**Striking the Balance – Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life in Regulation**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Purpose of paper</th>
<th>This paper sets out how the GDC complies with the best practice recommendations in the Committee for Standards in Public Life’s publication Striking the Balance.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Public session</td>
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<td>Action</td>
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| **Corporate Strategy 2016-19** | **Performance**  
Objective 1: To improve our performance across all our functions so that we are highly effective as a regulator.                                                                 |
| **Business Plan 2017** | **Priority three:**  
Drive improvement in dental regulation                                                                                             |
| **Decision Trail** | This publication has previously been circulated to Council but this is the first formal consideration of its recommendations.                                                               |
| **Next stage** | Best practice recommendations included in the report will be taken into consideration when reviewing the GDC’s governance framework and policies.                                                  |
| **Recommendations** | Council is asked to:  
- Discuss the results of the review of existing GDC policy and practice against the best practice recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.                                        |
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| **Appendices** | Appendix 1: Best practice recommendation schedule.                                                                                   |
1. Executive summary

1.1. The Committee on Standards in Public Life, the Committee, was established in 1994 and is responsible for promoting the Seven Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership in public life, commonly known as the Nolan principles.

1.2. In August 2015, the Committee decided to review how regulatory bodies uphold the Nolan Principles as it recognised the important public function of regulation and the distinctive ethical standards challenged by regulatory bodies. The review focussed on the internal arrangements and practices of regulators, identified ethical issues facing regulators and made a number of best practice recommendations based on its findings. It should be noted that the review considered all types of regulatory bodies across all sectors, not only healthcare. Consequently not all of the recommendations and best practice suggestions are completely relevant to the GDC. The resulting report was published in September 2016.

1.3. The Governance Team has considered the procedures and processes in place at the GDC and how they comply with the best practice recommendations in the six key areas of best practice identified in the report. These were: governance, codes of conduct, revolving door, independence, transparency and external leadership. The ‘revolving door’ refers to people moving into and out of regulatory bodies. The report suggests that there is a possibility that the integrity and independence of the regulator could be called into question if this is not properly managed and consequently the Committee recommends the introduction of adequate safeguards.

1.4. Overall the GDC’s existing practices compare favourably with the report’s recommendations particularly in the identification and management of conflicts of interest and in the publication of information on the website relating to the conduct of business and decision making. Many of the best practice recommendations made are addressed through the recruitment and induction processes.

1.5. There are some areas, for example arrangements for managing ‘revolving door’ situations, where GDC does not currently have specific procedures to identify and manage such situations. However such issues are not commonplace in the GDC and could be managed on a case by case basis by the recruitment and conflict of interests policies.

1.6. The Committee’s recommendations and the GDC’s practices are summarised on the appended document.

2. Recommendations

2.1. The Council is asked to:

- Discuss the results of the review of existing GDC policy and practice against the best practice recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

3. Appendices

3.1. Best practice recommendation schedule.