

Minutes of the Meeting of the

General Dental Council

held at 9:30 on Thursday 22 October 2020

in Closed Session held on MS Teams

Council Members present:

William Moyes	Chair
Terry Babbs	
Donald Burden	
Catherine Brady	
Anne Heal	
Jeyanthi John	
Sheila Kumar	
Mike Lewis	
Simon Morrow	
Crispin Passmore	
Laura Simons	

Executive Directors in attendance:

Ian Brack	Chief Executive and Registrar
John Cullinane	Interim Executive Director, Fitness to Practise
Stefan Czerniawski	Executive Director, Strategy
Sarah Keyes	Executive Director, Organisational Development
Gurvinder Soomal	Executive Director, Registration and Corporate Resources
Lisa Marie Williams	Executive Director, Legal and Governance

Staff in attendance:

Sam Clements	Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit (item 7 only)
Osama Ammar	Head of Public Policy (item 8 only)
Colin Mackenzie	Interim Head of Communications and Engagement
Katie Spears	Head of Governance
Rebecca Ledwidge	Secretariat Manager
Lee Bird	Governance Manager

Apologies:

Caroline Logan

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Donald Burden, Laura Simons and Mike Lewis, who were attending their first meeting as Council members. The Council noted apologies from Caroline Logan who had provided comments via correspondence.

2. Declaration of interests

- 2.1 In relation to the substantive agenda, registrant members declared an interest in the discussion on ARF levels as part of the Communications Principles paper.
- 2.2 In relation to items considered via correspondence, all staff declared an interest in the staff survey action plan.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The Council **noted** that the full and abbreviated minutes of the closed meeting held on 24 September 2020 had been approved via correspondence.
- 3.2 The Council **approved** the abbreviated minutes of the closed meeting held on 24 September 2020 for publication by correspondence.

4. Matters Arising and Rolling Actions List

- 4.1 The Council **noted** the actions list and agreed that all items labelled 'suggest complete' should be marked as completed. The Council noted the update paper on the actions log and was content with the proposals within the paper around the updated due dates for the actions.

5. Decision Log

- 5.1 The Council **noted** that it had considered two papers via correspondence:
 - a. Staff Survey: Update on Action Plan – this paper had been noted.
 - b. Routes to Registration: Overseas Registration Exam and Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications – this paper had been noted.

6. Chief Executive's Report

- 6.1 The Chief Executive provided the Council with an update on the following topics: COVID-19, cyber security, payment by instalments, EU Exit and regulatory reform.
- 6.2 The Council **noted** the update.

7. Strategic Risk Register (SRR)

The Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit joined the meeting.

- 7.1 The Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit presented the paper on the strategic risk position of the organisation and noted that the Council had discussed its risk appetite at a workshop the previous day. The Council was also asked to discuss and approve an approach to strategic risk reporting and to confirm whether, when a risk was classed as being 'on appetite' being rated as Amber, remained a useful one.
- 7.2 The Council **discussed** the following:
 - a. It had received a revised risk matrix the previous evening, following the workshop discussions the previous day. There was some additional work required to clarify the wording of the matrix and the Council requested that this further work be presented via correspondence and a decision on risk appetite could be sought at the December Council meeting.
 - b. In respect of the strategic risk register, the Council noted that there were ten active risks; one new risk had been recognised since the last version of the register was presented and one had been recommended for dormancy.

- c. In respect of the onward reporting approach, the Council **agreed** that the appropriate level of detail for the Council was to see the Board Assurance Framework (BAF). The SRR could be placed in the reference section on Diligent Boards. The Council agreed that there should be some refinement of the approach to the BAF, around the narrative on mitigations, and that this should be discussed again at the Audit and Risk Committee before it was presented to the Council in December.
- d. In respect of the categorisation of risks that were 'on appetite', the Council **agreed** that these should be rated 'Green' rather than 'Amber' as this more accurately reflected the culture around risk that the Council wished to build.

7.3 The Council **approved** the strategic risk register.

The Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit left the meeting.

8. Review of the Corporate Strategy

The Head of Public Policy joined the meeting.

8.1 The Executive Director, Strategy and Head of Public Policy presented the paper outlining the revised approach to the Corporate Strategy.

8.2 The Council discussed the following:

- a. The Corporate Strategy had been agreed in 2019 and this had set out the Council's strategic position for three years. The core purposes of the organisation had not changed but the external environment had changed significantly. This raised big strategic questions across the wider landscape; from the challenges faced by the dental sector around offering treatment during the pandemic, the wider damage to oral health to the sustainability of the professions in an economic, professional and personal capacity.
- b. The analysis of the research work that was underway to survey the wider public and registrant populations would be important to inform the final strategy and it was expected that this would contain insights around the expectations of both groups over the next 12 months and the attitudes of patients around accessing treatment during the pandemic.
- c. The Council expressed an appetite to focus carefully on the core statutory roles of the organisation and the need to communicate, with clarity, its message about its remit. The organisation had finite resources and, whilst there was likely to be value in working in the margins to influence effectiveness around its core duties, these would need to be carefully directed.

8.3 The Council **noted** that the draft strategy would be presented to the Council in December for approval.

The Head of Public Policy left the meeting.

9. Communications Principles – CCP, Budget, ARF Levels and Reserves Policy

9.1 The Executive Director, Strategy and Interim Head of Communications and Engagement presented the paper outlining the proposed communications approach to the Council decisions on the CCP, Budget, levels of the Annual Retention Fee and the reserves policy.

9.2 The Council **discussed** the following:

- a. The proactive approach to communications and engagement was the right one and the Council welcomed the form of the paper to outline the approach proposed.
- b. The Council highlighted the need to ensure that the messaging would reach a broad base of people, with a view to a good level of accessibility and inclusion.

9.3 The Council **noted** the proposed approach.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 There was no other business.

11. Review of the Meeting

11.1 The Council discussed the review of both meetings at the close of the public session.

The meeting was closed at 11:20am