

## Annual Report on the Chair’s Strategy Working Group

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<b>Type of business</b>	To note
<b>For Council only:</b>	Public session
<b>Issue</b>	In accordance with the General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Non-Statutory Committees of Council 2018, clause 8.4, Committees are required to report annually on expenditure, progress against work programmes and planned work programmes for the following year.  This report was circulated to the Group for comment on
<b>Recommendation</b>	The Council is asked to <b>note</b> the 2019 annual report on effectiveness from the Chair’s Strategy Working Group (CSG).

### 1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Chair’s Strategy Working Group (CSG) was established as a working group of the Council in accordance with Standing Order 13 of the GDC Standing Orders and Resolution for the Non-Statutory Committees of Council 2018.
- 1.2 The terms of reference were last approved by the Council on 25 July 2019 and are appended to this paper (**Appendix 1**).
- 1.3 The current membership of the CSG is William Moyes (Chair of the CSG and Chair of the Council), Anne Heal (lay Council Member), Catherine Brady (registrant Council Member), Sheila Kumar (lay Council Member) and Margaret Kellett (registrant Council Member). This year, the Group held five meetings on 21 February, 16 April, 19 June, 11 September and 5 November 2019.
- 1.4 The CSG’s key purpose is to assist the Executive to identify strategic initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the GDC, through an examination of strategic opportunities. Once these strategic opportunities have been identified and their feasibility and relevance has been subject to initial scrutiny, they will be referred to the Executive team for development and/or to an appropriate Committee for oversight in advance of proposals being placed before Council.
- 1.5 As part of this identification of strategic opportunities, the CSG will consider:
  - a. Income generation;
  - b. FTP caseload reduction and alternative resolution mechanisms;
  - c. Delivery of GDC functions by or through others; and

- d. New ways of working, including potential for relocating business outside London.

1.6 The CSG has no decision-making powers or delegated authority.

## 2. Expenditure

2.1 The only costs associated with the Group in 2019 were those relating to travel and subsistence of Council members for the meetings held.

## 3. Key Strategic Opportunities Identified

### Separation of Adjudication Function

- 3.1 The Group identified a key strategic opportunity in relation to a proposed separation of the adjudication function of the organisation from the wider investigation and prosecution function. This approach aligned with best practice within the healthcare regulation environment and the Group were keen to explore possible avenues of change. The Group received regular updates on this exploratory programme of work throughout 2019.
- 3.2 In April 2019, the Group discussed five options to implement the separation. The Group heard that only three of the options presented were available without any legislative change. The Group agreed that, out of the remaining three options, only two were preferred as doing nothing was not a suitable approach. The two remaining options available for discussion were:
  - a. Option 1: Operational separation within the current legal framework
  - b. Option 3: Operational improvement without operational separation.
- 3.3 In June 2019, the Group discussed at length the practical approach to operational separation of the function, specifically addressing the management, decision making and branding of any separated function, whilst acknowledging that whilst any legal or meaningful separation of the function would be impossible without legislative change, this programme could be a useful staging post for that future change.
- 3.4 In November 2019, the Group scrutinised the proposals for the implementation stages of this programme, in advance of their presentation to Council in December 2019. At its December meeting, the Council decided to take this programme forward in 2020.

### Annual Retention Fee: Payment by Instalments

- 3.5 The Group identified a strategic opportunity for the organisation in relation to the possibility of its registrants paying their annual retention fees (ARF) by instalments. The Group received regular updates on this exploratory programme of work throughout 2019.
- 3.6 In June 2019, the Group discussed the risks and costs of implementing the proposals suggested that it would be prudent for the organisation to seek external advice and a feasibility study before a final decision was requested of the Council. The Group agreed it would be advantageous for the Council to know the broad risks of implementation before making a decision in principle on the proposals in October 2019.
- 3.7 In September 2019, the Group discussed the outcome of the discussions on the proposals that had taken place at the Finance and Performance Committee (FPC) earlier in the month. The Group discussed the risks attached to the proposed different models of implementation. The Group also scrutinised the Council paper that was due to be presented to Council in October and suggested several adjustments.

- 3.8 In November 2019, the Group made some final recommendations on the structure of the paper on this topic that would be tabled at the December Council meeting. The Group also noted that the next stage of the project would need to be to seek external advice as the in-house team had taken the work as far as they could. At its December meeting, the Council decided to take this programme forward in 2020.

#### Section 60 Regulatory Reform

- 3.9 The GDC has been consistently pursuing a legislative change agenda with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in 2019, to facilitate large scale improvements to the current legislative environment in which the organisation operates.
- 3.10 In February and April 2019, the Group received updates on the regulatory reform consultation led by the DHSC in 2018. The outcome of this consultation was that two thematic Section 60 orders would be pursued which would apply to all the health regulators to allow for the removal of unnecessary constraints from the Dentists Act 1984 and replace them with more flexible systems. The first of these themes would relate to the Fitness to Practise function and the second would relate to the governance functions.
- 3.11 The Group heard that there had been preliminary discussions with key stakeholders and the outline of governance structures was presented. The Group further noted the aspirations from the GDC did not conflict with those of the DHSC, but there were still some information gaps in the proposals set out by the Department.
- 3.12 The Group were informed that the consultation response from the Department would be presented at July Council and the GDC continues to pursue the legislative change agenda with all key stakeholders.

### **4. Governance and Next steps**

#### Terms of Reference

- 4.1 The Council will consider the extension of the CSG at its meeting in January 2020. If extended, the CSG will review its Terms of Reference after the Council has completed its first Board Development session as this will inform the wider review into the assurance framework and scheme of delegations.

#### Work Programme 2019

- 4.2 The Committee reviewed the workplan at each meeting and will consider its 2020 workplan in early 2020, if extended by the Council in its January 2020 meeting.
- 4.3 The Council is asked to note the 2019 annual report on effectiveness from the CSG.

### **5. Appendices**

- a. Appendix 1 – CSG Terms of Reference
- b. Appendix 2 – CSG Forward Workplan

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## Terms of Reference

### Chair's Strategy Working Group

1. Chair's Strategy Working Group (CSG)
  - 1.1 The CSG is established as a Working Group of the Council under Standing Order 13 of the GDC Standing Orders and Resolution for the Non-Statutory Committees of Council 2015
2. Membership
  - 2.1 The CSG shall be chaired by the Chair of Council and the membership will include two registrant and two lay members of the Council;
  - 2.2 The Chief Executive will attend meetings of the CSG but will not be a member of the working group;
  - 2.3 Directors and senior staff will be invited to attend meetings as and when required.
3. Changes to the Terms of Reference
  - 3.1 Any proposed changes to the terms of reference of the CSG must be approved by the Council.
4. Co-opted members
  - 4.1 The working group may include co-opted members as required at the invitation of the Chair. Co-opted members will not count towards the quorum.
5. Key purpose
  - 5.1 To identify strategic initiatives to reduce the GDC's cost base.
6. Delegated Powers
  - 6.1 In accordance with the GDC Standing Orders and Resolution for the Non-Statutory Committees of the Council 2015, this working group does not have delegated authority to make decisions.
7. Functions and Duties
  - 7.1 To examine strategic opportunities in, but not limited to, the following areas:
    - 7.1.1 Income generation;
    - 7.1.2 FTP caseload reduction and alternative resolution mechanisms;
    - 7.1.3 Delivery of GDC functions by or through others;
    - 7.1.4 New ways of working, including potential for relocating business outside London.
  - 7.2 To identify options, assess relevance and feasibility and either refer to an appropriate committee/executive team for development or develop a proposal for the Council's decision.

8. Reporting

8.1 The working group shall report formally to each meeting of the Council with informal updates to Council members following each meeting;

8.2 The working group will report formally to Council on annual basis if required.

9. Frequency of Meetings

9.1 As required;

9.2 The working group is expected to be time limited. The continuing need for this working group will be reviewed by the Council on a 6 monthly basis

The GDC Standing Orders and Resolution for the Non-Statutory Committees of the Council 2015 apply to this working group as if it were a Committee of the Council.