Minutes of the Meeting of the
General Dental Council
held at 09:45am on Thursday 11 May 2017
in Public Session
at 37 Wimpole Street, London W1G 8DQ

Council Members present
William Moyes Chair
Catherine Brady
Geraldine Campbell
Rosemary Carter
Margaret Kellett
Alan MacDonald
Kirstie Moons
Lawrence Mudford
David Smith
Jayendra Patel
Neil Stevenson

Executive in attendance:
Ian Brack Chief Executive and Registrar
Gurvinder Soomal Executive Director, Registration and Corporate Services
Jonathan Green Executive Director, Fitness to Practise (FTP)
Matthew Hill Executive Director, Strategy
Lisa-Marie Roca Principal Legal Adviser
Lisa Cunningham Head of Communications

Staff members in attendance:
Clare Mitchell Head of Governance
Ian Jackson Director for Scotland
Helen Elderfield Governance and Executive Support Manager
Jag Sahota Head of Registration Change and Development (Item 6)
Janet Collins Head of Standards (Item 6)
Rebecca Cooper Head of Corporate Policy (Item 7)
Nyree Connell Corporate Policy Manager (Item 7)

Invited Attendees:
-

PART ONE – PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1. Opening remarks, apologies for absence and declarations of interest
   1.1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
   1.2. Apologies for absence were received from Terry Babbs and Jonathan Green.
   1.3. There were no additional declarations of interest pertaining to items on the agenda.
2. Questions submitted by members of the public
   2.1. The Chair advised that no questions had been received from the public in response to the agenda and papers being posted on the GDC’s website.

3. Minutes of meeting on 16 March 2017
   Discussion
   3.1. In relation to the discussion on the Annual Review of Education, an amendment was suggested to the final sentence of paragraph 6.9 for clarity on the vocational training year.
   3.2. Subject to that change, the draft minutes were considered and accepted as a true and accurate record of the discussions that took place on 16 March 2017.
   Action
   A.1 Final sentence of paragraph 6.9 to be amended.
   Action: Helen Elderfield
   Resolution
   The Council resolved to:
   R.1 Approve the minutes of the meeting held in public session on 16 March 2017 without amendment

4. Matters arising from the meeting on 16 March 2017 and rolling actions list
   Discussion
   4.1. The Council noted progress made with actions arising from previous meetings.
   4.2. There were no matters arising.
   Action
   A.2 Actions marked ‘suggested complete’ to be updated and marked ‘complete’.
   Action: Helen Elderfield
   Resolution
   The Council resolved to:
   R.2 Note the progress made with regard to actions arising from previous meetings.

5. Decisions Log
   Discussion
   5.1. The Council noted the decision taken under delegated powers since the meeting on 16 March 2017, namely to make the letter regarding the Apologies (Scotland) Act available to the relevant committee of the Scottish Parliament. Matthew Hill advised that the committee had met and the exemption to the provisions to the Act had been secured.
   Resolution
   The Council resolved to:
   R.3 Note the decisions taken since the last meeting.
PART TWO – ITEMS FOR DECISION AND DISCUSSION

6. Enhanced CPD

Discussion

6.1. Janet Collins and Jag Sahota joined the meeting to present the paper on enhanced CPD, 'ECPD'. Janet began by advising the Council that it was not possible to seal the Rules as planned because further validation was required by the Department of Health. Assurance was given however that the revised timetable would allow the Rules to be signed and sealed at the June Council meeting and that allowance had been made for both the pre-election period and the summer recess. Janet advised that the decision had been taken to retain this item on the agenda to inform Council members of the team’s readiness and to provide an update on the proposals being taken forward from Shifting the Balance.

6.2. Council members expressed concern that they had not had sight of the detailed arrangements. Janet explained that communication on the transition details and arrangements, and the content, would commence immediately and would be targeted especially at those groups who would be first to follow the new system. She informed the Council that the team had received many offers of the use of partners’ communication channels to assist with awareness raising and that the content for the GDC’s website had been prepared.

6.3. It was agreed that a session would be arranged at the next Council workshop to explain the detailed arrangements and that slides would be made available for members to include in their own presentations to assist with promoting awareness of the scheme.

6.4. Council members enquired as to the costs of implementation and Gurvinder Soomal gave assurance that this had been factored into the 2017 budget and would be affordable within the 2018 budget.

6.5. Consideration was given as to whether ECPD should be retained as a stand-alone project or to present it as an initiative emerging from Shifting the Balance. It was agreed that the key to its effectiveness was a change in behaviours, particularly in relation to the PDP which would be unfamiliar to many. Signposting, FAQs and examples would be put in place to assist with this aspect. Jag reminded the Council that although the Rules would come into force on 1 January 2018, individuals would not need to submit their records until the end of the year so there would still be plenty of time to learn and embed the requirements.

6.6. It was explained that ECPD would be launched with paper based templates before developing more intuitive software for recording activities. The template had been specifically developed during the pilot project taking feedback from participants into account.

6.7. It was suggested that a soft introduction by dentists to DCPs to the use of personal development plans would not only support the promotion of the system but would also contribute to the dentists’ PDP. It was noted that the profession was enthusiastic and keen to make ECPD work. Janet advised that she, Matthew Hill and Ian Brack were all speaking at The Dentistry Show at the weekend and would use the opportunity to raise awareness of ECPD.
**Action**

A.3 The implementation arrangements to be explained to Council members at the June Council workshop.

*Action: Jag Sahota & Janet Collins*

A.4 Slides to be produced for Council members to include in any presentations that they are giving to assist in promoting ECPD.

*Action: Lisa Cunningham*

**Resolution**

The Council resolved to:

R.4 Agree that the Chair has the Council’s authority to approve any additional amendments required to the Rules prior to the June meeting.

R.5 Note the plans for further development of CPD.

7. **Shifting the Balance**

**Discussion**

7.1. Matthew Hill advised that the GDC’s discussion document had been very well received and had enabled a lot of direct engagement with the professions in the four nations including at LDC and DCP meetings.

7.2. Rebecca Cooper and Nyree Connell joined the meeting and gave a high-level overview of the feedback received during the three-month discussion period that had recently closed. It was noted that whilst the GDC was setting the agenda it was not necessarily the implementation agent for all the initiatives suggested in Shifting the Balance. It was explained that the programme plan of activities would be discussed with PRB and subsequently presented to the Council.

7.3. Given the wide variety of input, action was being taken to give assurance to respondents that matters were being taken forward and that conversations were ongoing. It was agreed that one way of ensuring that the dialogue continued was to ensure that follow up meetings were arranged on specific matters, even when they were for some time hence. Additionally, the communications plan would ensure that a commentary on what is happening and what work is being undertaken with stakeholders would be widely disseminated.

7.4. It was agreed that insofar as reporting to Council was concerned, initiatives would be disaggregated according to the timeline and progress reported to each meeting.

7.5. There was acknowledgment that responses from patient groups were low. This was being addressed at a meeting with the patients’ association in the next week. There was also an intention to develop projects at the next level which would specifically be aimed at patient groups.

**Resolution**

The Council resolved to:

R.6 Note the summary provided in the paper.

8. **Council Member Recruitment and Induction**

**Discussion**

8.1. Clare Mitchell reminded the Council that the current recruitment exercise sought four lay members and up to two registrant members to take office on 1 October 2017.
She advised that the campaign had generated a good response rate with 152 lay and 52 registrant applications being received.

8.2. Clare reminded Council members that a workshop had been hosted aimed at generating applications from DCPs and advised that this had resulted in 35 applications being submitted.

8.3. Long listing was completed on 19 April and Saxton Bamfylde were conducting preliminary interviews with longlisted candidates with a shortlisting meeting planned for 17 May. Final interviews would be held at the beginning of June and the Privy Council were expected to make the appointments by the end of July.

8.4. Clare also advised that a draft induction programme was being shared with the Remuneration Committee. It included two events in September, one for new members only and a second around the September Council workshop including new member observing the Council meeting on 28 September.

8.5. Bill thanked Clare for the work completed so far and reflected that the calibre of applicants was high.

Resolution

The Council resolved to:

R.7 Note the progress made with Council member recruitment.

9. Striking the Balance – Upholding the seven principles of public life in Regulation

Discussion

9.1. Clare Mitchell introduced the paper that set out how the GDC complies with the best practice recommendations in the Committee for Standards in Public Life’s publication Striking the Balance. She noted that the recommendations apply to all regulatory bodies, not just those in healthcare.

9.2. Clare noted the six areas that the report covered and explained that many of the recommendations relate to staff as well as Council members and Associates. She noted that the GDC’s compliance with the recommendations was broadly positive.

9.3. Council members noted that there were no specific policies in place to address ‘revolving door’ concerns and discussed whether restrictive covenants should be introduced into contracts. An example was cited of a previous Council member who had taken up a role with the BDA at the end of their Council term. It was agreed that Bobby Davis would be asked to consider this area for staff and, with specific concern for FTP Associates, to raise the concern with the Statutory Panellists’ Assurance Committee.

9.4. It was noted that the recommendations made reference to ‘at least one code of conduct should cover all staff’. In acknowledging that there was no code of conduct document for staff, it was agreed that the arrangements in place, including staff behaviours and the induction arrangements, formed equivalent documents which addressed the issues concerned.

9.5. Council members expressed their satisfaction with the GDC’s position in relation to the best practice recommendations and requested that it be reviewed every few years.

Action

A.5 Consideration to be given to introduce measures to address ‘revolving door’ concerns for staff and FTP Associates.

Action: Bobby Davis
Resolution
The Council resolved to:
R.8 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.

10. Committee Reports
Audit & Risk Committee
10.1. Council members welcomed the internal audit recommendation tracker approved by the committee and welcomed the intention to bring a dashboard version to the Council meeting in June.

Remuneration Committee
10.2. It was confirmed that the equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and policy would be brought to the Council in July.

Policy & Research Board
10.3. The Council welcomed the availability of the FTP case studies on the website.
10.4. The new annex to the Horizon Scan covering the external environment in the four nations was welcomed and further suggestions were made for additional stakeholders to be included. Lisa Cunningham encouraged Council members to pass further information to her for inclusion in the report.

Resolution
The Council resolved to:
R.9 Note the reports from the committee meetings that had taken place since the Council’s last meeting.

11. Executive Management Team Board – terms of reference
Discussion
11.1. Ian Brack informed the Council that this was the first formal codification of the EMT Board terms of reference, covering their functions and responsibilities. He sought their views on the provision for a Chief Executive’s report to the Council. After discussion, it was agreed that a CEO’s report should be included on the council’s agenda, where necessary, to present a more corporate collective view on matters such as finance and resources where those items are not covered by papers elsewhere on the agenda.
11.2. Council members agreed that the document would be helpful guidance which would not fetter the EMT Board’s agility to deal with emerging situations.
11.3. The Council were keen to ensure that the EMT Board operated transparently and modelled leadership behaviours. It was suggested that consideration was given to inviting staff to observe the meetings.
11.4. It was suggested that amendments be made to the terms of reference to clarify routes for financial reporting, and to confirm that the senior financially qualified member of staff would have a dotted line report to the Accounting Officer.
Action

A.6 The terms of reference to be amended to use gender neutral language throughout, clarify that finance reports would be submitted to ARC prior to Council, and confirm the dotted line report for the most senior financially qualified staff member to the Accounting Officer.

Action: Helen Elderfield

Resolution

The Council resolved to:

R.10 Approve the Executive Management Team Board Terms of Reference.

12. General Election Guidance

Discussion

12.1. Matthew Hill informed the Council that the direct impact of the pre-election period on the General Dental Council was very limited. He stated that there was likely to be a greater impact on the Department of Health particularly in restricting the development of future plans. Since it was likely that there would be in the order of 15 Bills to implement the UK’s exit from the European Union however, it was suggested that there may be little parliamentary time available for health-related legislation. Matthew reminded the Council that the proposals for reform suggested in Shifting the Balance did not rely on primary legislation.

12.2. Ian Brack cautioned members who may be approached to respond to questions or give comments to exercise discretion and contact the Press Office for guidance.

Resolution

The Council resolved to:

R.11 Note the guidance provided in relation to the General Election.

PART THREE – ITEMS FOR NOTING


PART FOUR – CONCLUSION OF BUSINESS

13. Any Other Business

13.1. Members welcomed the revised layout of the agenda.

13.2. The Council was informed of the Chair’s recent visits to primary dental care facilities which included discussions with both trainers and trainees on the foundation programme. Positive feedback had been received and it was suggested that the visit programme be extended for other Council members. It was stated that visits to the dental schools were also being arranged as part of the new Council members’ induction programme.

14. Review of the meeting

14.1. All agreed that despite the light agenda, good discussions had taken place.
15. Close of the meeting
   15.1. There being no further business the meeting was closed at 11:30am.

Date of next meeting: 22 June 2017

Name of Chair:
William Moyes