

Confirmed

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
General Dental Council
held at 12:45pm on Thursday 17 May 2018
in Public Session
at 37 Wimpole Street, London W1G 8DQ**

Council Members present:

William Moyes	Chair
Terry Babbs	
Catherine Brady	
Geraldine Campbell	
Anne Heal	
Jeyanthi John	
Caroline Logan	
Margaret Kellett	
Kirstie Moons	
Lawrence Mudford	
Crispin Passmore	

Executive in attendance:

Ian Brack	Chief Executive and Registrar
Bobby Davis	Executive Director, Organisational Development
Matthew Hill	Executive Director, Strategy
Tom Scott	Executive Director, Fitness to Practise (FtP) Transition
Gurvinder Soomal	Executive Director, Registration and Corporate Resources
Lisa-Marie Roca	Principal Legal Adviser

Staff in attendance:

Clare Mitchell	Head of Governance
Kairen Zonena	Senior Governance Manager
Angeline Burton	Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement
Ian Jackson	Director for Scotland
Rebecca Cooper	Head of GDC Policy and Research (item 7)
Kristen Bottrill	Policy Officer (item 7)
Peter Butler	QA Operations Manager (item 8)
Michelle Williams	Dental Complaints Service Manager (item 9)
Keith Geraghty	Head of IT (item 10)
Melanie Stewart	Head of Finance and Procurement (item 14)
Alex Gooding	Business Planning and Reporting Manager (item 14)

Also in attendance:

Rosie Varley	Chair, Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee (item 12.1)
Adam Halsey	haysmacintyre (item 14)

Members of the public were in attendance.

PART ONE – PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1. Opening remarks and apologies for absence

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 1.2. There were apologies for absence from Sheila Kumar.

2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1. There were no declarations of interest.

3. Questions submitted by members of the public

- 3.1. No questions had been submitted by members of the public in line with the GDC's policy.

4. Approval of minutes of the previous meetings

- 4.1. The Council **approved** the full minutes of the Council meeting in public held on 15 March 2018.

5. Matters arising from the Open Council meeting held on 1 February 2018 and rolling actions list

- 5.1. The Council **noted** progress made against actions arising from previous meetings. In relation to action 245, to consider the possibility of tweeting from Council meetings, it had been felt not to be a particularly useful subject for twitter, and did not justify the resources. The Executive's view was that there were more effective ways of communicating with stakeholders. The work on communications preferences in the stakeholder engagement project would help inform the GDC's strategy for how best to communicate aspects of its work to various audiences in the future.
- 5.2. For action 275, Margaret Kellett thanked staff for the email she had been sent, to which she had sent a further email querying what the new KPIs measured. The action would remain open pending a response by staff.
- 5.3. The Council considered the status of the actions and agreed that, with the exception of 275, those marked complete on could be closed.

6. Decisions log

- 6.1. The Council **noted** the decisions that had been taken by Committees under delegated powers.

6a Recent Reports – PSA investigation of the NMC; HEE's *Advancing Dental Care*

- 6.2. Matthew Hill commented on the PSA's investigation report into the NMC's handling of fitness to practise complaints concerning Barrow in Furness General Hospital. It would be analysed for any lessons that could be drawn for the GDC. At first reading it appeared that the analysis of the PSA in their report echoed the factors which had led the GDC to produce *Shifting the Balance*.
- 6.3. He also mentioned the report of Health Education England, *Advancing Dental Care Education and Training Review*, where a number of recommendations involved areas which were in fact the statutory responsibility of the GDC. Correspondence had taken place during the consultation phase to seek a more joined up approach, and would now need to continue further.

Rebecca Cooper and Kristen Bottrell joined the meeting.

PART TWO – ITEMS FOR DECISION AND DISCUSSION

7. Regulatory Reform – consultation responses on Fees Policy Framework – oral update

- 7.1. Rebecca Cooper and Kristen Bottrell reported that 106 consultation responses had been received, of which 12 were from institutions, and the remainder from individuals, largely dentists. The consultation had just closed, and the analysis was about to be done, together with some follow-up work inviting membership organisations in to meet with the GDC to discuss the proposals in more detail. The analysis would be presented to Council in July, with publication planned for the autumn.
- 7.2. The Council **noted** the oral update.

Rebecca Cooper and Kristen Bottrell left the meeting.

Peter Butler joined the meeting.

8. Plan for the Appointment of GDC Education Associates

- 8.1. In response to questions about the process for the appointment of Education Associates, Matthew Hill explained that appointment of Associates to inspect dental schools was delegated to the Registrar, whereas the appointment of those recruited to inspect training programmes for Dental Care Professionals (DCPs) was reserved to the Council. As it was intended to use Education Associates interchangeably for inspection of both, the request had been brought to the Council as its approval would cover both groups. The paper was intended to give sufficient background and context to enable the Council to make the decision.
- 8.2. The Council required further scrutiny and oversight of the proposals and directed Remuneration Committee to review the proposals for the purpose of consistency, and as they related to remuneration, conditions, and the wider Associates Project.
- 8.3. Bobby Davis advised that the Remuneration Committee was due to consider a report on the Associates project the following week, and added that any recruitment of Education Associates would of course be in line with those recommendations. Matthew Hill confirmed that education staff had consulted with HR colleagues over the recruitment process.
- 8.4. A comparison was made with the recruitment process for Fitness to Practise Associates, and Rosie Varley, Chair of the Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee (SPC), spoke highly of the rigour and quality of the process employed by FtP, and overseen by SPC. It was observed that this could be a fruitful source of shared information and practice. It was also noted that there were nevertheless significant differences due to the very different nature of the work undertaken by the respective Associate groups (quasi-judicial decisions by FtP panellists, and therefore quite different requirements from those needed for the education inspection and accreditation done by Education associates).
- 8.5. The proposed length of the associate contract (initially for five years with the option of an additional one-year extension) had been based on the original five-year cycle of education inspections. It also reflected the need for continuity, and reducing the impact on staff of the resource-intensive nature of recruitment. The new recruits would start work with the new risk-based approach to quality assurance starting next year. It was proposed that the length of contract for this group of associates should be three years and that the need for continuity should be borne in mind, i.e. so that not all associates finished their term at the same point.
- 8.6. Many of the concerns expressed by Council were those being addressed by the Associates Project. Ian Brack commented that the majority of Associates were FtP related and came under the auspices of the SPC, where there was a good system of recruitment, selection, training, and development. For the other groups and types of Associates around the

organisation, the picture was more varied. The project would provide an overview of the arrangements in place for all groups of associates across the GDC, allow Associates to be considered in the round, and decisions to be taken about how to manage and communicate with this important resource.

- 8.7. It was agreed that the paper had highlighted some interesting points and that for reasons of consistency and oversight, it should also go to Remuneration Committee to be considered alongside the Associates Project. The Committee and staff would be asked to consider issues such as diversity, remuneration and contract length. Consideration should also be given to amending the DCP Rules to delegate the appointment of DCP Education Associates to the Registrar.

Action: Bobby Davis and Matthew Hill to refer the paper to the Remuneration Committee meeting of 24 May 2018, to be considered together with a paper on the Associates Project, for consistency and oversight.

Peter Butler left the meeting.

Michelle Williams joined the meeting.

9. Dental Complaints Service Quarter 1

- 9.1. Hazel Adams had not been able to be present for this meeting, but at a Council Workshop the previous day, William Moyes on behalf of the Council had placed on record the Council's thanks to Hazel Adams for her service, and wished her well in the future.
- 9.2. Michelle Williams was present as the Operations Manager, and would formally become Head of the Service as part of the restructure which came into effect on 1 June. She was welcomed. She introduced the report, saying that the DCS had had a very positive start to 2018 with a significant improvement on performance from Q4 in 2017. In particular:
- 94% of all enquiries were responded to within the 2-day SLA
 - Timeliness in resolving cases in the Local Resolution stage improved from 60 days to 32 days and from 84 days in January to 65 days in March at the facilitated stage
- 9.3. She went on to say that Phase 1 of the DCS Review had been completed with all changes successfully implemented. As part of the review, the new principles for referrals to FtP had gone live on 1 March, and she summarised the new arrangements as below:
- During 2017 there had been an average of 15 cases per month referred to FTP. Of those a large proportion of cases did not pass the triage test and were closed by the triage team
 - DCS and FTP worked collaboratively to produce the new principles, which were based on the public interest test, to ensure that high risk cases would be referred by DCS to be progressed by FTP
 - On the rare occasion where there might be uncertainty about whether to refer or not, the DCS team member would consult with FTP for confirmation
 - If after assessment by the Complaints Officer the case was not referred to FTP, patients were advised that they could raise a concern directly with FTP independently, thus ensuring all options were available to the patient
 - In addition to changes to the referral process, DCS cases could now run concurrently with FTP cases, helping resolve concerns at a local level in a timely manner
 - During March there were 7 referrals to FTP - of which three were for the same registrant - representing a 46% reduction in referrals
 - To ensure that DCS referred the appropriate cases, daily and weekly reports were submitted to FTP and DCS management teams to enable them to review the referrals and make adjustments to the streams as required
- 9.4. Finally, the DCS team had moved into Wimpole Street on 14 May, and she thanked all for their help and kind reception.

- 9.5. Catherine Brady asked whether there had been a detectable change in the type of treatment complained about, and any themes or trends. Michelle Williams undertook to include this as part of the next Quarterly report.

Action: Michelle Williams to include trends and themes in treatments complained of in the next Quarterly report.

- 9.6. The Council **noted** the report.

Michelle Williams left the meeting.

Keith Geraghty joined the meeting.

10. Cybersecurity

- 10.1. Keith Geraghty introduced the report, which was necessarily slight, as arrangements for cybersecurity were confidential.
- 10.2. In response to questions, he confirmed that those dealing with the GDC in any formal or contractual way had to comply with certain cyber-secure standards and requirements, and that the GDC was involved in relevant government cybersecurity networks, received alerts bulletins, and met the government's standards (such as Cyberessentials).
- 10.3. The Council **noted** the paper.

Keith Geraghty left the meeting.

11. Appointment of Independent Member to the Audit and Risk Committee

- 11.1. The Council **ratified** Rajeev Arya's appointment as the independent member on the Audit and Risk Committee to 31 March 2021.

12. Reports of the Council's Committees

Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee (SPC)

- 12.1. Rosie Varley introduced the report, which was the report of the February Committee (the April meeting having been too close to this meeting – it would be reported to a later Council, as the Committee moved to six-monthly and/or by exception reports). The Council supported this approach. Relating back to the earlier discussion on education associates, she mentioned the process adopted by SPC for the recruitment and monitoring of panellists, which was robust and worked well. There had been a considerable improvement in the amount and quality of training and she paid tribute to the Hearings Team for their work. She highlighted the relevance of this for work currently being undertaken on Associates, and its possible application for quality assurance and consistency across other associates.
- 12.2. The Committee now wished to focus on trends in complaints and FtP cases which could inform the education and training of dentists and dental care professionals. Matthew Hill would be invited to a future meeting of SPC for consideration of the work of the Quality Assurance Group (chaired by Matthew Hill), trends in FtP issues and the learning from both those, and communication with registrants.
- 12.3. The Council **noted** the report.

Audit and Risk Committee

- 12.4. Crispin Passmore thanked the Executive and external advisors for their work on the Annual Report and Accounts, which had gone well.
- 12.5. In response to a question regarding the Health and Safety report, Ian Brack referred to an incident late last year when the public had sought refuge in the Wimpole Street building following a reported incident at Oxford Circus. He said that a policy had now been agreed to manage any repeat occurrence.

12.6. The Council **noted** the report.

Policy and Research Board (PRB)

12.7. Kirstie Moons commented on the very interesting presentation by Simon Wright on Human Factors, and it was agreed that the work of the proposed group (on which Matthew Hill would sit) was awaited with interest.

12.8. William Moyes asked whether the breadth of PRB's work was proving manageable, and Kirstie Moons replied that the workplan had been rationalised, and said that for the time-being it remained manageable but would be kept under review.

12.9. The Council noted the report.

13. Horizon Scan

13.1. The Council **noted** the Horizon Scan report.

Adam Halsey of haysmacintyre, Melanie Stewart and Alex Gooding joined the meeting.

14. Annual Report and Accounts 2017

14.1. Matthew Hill introduced the paper.

14.2. Clare Mitchell noted a small amendment made since the ARA had been circulated, which was the title of the diagram on page 32.

14.3. Adan Halsey reported that the closing of the accounts and the audit had gone well. He complimented staff on having produced a good clean set of accounts. He recommended them for adoption without modification or qualification. Where necessary there had been appropriate and healthy challenge in both directions, with ARC carrying out its assurance role well.

14.4. With the amendment noted on page 32, the Council:
Approved the Annual Report and Accounts 2017; and,
Authorised the signing of the Annual Report and Accounts 2017 and letters of representation by the Chief Executive and Registrar and Accounting Officer and the Chair of the Council.

CONCLUSION OF BUSINESS

15. Any other business

15.1. The Chair updated the Council on preparations for the **Council meeting in Edinburgh**, briefings and final information for which would be issued the week before the meeting.

15.2. **Council member interviews** were on 4 June followed by a recommendation to the PSA and Privy Council.

16. Review of the meeting

16.1. Council members agreed that the meeting had gone well.

17. Close of the meeting

17.1. There being no further business, the public meeting ended at 2.10pm.

Date of next meeting: 21 June 2018, in Edinburgh

Name of Chair:

William Moyes