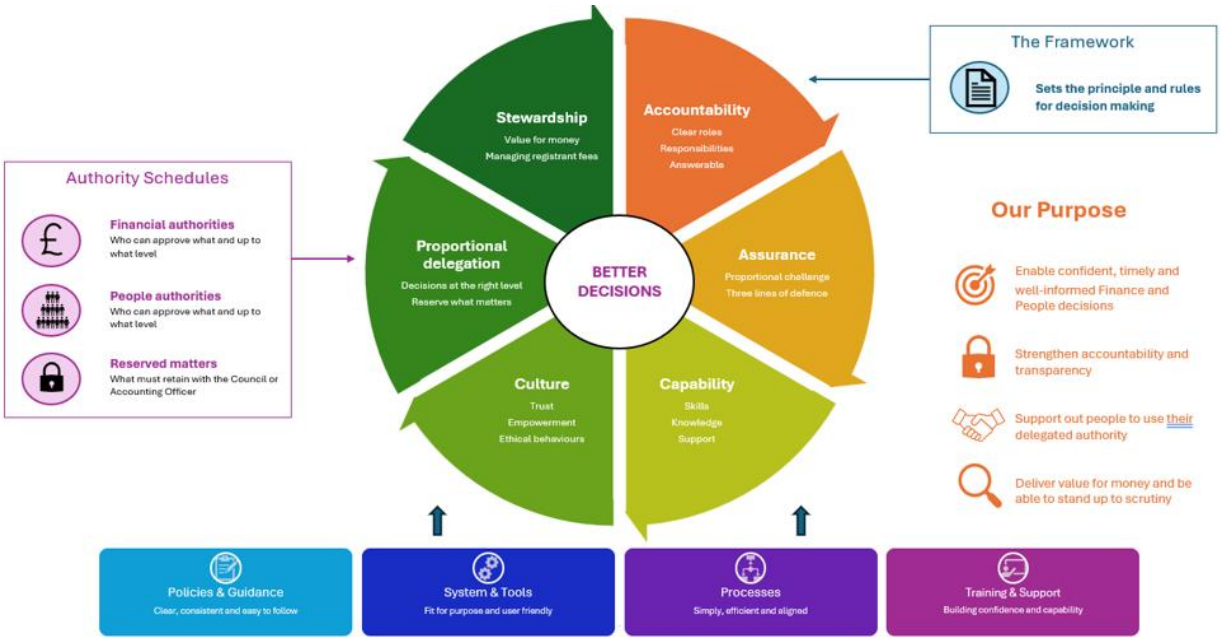
5. Frameworks principles

5.1 The following principles underpin every financial and people decision made under this Framework.

1. Decisions should be taken once and at the appropriate level.

2. Authority and accountability must sit together.
3. Decisions should be taken by those closest to the impact of the decision.
4. Professional advice should strengthen decisions, not replace them.
5. Assurance should be proportionate to the level of risk.
6. Unnecessary approval stages should be avoided.
7. Budget holders remain accountable for managing their budgets.
8. Financial stewardship and good people management are shared leadership responsibilities.
9. Decisions should demonstrate value for money, affordability and appropriate use of public resources.
10. Leadership, capability and culture are essential to successful delegation.

6. Decision making



6.1 Good decision-making is about more than delegated authority. It requires decisions to be taken at the appropriate level, informed by the right advice and supported by clear accountability.

6.2 The Decision-Making Wheel provides a consistent approach to financial and people decisions across the organisation. It should be used alongside this Framework to support proportionate, well-informed and timely decision-making.

6.3 Before making a decision, decision-makers should satisfy themselves that they:

1. have the appropriate delegated authority
2. understand the purpose and intended outcome of the decision
3. have considered affordability, workforce implications and organisational priorities where relevant
4. have sought appropriate professional advice
5. have considered risk, value for money and public confidence
6. are prepared to take ownership of the decision and be accountable for the outcome.

7. Delegated authority

7.1 Delegated authority enables decisions to be taken by those closest to the issue, improving agility while maintaining appropriate governance and oversight.

7.2 Delegated authority transfers the authority to make a decision. It does not transfer accountability for that decision.

7.3 People exercising delegated authority must act within:

1. the limits of their delegated authority
2. approved budgets, where applicable
3. organisational policies and procedures
4. relevant legislation
5. the principles set out in this Framework.

7.4 Where authority has not been delegated, decisions must be referred to the appropriate decision-maker. Additional approval stages should not be introduced unless they are required by this Framework, legislation or organisational policy.

8. Professional advice and assurance

8.1 Professional advice strengthens decision-making by ensuring decisions are informed by the appropriate expertise.

8.2 Depending on the nature of the decision, advice may be required from Finance, People, Procurement, Legal, Information Governance, Facilities, Communications or other professional functions.

8.3 Professional advice supports decision-makers. Accountability always remains with the individual exercising delegated authority.

8.4 Assurance should be proportionate to the significance of the decision and the level of risk. It should provide confidence in decision-making without creating unnecessary delay or additional approval stages.

9. Financial Stewardship

9.1 Effective financial management relies on accountable budget holders making informed decisions within the resources available to them.

9.2 Everyone exercising delegated financial authority has a responsibility to demonstrate good stewardship of public resources and ensure decisions represent value for money.

9.3 Decision-makers should consider:

1. affordability
2. sustainability
3. value for money
4. reputational impact
5. public confidence.

9.4 Recurring commitments should normally be supported by recurring funding. One-off funding should not normally be used to support ongoing expenditure.

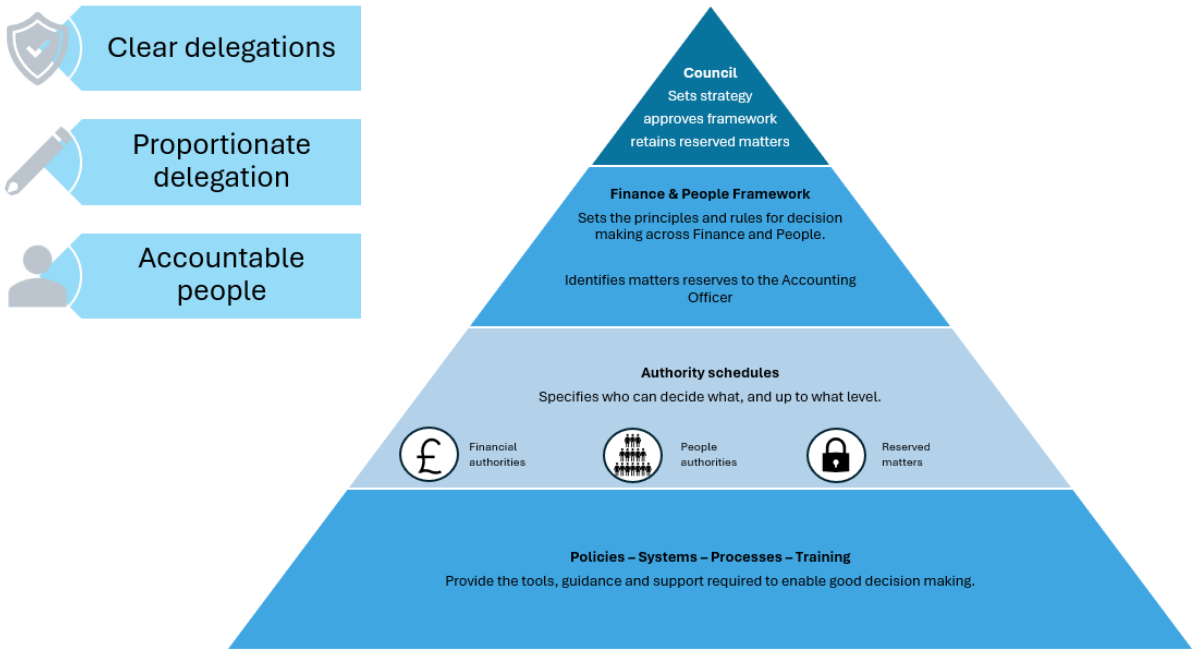
10. People decision-making

10.1 Financial and people decisions are closely connected. Decisions affecting the workforce should consider GDC's priorities, affordability, workforce planning and the longer-term impact on service delivery.

10.2 Financial and People colleagues provide professional advice and assurance and will not take a decision for the responsible/accountable manager. They do not replace the accountability of the individual making the decision.

10.3 Decisions relating to establishment control, recruitment, grading and organisational design must be taken in accordance with this Framework and the supporting Authority Schedules.

11. Authority schedules



11.1 This Framework establishes the governance principles for financial and people decision-making.

11.2 The supporting Authority Schedules set out the operational delegated authority that sits beneath those principles.

11.3 Separating the Framework from the Authority Schedules allows operational delegated authority to evolve as organisational structures, systems and business requirements change, while maintaining a stable governance framework.

11.4 Authority Schedules must remain consistent with the principles established by this Framework.

12. Review and assurance

13. Related documents

13.1 Related procedures are detailed within relevant detailed policy.

13.2 Related schedules

- FIN001 – Financial Authority Schedule
- POD001 – People Authority Schedule

- PRO001 – Procurement and Contracting Authority Schedule

Compliance

13.3 Supporting operational procedures owed by Finance and People Services are maintained to support the consistent approach of the Authority Schedules.

13.4 The effectiveness of this Framework will be monitored through existing governance, assurance and audit arrangements.

14. Monitoring and review

14.1 The Framework is intended to provide a stable set of governance principles and will normally be reviewed following significant changes to the GDC's governance arrangements, including future Board Effectiveness Reviews, Matters Reserved to Council, the Scheme of Delegation or Committee Terms of Reference.

14.2 The Authority Schedules should be reviewed more regularly to ensure they remain aligned with organisational structures, operational requirements and organisational maturity.

Minor Changes – approved by Associate Director, Finance	**Significant Changes – approved by Council**
Correction of spelling errors or typos Changes to layout Change to Policy owner Updates to links and external references Addition of definitions Addition of external links	Changes to who the Policy applies to Change to approving forum, particularly if moving "down" a tier (ARC to ELT for example) Changes to the scope Change to the substance of the Policy Changes to procedure/process Changes to roles or responsibilities within the Policy

15. Appendices

1. Definitions
2. Roles and Responsibilities

Appendix 1 - Definitions

Internal Corporate Policy

A policy which sets out how the organisation is run, how it manages its finances and how it treats it employees. Some policies are required by law, others are recommended as best practice; and all are likely to be in place in any well-run public body, whatever its role or remit.

Accountability

The obligation to take ownership of a decision and be answerable for the outcome. Accountability cannot be delegated, even where authority to make a decision has been delegated.

Authority Schedule

A document approved by the Executive that sets out the operational delegated authority for specific financial or people decisions. Authority Schedules must operate within the principles established by this Framework.

Delegated Authority

The formal transfer of authority to make specified decisions within defined limits. Delegated authority enables decisions to be taken at the appropriate level but does not transfer accountability.

Decision-maker

The individual exercising delegated authority and accountable for the decision being made.

Financial Stewardship

The responsible management of public resources to ensure affordability, value for money, propriety, regularity and long-term financial sustainability.

Professional Advice

Advice provided by an appropriately qualified or authorised professional function, including Finance, People, Procurement, Legal, Information Governance or other specialist teams, to support informed decision-making.

Stewardship

The responsible use of organisational resources, authority and public funds in a manner that supports the organisation’s statutory duties, strategic objectives and public confidence.

Supporting Controls

The policies, procedures, systems, guidance and assurance arrangements that enable delegated authority to operate effectively.

Appendix 2 - Role and Responsibilities

Council

Approves the Finance & People Decision-Making Framework.

Sets the governance principles for financial and people decision-making.

Retains responsibility for Matters Reserved to Council and strategic oversight.

Finance & Performance Committee

Reviews the effectiveness of the Framework.

Provides assurance to Council on its operation.

Recommends approval of the Framework and significant amendments to Council where appropriate.

Executive Leadership Team

Owns the operational implementation of the Framework.

Approves and maintains the supporting Authority Schedules.

Promotes consistent application of the Framework across the organisation.

Ensures appropriate governance, capability and assurance arrangements are maintained.

Wider Leadership Community

Exercises delegated authority in accordance with this Framework.

Creates an environment where decisions are taken at the appropriate level.

Reinforces accountability and supports managers to exercise delegated authority confidently.

Ensures professional advice is sought and properly considered before decisions are made.

Decision-makers

Exercise delegated authority within approved limits.

Seek appropriate professional advice where required.

Take ownership of decisions and remain accountable for the outcomes.

Act in accordance with organisational policies, legislation and this Framework.

Finance

Provides professional advice, challenge and assurance.

Maintains the Financial Authority Schedules.

Supports effective financial stewardship and compliance with financial governance.

Monitors the operation of delegated financial authority and recommends improvements where appropriate.

People

Provides professional advice, challenge and assurance on workforce matters.

Maintains the People Authority Schedules.

Supports consistent application of people policies and workforce governance.

Monitors the operation of delegated people authority and recommends improvements where appropriate.

Professional Functions

Provide specialist advice within their area of expertise.

Support informed and proportionate decision-making.

Escalate concerns where decisions may expose the organisation to unacceptable risk.

Recognise that accountability remains with the decision-maker.

Internal Audit

Provides independent assurance on the effectiveness of the Framework and the supporting governance arrangements.

Committee and SICM Appointments 2026 – 2027

Executive Director	Katie Spears, Executive Director, Legal and Governance
Author(s)	Rebecca Ledwidge, Head of Governance
Type of business	For approval
Purpose	The Council is asked to: • **approve** the proposed appointments to the Committees of the Council; and • **approve** the appointment of the Senior Independent Council Member (SICM) in line with the GDC Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business of the Council and Committees 2026.
Issue	To present the Council with the proposed Committee memberships for the non-statutory Committees and the proposed SICM.
Recommendation	The Council is asked to **approve** the recommendations and **make** the proposed appointments.

1. Committee appointments

1.1 The General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business for the Council and Committees 2026 ('the Standing Orders') provide that the Chair of Council will, at a public Council meeting, propose appointments of the Members and Chairs to the (non-statutory) Committees of the Council. This will take place after there has been an assessment of the competencies for those roles. The Committees shall be constituted of a Chair and at least two Council Members, of whom at least one must be a registrant Council Member, and one must be a lay Council Member.

1.2 The current membership of the Committees (as of September 2026) is as follows:

a. **Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)**

Name of Member	**Member Type**
Mike Driver (Chair)	Lay Member
Serbjit Kaur	Registrant Member
Simon Morrow	Registrant Member
Laura Simons	Lay Member
Liz Butler	Independent Member

b. **Finance and Performance Committee (FPC)**

Name of Member	**Member Type**
Ilona Blue (Chair)	Lay Member
Reshard Auladin	Lay Member
Donald Burden	Registrant Member
Bill Gunnyeon	Lay Member

c. **Remuneration and Nomination Committee (RemNom)**

Name of Member	Member Type
Angie Heilmann (Chair)	Registrant Member
Reshard Auladin	Lay Member
Bill Gunnyeon	Lay Member
Mike Lewis	Registrant Member
Timea Milovecz	Registrant Member
Jane Slatter	Independent Member

1.3 On 30 September 2026, Simon Morrow (registrant Council Member, SICM and member of the ARC) will leave office. Oosh Devalia (registrant Council Member) will take office on 1 October 2026.

1.4 The Chair of Council has considered the appraisal discussions which took place over the summer and the skills and experience of Council Members, including the incoming member. The Chair has reflected on the following areas:

a. The competencies required to sit on each Committee and the appraisals of Council Members.

b. The time commitment required to prepare and attend committee meetings, alongside advertised expectations about time commitments and the best use of Council Members' time as a resource.

c. Ensuring a balance of registrant and lay members across the Committees.

d. Discussions with individuals about their preferences and ability to commit the time required for the roles.

e. Ensuring stability in Committee membership to safeguard the assurance framework that is in place.

1.5 The Chair has concluded that maintaining stability in the Committee membership provides a significant benefit. As a result, it is proposed that the membership of the Committees remains largely the same, with the only change being that Oosh Devalia replaces Simon Morrow as a member of the ARC when he leaves office. This is set out in **Appendix 1**.

1.6 These proposals meet the requirements of the Standing Orders. It is proposed that these appointments are made for a period of one year, to enable the Chair to review the arrangements in 2027. The Council is asked to **approve** the proposals and appoint the Council Members to the Committees as outlined in **Appendix 1**.

2. Senior Independent Council Member (SICM)

2.1 Section 12.8 of the Standing Orders provides that the Council may choose to appoint one of its Members as the Senior Independent Council Member (SICM).

2.2 The role of the SICM is to:

a. Be a conduit between Council Members and the Chair of Council to communicate any major concerns.

b. Lead the appraisal process for the Chair of Council, with advice from the Council via the Remuneration and Nomination Committee.

c. Investigate any complaints about the conduct of the Chair of Council and

d. Occasionally deputise for the Chair of Council at external events or internal meetings.

2.3 The current SICM, Simon Morrow, demits office on 30 September 2026.

2.4 The Chair of Council proposes that Donald Burden is appointed to the SICM role from 1 October 2026.

2.5 Donald is a longstanding Council Member who has served on the Council for six years and has done so diligently, with strong appraisals each year. Donald has also been a registrant member of the FPC for several years and will continue to be a member of that Committee.

2.6 Donald's current term as a Council Member is due to end on 30 September 2027, but he is eligible for reappointment for a further year. The intention is to pursue reappointment and extend the SICM role for an additional year, but to avoid pre-empting the reappointment decision of the Privy Council, it is proposed that his initial appointment to the SICM role is for one year. The Council is asked to **approve** the appointment of Donald to the role of SICM for a year (from 1 October 2026 - 30 September 2027).

3. Legal, policy and national considerations

3.1 The proposals set out in this paper are line with the Standing Orders and the legislative framework.

4. Equality, diversity and privacy considerations

4.1 An assessment of diversity of skills and experience has been undertaken as part of the assessment of Committee appointments.

5. Monitoring and review

5.1 It is proposed that the Committee memberships are reviewed in September 2027.

6. Development, consultation and decision trail

6.1 The Chair of Council has discussed these proposals with the Committee Chairs and the Chief Executive. Council Members were subject to an appraisal process which took place over the summer months.

7. Next steps and communications

7.1 Subject to approval of the proposals, letters will be issued to Members confirming their appointments.

Appendices

1. Proposed table of Members and Chairs of the non-statutory Committees of Council.

Rebecca Ledwidge, Head of Governance
26 August 2026

Appendix 1

Table of Members and Chairs of the Non-Statutory Committees from 1 October 2026

Committee	Chair	Council Members
Audit and Risk Committee	Mike Driver (lay)	Oosh Devalia (registrant) Serbjit Kaur (registrant) Laura Simons (lay) Liz Butler (independent member) *[a new independent member will be recruited in 2027 as Liz is due to demit office in June 2027]*
Finance and Performance Committee	Ilona Blue (lay)	Reshard Auladin (lay) Donald Burden (registrant) Bill Gunnyeon (lay)
Remuneration and Nomination Committee	Angie Heilmann (registrant)	Reshard Auladin (lay) Bill Gunnyeon (lay) Mike Lewis (registrant) Timea Milovecz (registrant) Jane Slatter (independent member)

External Communications and Engagement: Quarterly Review and Insights Q2 2026

Executive Director	Stefan Czerniawski, Executive Director, Strategy
Author(s)	Joanne Rewcastle, Associate Director, Communications and Engagement
Type of business	For noting
Purpose	To share the external communication priorities and approach in Q2 2026, engagement with dental professionals and stakeholders, our challenges, lessons learned and the priorities in Q3 2026.
Issue	The review provides a quarterly overview of the external communications and engagement activity.
Recommendation	The Council is asked **to note** the priorities and approach.

1. Summary

1.1 This is the review of insights and performance from the team's external communication and engagement activity, covering Q2 2026.

1.2 The report gives an overview of engagement with dental professionals and stakeholders, and further information about three themes this quarter: supporting professionalism and learning, how our LinkedIn engagement is performing, and the results of our pilot to address fear.

2. Legal, policy and national considerations

2.1 All external communication and engagement priorities that are associated with legal or policy risks are agreed through collaboration with the relevant expertise in each area.

2.2 Stakeholders in each of the four nations are engaged by the GDC through established contacts.

3. Equality, diversity and privacy considerations

3.1 Equality and diversity considerations are considered in all external communications and engagement, by ensuring that key messages are accessible and inclusive and targeting audiences that represent the diverse registrant base.

4. Risk considerations

4.1 Communications are designed to anticipate and mitigate reputational risks to the GDC.

5. Resource considerations and CCP

5.1 The activity is within existing capacity and capability.

6. Monitoring and review

6.1 Plans are monitored at a weekly team meeting, a monthly deep dive into the plan and communication priorities and a monthly review of the priorities with Heads of Policy and Research.

6.2 Priorities are shared with the Chair and CEO at regular one-to-ones.

6.3 The external communications and engagement grid is shared with ELT and SMT every quarter.

7. Development, consultation and decision trail

7.1 The team has contributed to developing the review.

8. Next steps and communications

8.1 Subsequent quarterly reports will be available for Council on an ongoing basis.

Lead Author:

Joanne Rewcastle, Associate Director, Communications and Engagement

Appendix 1: External Communication and Engagement Quarterly Review and Insights Q2 2026

General Dental Council

External Communications and Engagement – Quarterly Review and Insights

Q2: April to June 2026

Contents

1. Introduction 2
2. Communication and engagement priorities 2
3. Engaging dental professionals 5
4. Engaging stakeholders 6
5. New or unplanned activity 8
6. Challenges 9
7. Lessons learnt 9
8. Future priorities 9

1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of three of our communication and engagement priorities from April to June 2026, describing our approach and the outcomes. An overview of our engagement with dental professionals and stakeholders is also provided, together with a summary of challenges and the lessons learnt. The report concludes with a summary of the external engagement priorities for Q3 2026.

2. Communication and engagement priorities

The communication and engagement priorities highlighted this quarter are: supporting professionalism and learning, how our LinkedIn engagement is performing, and the results of our pilot to address fear.

Supporting professionalism and learning

In February we published the first in a series of blogs written by Dr Shamir Mehta, Lead Clinical Adviser at the GDC. The aim of the blogs is to provide non-clinical guidance to support learning, wellbeing and professionalism. The content centres on Shamir's insight into clinical matters arising from Fitness to Practise (FtP) complaints. We want to provide dental professionals with clear information to help them to avoid common complaint scenarios and to demonstrate how they can respond more effectively to scenarios to put things right and avoid complaint escalation.

We incorporated an umbrella theme of 'Supporting professionalism and learning' for the blog series, to support the Comms and Engagement strategy objective to 'address the causes of fear and perceptions of the GDC caused by fear'.

We've created an identity and mini brand for this series of blog posts. Every blog published on the website sets out our aim that:

We want to regulate in a way which promotes learning over fear, supporting dental professionals to continuously demonstrate professionalism, rather than driving behaviours through the threat of fitness to practise. Our role is to give clear, easy to use guidance that supports dental professionals to show good judgement and professional behaviour in providing good oral healthcare for patients and the public.

This blog is part of a series to support your learning and encourage good practice and continuous improvement to achieve positive patient outcomes.

Blogs are published on the website and included in the newsletters for dental professionals and stakeholders.

How patient consent can help build trust and confidence – 24 February (included here as the first in the series). The second most popular item in the March newsletters, with 707 unique clicks. A senior dental adviser at NHS England and a Defence Union Head both gave verbal feedback. They found the approach novel and the text well-written. *"It focussed on relevant and practical details and offered value and clarity from the GDC on a poorly understood topic like consent."*

Drills, spills, and protocol: when dentistry doesn't quite go to plan - 1 April. The third most popular item in the April newsletter with 774 unique clicks. Those who engaged on LinkedIn included Professor Raj Rattan, Global Adviser at the Medical Protection Society; and Maggie Elsey, Dento-Legal Adviser.

'Bonding boom' - composite bonding insights for dental professionals - 28 April. This was the second most popular article in the May newsletter and the third most popular article so far in 2026. It was reposted on LinkedIn by Ewen McColl, Editorial Director of Dental Update and Head of Peninsula Dental School at the University of Plymouth, saying: *"Dr Shamir Mehta a very timely article. I agree managing expectations is key. Thanks for this excellent article."*

Fear of the GDC: A personal perspective on perception, reality and responsibility - 3 June. The fourth most popular article in the June newsletter with 314 unique clicks, and strong engagement on LinkedIn,

especially when reposted by Shamir, when Jason Wong, CDO England commented: "*Nicely said Shamir."*

We also promote the blog posts and other content from Shamir on LinkedIn. Four posts on LinkedIn this quarter achieved:

- Combined reach: 25,949 impressions across four posts.
- Direct engagement: 96 reactions, 7 comments and 21 reposts.
- Average engagement rate: 5.8% per post.

Outcomes:

- We are seeing higher levels of engagement with content that supports dental professionals than with news or announcements from the GDC.
- We are demonstrating how the GDC is supporting dental professionals, showing one of the ways we are delivering our vision in the GDC Strategy. Over time, this will help to build trust.
- Generating endorsement from key sector stakeholders, helping to enhance reputation and build credibility.

A pilot to explore how we can address the climate of fear

Through our very supportive and productive relationships in Scotland, we worked in collaboration with the Aberdeen Vocational Training scheme and Public Services Delivery Scotland. The GDC's Head of Scottish Affairs led the pilot in partnership with Amro Alkado, Dental Practice Adviser with NHS Grampian and a Vocational Training Adviser with NHS Education for Scotland.

We set out to learn more about how we can communicate in a way that positively addresses the climate of fear for early career dental professionals. An in-person engagement session was designed, where we tested some existing and new content about regulation and FtP. The GDC's Senior Clinical Lead, Shamir Mehta, joined online to provide a clinical overview of several case studies.

The session was well received. We learned that the VTs showed a strong preference for clear, practical information, grounded in real practice. This helped to demystify the FtP process and describing scenarios in terms of outcomes and data about the FtP process was seen as being honest and credible rather than abstract. The VTs appreciated hearing from a dentist who still works in practice and understands day to day pressures and more clinical scenarios and case studies to work through, with examples of professionalism and an explanation of the potential implications for an individual's fitness to practise.

We also learned that the VTs felt confident that they had heard about the GDC's role, remit and responsibilities during the student engagement sessions we held with them before they graduated. The content we share in the final year of BDS courses was familiar to them and engagement waned when some of it was represented again.

Outcomes:

- We are updating the content in our student engagement sessions with FDs and VTs to focus less on an overview of regulation and much more on case studies and real-life examples.
- The GDC's Clinical Fellow will play an important role in presenting this information to FDs and VTS in future, with ongoing involvement from the GDC's Lead Clinical Adviser.
- We will evaluate engagement during the student engagement programme in the academic year 2026-2027.

The GDC's engagement through LinkedIn

We had 2,137 new followers this quarter, a 4.7% growth rate on our existing base, competitive with much larger organisations. We currently rely on organic performance of posts, with no paid promotion or boosted posts on LinkedIn.

People and professional journeys repeatedly performed well, especially stories featuring dental professionals and thought leadership posts.

Engagement rate by follower: For an average post, roughly 3 out of every 100 of our followers did something with it; they liked it, commented, shared it, clicked it, etc. Compared to other regulators and organisations in our benchmark set, we came out on top at 3.18%, ahead of the BDA (3.16%) and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (2.78%).

Engagement rate by post: Our top June posts hit **25.6%, 20.3%,** and **13.1%** engagement rates, meaning 1 in 4 to 1 in 8 people who saw the post engaged with it. June was the clear standout where our top post reached 25.6% engagement rate, compared to 10.2% in May and 9.4% in April.

In-person events drove strong engagement: The Dentistry Show and Scottish Dental Show posts were among our monthly top performers. Example: **LinkedIn post**

Top Q2 post: The DLN - 'Supporting and embedding international dental professionals.'

Mostafa Hassaan, Deputy CDO for Wales (30 June): his career journey as an internationally qualified dentist in the UK - 388 engagements, 2,955 impressions, 13.1% engagement rate.

Nicola Blake - 'From Dental Nurse to Strategic Mobile Lead' audiogram (13 April): an audiogram following her career journey at Community Dental Services - 107 engagements, 1,605 impressions, 6.7% engagement rate.

Photo-led posts dominated, with 25 of our 30 top posts including photos. The strongest pattern was photo storytelling around people, events, and visits, rather than purely informational announcements.

Examples:

The GDC in Scotland (23 June): Three photos to accompany the caption, 506 engagements, 2,498 impressions, 20.3% engagement rate.

Manjula Das at the University of Portsmouth Dental School (5 June): 624 engagements, 6,780 impressions, 9.2% engagement rate.

In summary, the most effective Q2 formula involved first person professional stories and real-world activity, coupled with a photo or multi-image graphic. That combination appears strongest across the quarter.

Outcomes

- Our posts and key messages reach a wider audience when people share or interact with them on LinkedIn, meaning that we have more opportunities to influence perceptions.

- Our people-led stories and photos show the GDC team meeting dental professionals where they are, visibly supporting dental professionals, demonstrating our vision.

3. Engaging dental professionals

As reported in Q1 2026, we know from insight in the previous Perceptions research that dental professionals want information from the GDC about issues that are more relevant to their role and that shows a better understanding of issues that matter to the dental team. We have used this to provide more relevant information and saw high engagement, which is helping us to learn what is of most value and welcomed by the dental team.

We have gone further in Q2, in support of Objective four in the GDC Strategy, to 'Work collaboratively to speak up on, influence and address issues that affect patients and the public'.

We launched a new communication channel called Insights where we commission, produce and share thought-leadership articles from both GDC staff and external stakeholders. We produced four articles this quarter, from a mixture of GDC staff and external stakeholders. These longer-form articles are a way to provide more background to an issue or a deeper analysis of a topic. Early indications are that they are well received. We will evaluate them at the end of 2026.

Insights:

- Changing profile of UK dentists – 5 May. Our review of the working patterns data and 2025 registration statistics poses questions for the sector, such as how to persuade and support newly registered dentists to provide NHS care, what types and levels of support to offer dentists from diverse backgrounds, and what else needs to be put in place to ensure the dental workforce can continue to meet population oral healthcare needs.

- Education reforms support inclusion and diversity – 5 May. The Head of EQA spoke on camera about how education reforms support diversity and inclusion, reflecting on how the Safe Practitioner Framework and Standards for Education help us to work with education providers to ensure graduates were appropriately prepared, and making sure students who needed help were being identified and supported.

- In conversation with the CDO England – 7 May. We interviewed Jason Wong, CDO England, who explained how new pathways for patients with urgent and complex needs, alongside support for dental professionals, can reduce unmet care needs and address growing oral health inequalities in England.

- Clarity from complexity: working patterns data – 28 May. We reflected on how the data on working patterns that dental professionals voluntarily provide to us has been used to inform workforce discussions across the sector and within government.

Engagement with dental professionals via the monthly newsletter this quarter was on a par with previous quarters, with a mean open rate of 58.1% (57% in Q1). The average click-through rate continues to fluctuate each quarter but reached a high in Q2 of 3.1%, above the industry standard at 2.6%.

This was driven by May's newsletter achieving an open rate of 63%, the highest to date in 2026. It contained some of our top-performing items in 2026: working patterns data for dentists, Shamir Mehta's blogpost on composite bonding and an Insights piece on the changing profile of UK dentists with internationally qualified outnumbering UK-trained and how best to support them.

Our evaluation of the newsletter at the half-year point shows that the blog posts and Insights pieces are much more engaging than news announcements, with more dental professionals opening the links,

regardless of where the item is placed in the newsletter. This shows that our firm editorial policy is working, with fewer items in the newsletter, shorter, more interesting titles and a broader range of content that dental professionals want to read.

Month	Open Rate	Click Through	Total Engagement
April 2026	54.8%	2.6%	57.4%
May 2026	59.6%	4.0%	63.7%
June 2026	58.9%	2.7%	61.6%
Q2 mean	**58.1%**	**3.1%**	**60.9%**

Announcements for dental professionals this quarter:

- GDC consults on replacing the 'silver book' with new professionalism framework - 2 June. We announced the start of the consultation on proposals to replace the Standards for the Dental Team with a new Framework for Professionalism, explaining that this will make a major contribution to the delivery of our 2026-2028 strategy, particularly its first objective to support dental professionals to provide safe and effective care for their patients.

Additional blog posts this quarter:

- Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion by modernising services, improving understanding and developing policies - 29 April. We reflected on some of the improvements delivered as part of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2025.
- A view from the Chair: Council's discussions in April; improvements to fitness to practise; a new framework for professionalism; coaching and mentoring - 7 May
- A view from the Chair: understanding the dental workforce; insights into working patterns and fitness to practise; proposals for a new Framework of Professionalism - 3 June
- Regulation up close: what four Scottish Clinical Leadership Fellows learned from the GDC - 8 June. We invited clinical fellows from Scotland to reflect on their perceptions of the GDC, and what they learned from a series of engagement sessions we held with them, with teams from Regulation and Strategy directorates.
- Continuing professional development (CPD) myth-busting: Helping DCPs navigate their CPD requirements in 2026 - 24 June. We worked with the Dental Professionals Alliance to publish an updated version of their myth-busting article, which is aimed at helping dental care professionals through their annual renewal process.
- View from the Chair: Our Council meeting was held in Glasgow in June; Improving Fitness to Practise; Discussing our performance and how we will monitor and evaluate it; Observe a Council meeting or ask a question - 2 July

4. Engaging stakeholders

Stakeholder engagement was at a lower level than in Q1 in terms of numbers of opportunities, but similar to Q2 in 2025. We achieved a good spread of engagement across the three comms and engagement objectives, with some notable highlights:

- The Head of EQA and Head of Upstream Regulation presented an update on the Standards for Education at the NES Scotland event in April.

- The ED, Regulation, spoke on two panels about 'Fear and regulation' at the Dentistry Show in Birmingham, where we also had a stand.

- The CEO spoke at the annual Local Dental Committee (LDC) conference, which has led to further engagement with local LDCs.

- Colleagues from Regulation and Comms and Engagement attended the Scottish Dental Show, engaging directly with hundred of dental professionals, particularly early careers and dental nurses.

- We convened the Dental Leadership Network in June on the theme of supporting internationally qualified dental professionals, with speakers including dental corporates explaining how they support internationally qualified dental graduates to register and practise in the UK, and several internationally qualified graduates themselves, sharing their lived experience. The ED, Strategy presented on the future shape of the dental workforce, with examples of how it will change as a result of the increasing numbers of places for internationally qualified graduates to register in the UK.

- We continued to proactively build relationships with new stakeholders, inviting two stakeholder organisations to join the DLN in June, and creating three opportunities for Council to engage with stakeholders in Scotland.

- The number of stakeholder organisations who receive our monthly newsletter has increased, which increases the likelihood of more dental professionals receiving our key messages.

- Consultation continued on the guidance for case examiners and decision bank, and we started to consult on the proposals for a new Framework for Professionalism hosting several events for stakeholders to hear more and provide feedback. We shared the annual statistical reports for Registration and FtP with stakeholders, with both generating several trade media pieces and generating a lot of interest.

Engagement by partner type is broken down as follows:

Stakeholder organisation	**Number of engagements**
Education	15
NHS	11
Patient representative body	0
Government	14
Professional body	5
Dental corporate	2
Other regulators	10

Stakeholder organisation	Number of engagements
Students	5
Cross-sector	5
Indemnity/insurance organisation	8
Charity	2
TOTALS	**77**

Nation	Number of engagements
UK-wide	12
Scotland	22
Wales	13
England	27
Northern Ireland	3
International	0
TOTALS	**77**

Other announcements for stakeholders this quarter:

First ORE sittings and fees under new contract confirmed - 6 May. We announced the confirmed sittings, expanded capacity and revised fee structure for the Overseas Registration Examination (ORE) in the first year of our new contract with UCL Consultants Ltd. This explained that, in the first year, we will provide 2,400 Part 1 exam places and 944 Part 2 exam places.

Internationally qualified dentists outnumber UK-qualified dentists joining GDC register - 7 May. We published the annual Registration statistics report, which showed that internationally qualified dentists now outnumber UK-qualified dentists joining the register, 53% compared to 47%. The report provides insights into the dental workforce and also showed that we met, and in several areas exceeded, its timeliness targets across all UK and specialist registration routes in 2025.

GDC publishes most detailed fitness to practise report to date - 3 June. Our annual FtP statistics report showed that we received 1,766 concerns in 2025, a 26% rise on the previous year. We also provided details of our performance, showing that in 2025, we closed 19% of new concerns at the initial assessment stage, more than at any point in the previous four years, reflecting our work to identify and resolve less serious concerns earlier in the process. Also that we reduced the time to reach a final case examiner decision from 50 working weeks to 36, and the time from case examiner decision to Practice Committee hearing is now at its lowest in five years.

GDC to relocate London headquarters to Paddington - 3 June. We announced our move from Wimpole Street, sharing that, beyond the practical case for the relocation, the exit from Wimpole Street is projected to generate £3.2 million in savings over five years.

Tom Whiting, Chief Executive, GDC, speaking at the LDC Conference 2026 - 5 June. We published the speech online, sharing key messages about our performance and priorities.

5. New or unplanned activity

Nothing this quarter.

6. Challenges

The range of content types that we provide has grown this year, as part of our strategy to build understanding, address fear and nurture relationships. The early signs are positive, with higher engagement on this content than on news and announcements. The challenge is sustaining the flow of content, which requires additional time to identify opportunities, source and create content.

7. Lessons learnt

We are starting to learn more about what information is of most value to dental professionals. We will continue to build our stakeholder relationships so that we understand this better and work with partners to create content that is relevant, timely and of value.

8. Future priorities

July

- Annual Report and Accounts published – 2 July
- Framework for Professionalism engagement sessions – online and in person throughout July and August
- Consultation starts: FtP decision-making guidance – w/c 1 July
- Education Supervisors' Conference, EQA team attending – 3 July
- EQA Event 'Celebrating best practice in education' – 14 July

August

- Framework for Professionalism consultation events continue
- Consultation starts: FtP Initial assessment and Assessment guidance – w/c 10 August

September

- ORE booking process – potential new process for booking (ballot)
- BDIA National Conference – ED, Strategy, is speaking – 24 September
- Educational Supervisors' Conference – The EQA team are convening this important group of education stakeholders – 25 September

Council Forward Plan 2026

Key: Corporate Resources | Legal & Governance | People Services & OD | Regulation | Strategy

			Meeting Date	Fri 30 October 2026		Thu 10 December 2026	
			Location	London Paddington		Colmore Square	
			ELT / Committee / Council Dates	ARC - 1 Oct 2026		RemNom - 13 Nov 2026 SPC - 18 Nov 2026 ARC - 19 Nov 2026 FPC 23 Nov 2026	
			Reporting Period				
Category	**Report**	**Action Required**		**Closed**	**Public**	**Closed**	**Public**
	Board Effectiveness Review - update	For approval					✔
	Board development	For discussion					
	Committee appointments 2026	For approval					
	SICM appointment 2026	For approval					
	Committee Assurance Reports	For approval			✔		✔
	Committee Terms of Reference	For approval					
	Standing Orders	For approval					
	Scheme of Delegation	For approval					
	Duties and roles of Chair/CM/SICM and Duties and role of CE, AO and Registrar	For approval					✔
	Code of Conduct - Council Members and IGAs	For approval					✔
	Council Member Reappointment - as required	For approval		✔			
	Independent Governance Associate Reappointment - as required	For approval					
	Chair and CEO Objectives - 2026 Objectives	For approval					
	Approval of Objective setting Process (every 2 years)	To note					
	Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2025	To note					
	Total Reward - Pay and Grading (tbc)	For approval					
	Chief Executive's Report	To note		✔	✔	✔	✔
	Annual Retention Fee (ARF) Regulations - if required	For approval			✔		
	Defined Benefit Pensions Scheme Update - if required	To note					
	Estates Strategy/ Optimisation of GDC estates	For discussion					
	Business Plan - second draft	For discussion					
	Business Plan - final	For approval		✔	✔		
	Strategic Risk Appetite - date TBC	For approval					
	Strategic Risk Register	For approval		✔		✔	
	Organisational Performance Report (Quarterly) to include strategy outcomes	For approval					
	Medium Term Financial Strategy	For approval					
	Investment Policy						
	Sustainability Strategy	For approval					
	IT Strategy	For approval					✔
	People Strategy	For approval					
	People Strategy - update						✔
	Financial delegations	For approval					
	Agree Panel Determinations	For approval					
	Associates (Somerville) Pay and expenses policy	For approval					
	Council Members and Associates Remuneration Policy	For approval					
	Council Members and Associates Remuneration	For approval					
	Overseas Registration Examination fees	For approval					
	FtP improvements	For discussion			✔		
	Mann Review recommendations	For approval			✔		
	Update on Strategy Outcome Process	To note					
	Strategy Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	For approval					
	Data Strategy Roadmap	For approval					
	Research update and plan	For approval					
	Annual Report and Accounts	For approval					
	PSA Standards of Good Regulation and GDC Organisational Performance	For discussion					
	Dental Nursing Report	For discussion					
	Review of Education	To note					✔
	Corporate Strategy - as required	For approval					
	Communication Principles for Business Plan, ARF, Budget and Reserves	For discussion					
	Changes in Legislation - as required	For discussion					
	Framework for Professionalism [plus Supporting Safe Practice - or separate paper]	For approval					✔
	English Language requirements	For approval			✔		
	Framework for Professionalism - Supporting Safe Practice	For approval					✔
	Routes to International Registration - as required	For discussion				✔	
Correspondence items	Communications and Engagement: quarterly review and insights	To note			✔		
	Assessment to Case Examiner Decision	For approval					
	Hearings and ILPS KPIs	For approval					
	Triennial Pensions Update and Actuarial Assumptions	To note					
	Pension Plan - Report from the Chair of Trustees	To note				✔	
	Health and Safety Annual Report	To note					
	Council Member and Associates Expenses Policy	For approval				✔	
	Minutes of Non-Statutory Committees	To note		✔		✔	
	Annual Committee Reports	To note					✔
	Council Member appointments timetable	To note					
	Social Media Policy - date TBC	For approval					
Items to note (to be provided when available)	Annual Report on Significant Litigation	To note					
	Education Quality Assurance Annual Update	To note					✔
	Joint Regulatory Whistleblowing Report	To note			✔		
	Annual Report on the Use of the Seal	To note					

General Dental Council

gdc-uk.org

A closed meeting of the Council of the General Dental Council

12:45pm on Friday 18 September at

Colmore Square, Birmingham

Members:

Helen Phillips (Chair)

Reshard Auladin

Ilona Blue

Donald Burden

Mike Driver

Bill Gunnyeon

Angie Heilmann

Serbjit Kaur

Mike Lewis

Timea Milovecz

Simon Morrow

Laura Simons

The meeting will be held in private. Items of business may be held in private where items are of a confidential nature.[1]

If you require further information or if you are unable to attend, please contact Rebecca Ledwidge as soon as possible:

Rebecca Ledwidge: Head of Governance, General Dental Council

Email: rledwidge@gdc-uk.org

[1] Section 5 of the General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business of Council and Committees 2022

Closed Council Meeting

PART ONE - PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1.	**Welcome and Apologies for Absence**	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council	12:45 – 12:50 (5 mins)	Verbal
2.	**Declarations of Interest**	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council		
3.	**Minutes of Previous Meetings** To note approval of the full minutes of the closed meeting held on 19 June 2026	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council		Paper
4.	**Matters Arising and Rolling Actions List** To note any matters arising from the closed meeting held on 19 June 2026 and review the rolling actions list	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council		Paper
5.	**Decisions Log** To note decisions taken between meetings under delegation	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council		Paper

PART TWO - ITEMS FOR DECISION AND DISCUSSION

No	Item & Presenter	Tabled for?	Time	Status
6.	**Chief Executive's Report** Tom Whiting, Chief Executive	Noting	12:50 - 13:00 (10 mins)	Paper
7.	**Business Plan 2027 – 2029 (Second Draft)** *Business Plan 2027-29 – cover paper* *Appendix 1 - Business Plan 2027-29 plan* *Appendix 2 - FtP Executive summary - FtP investment cases* David Criddle, Head of Business Intelligence and PMO Samantha Bache, Associate Director, Finance Theresa Thorp, Executive Director Regulation	Discussion	13:00 - 14:00 (60 mins)	Paper
8.	**Communication Principles for the Business Plan and ARF** Colin Mackenzie, Head of Nations and Engagement	Approval	14:00 -14:20 (20 mins)	Paper

9.	**Board Development** Rebecca Ledwidge, Head of Governance	Discussion	14:20 -14:40 (20 mins)	Paper

PART THREE - CONCLUSION OF BUSINESS

10.	**Any Other Business**	Helen Phillips, Chair of the Council	14:40 -14:50 (10 mins)	Oral
11.	**Date of Next Meeting** 30 October 2026, 50 Paddington, London			
Close: 14:50				

Appendix 1 - Items considered via correspondence

Note:

- *These papers will not be discussed during the substantive Council meeting unless there is a request, no later than 48 hours before the meeting, for a specific item to be added to the agenda.*
- *The deadline for comments on papers circulated via correspondence is outlined on the individual item.*

No.	Item	Authors	For	Closed /Public	Deadline
C1	**Minutes of the meetings of the Non-Statutory Committees** 1) Remuneration and Nomination Committee – 4 June 2) Finance and Performance Committee – 9 June, 29 July, 24 August 2026	Governance Managers	Noting	Closed	16 September 2026

Reading Room items

The following items contain additional papers that are provided in the Council Reading Room in the Resources section of Board Intelligence.

No.	Item	Authors	For	Closed/Public
R1	**Item 9** – Business Plan 2027-2029 – Strategy risk of delivery review	David Criddle, Samantha Bache	Noting	Closed
R2	**Item 9** – Business Plan 2027-2029 – Delivery plan activity detail	David Criddle, Samantha Bache	Noting	

Board Charter

Our organisational values guide how we operate. Acknowledging their respective roles and responsibilities, Council Members and the Executive Leadership Team have agreed ways of working (a 'Board Charter') that aim to embed the GDC's values of fairness, transparency, responsiveness, and respect within our discussions, decision-making and leadership of the GDC.

The GDC's purpose and overarching objective when exercising its functions is the protection of the public. In order to achieve this, the GDC must:

- pursue, promote and maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of the public;
- promote and maintain public confidence in the professions, and;
- promote and maintain proper professional standards and conduct for members of those professions.

The Council and the Executive team are committed to:

- Working together in a respectful, inclusive, honest, transparent and open-minded way to achieve the best outcomes for the public.
- Bringing the views of the public, the profession, and our wider stakeholder group into decision-making.
- Being well informed, prepared and contributing constructively to the discussion.
- Welcoming constructive challenge.
- Drawing on evidence as appropriate to make informed, rational and fair decisions.
- Looking ahead, whilst learning from experience.

This Board Charter will be used:

- As a foundation for discussion on Council and Committee agendas.
- To inform discussion at Council Member and Executive appraisals.
- In meeting reviews.
- In communication with our internal stakeholders e.g. through a weekly newsletter and/or message from the Chair and the new Chief Executive.
- In the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024/25 to highlight work in respect of Board development.