

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
General Dental Council
held at 09.30 on Wednesday 30 July 2020
in Closed Session held on MS Teams**

Council Members present:

William Moyes	Chair
Anne Heal	
Caroline Logan	
Crispin Passmore	
Geraldine Campbell	
Jeyanthi John	
Kirstie Moons	
Margaret Kellett	
Sheila Kumar	
Simon Morrow	
Terry Babbs	

Executive Directors in attendance:

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

Staff in attendance:

Samantha Bache	Head of Finance and Procurement (item 8 only)
Dave Criddle	Head of Business Intelligence, Delivery and PMO (item 8 only)
Sam Clements	Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit (item 11 only)
Clare Callan	Head of FtP Case Progression (item 14 only)
Colin Mackenzie	Interim Head of Communications and Engagement
Katie Spears	Head of Governance
Rebecca Ledwidge	Secretariat Manager

Apologies:

Catherine Brady and John Cullinane (Interim Executive Director, Fitness to Practise)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone and noted apologies from Catherine Brady and John Cullinane.
- 1.2 The Chair outlined that the Governance team had drafted some questions for reflection on the effectiveness of the meeting that would be circulated by correspondence. The team had also taken soundings from the Committee Chairs in relation to how the organisation should plan to use virtual meetings in the longer term, if required.

2. Declaration of interests

- 2.1 The Chair and Chief Executive declared an interest in the item, considered via correspondence, on Chair and Chief Executive Mid-Year Appraisals. Catherine Brady declared an interest, via correspondence, in relation to items 12 and 13 (Thematic Review of Preparedness to Practice and Education QA Update) as she has a relative who is a current fourth year dental student.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The Council **noted** that the full and abbreviated minutes of the closed meeting held on 3 June 2020 had been approved via correspondence.
- 3.2 The Council **approved** the abbreviated minutes of the closed meeting held on 3 June 2020 for publication.

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 was content with the progress of the other live actions.

5. Decision Log

- 5.1 The Council **noted** that it had considered four papers via correspondence:
- a. Council Member Appointments – the proposals from the paper had been approved.
 - b. Remote Orthodontics – the paper had been noted.
 - c. Integrated Performance Report Prototype – the Council had been given an opportunity to comment on the proposed format of the report and had approved it.
 - d. Chair and Chief Executive Mid-Year Appraisals – the paper had been noted.
 - e. Extension of the CSG – the proposal to extend the CSG for another six months (until 28 February 2021) had been approved.
 - f. Lifelong Learning Consultation and Action Plan – the paper had been noted.
 - g. Public Affairs, Policy and Media Update and Stakeholder Report – the papers had been noted.

6. Chief Executive's Report

- 6.1 The Chief Executive provided the Council with an update on the organisation's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, plans to re-open the GDC offices, furlough, fitness to practise key performance indicators, the PSA's targeted performance review and regulatory reform.
- 6.2 The Council **noted** the update.

7. Update from Committee Chairs

- 7.1 The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) provided the Council with the following update on the work of the ARC since the last Council meeting:
- a. The Committee had reviewed the Strategic Risk relating to Fitness to Practise in depth.

- b. It was noted that there were various assurance mechanisms that existed to ensure that serious risks or issues would be appropriately escalated. These included the EMT insights in relation to the SRR, any necessary Accounting Officer advice to the Committee or Council and a referral process from the FPC to the ARC around its assurance levels on performance.
- 7.2 The Chair of the Finance and Performance Committee (FPC) provided the Council with the following update on the work of the FPC since the last Council meeting:
- a. The Committee had met on three occasions since the last Council meeting. Workshop sessions had been held in relation to FtP KPIs and Organisational Development KPIs.
 - b. At its substantive meeting in July, the Committee had been taken assurance in relation to the quarterly financial report and recommended the new format quarterly Costed Corporate Plan (CCP) report. The Committee had scrutinised and provided direction in relation to the current drafts of the CCP 2021-2023 and the FtP Action Plan, both of which were on the substantive agenda for the Council today.
 - c. The Council heard that the Committee had received a report on the use of undertakings and agreed that, although undertakings had not had the uptake rate that had been initially anticipated at the point of inception, there had been careful analysis of the reasons behind this. Following review and scrutiny of this work, the Committee were satisfied no further challenge to staff on this matter was required.
 - d. The Committee were due to meet again in September 2020 to discuss the CCP and Budget and FtP KPIs, and had scheduled two extraordinary meetings in August and September for additional scrutiny of the budget and CCP, prior to the Council being asked to take a decision in October 2020.
- 7.3 The Chair of the Remuneration Committee (Remco) provided the Council with the following update on the work of the Remco since the last Council meeting:
- a. The Council heard that the Committee had met twice since the last Council meeting.
 - b. The Committee had considered the Council Member induction process, Council Member appraisals process, and Council Member remuneration, all of which would be considered by the Council in due course. The Chair and Chief Executive Objectives had been reviewed by the Committee, and suggestions made for amendments, and these had been considered by the Council in correspondence.
 - c. The Committee had reviewed and provided feedback on the draft EDI strategy and this work was ongoing.
- 7.4 The Chair of Council offered his thanks to the Committees, on behalf of the Council, for the hard work carried out on its behalf in the last few weeks.

The Head of Finance and Procurement and the Head of Business Intelligence, Delivery and PMO joined the meeting.

8. Review of the Costed Corporate Plan 2021-2023 (CCP)

- 8.1 The Executive Director, Registration and Corporate Resources introduced the paper and outlined the planning approach to the next period of the CCP and provided an update on the ongoing prioritisation work around the portfolio of projects. It was planned that the

FPC would scrutinise this work again on 18 August, and in September, before the Council had sight of it in September and then, when a decision would be sought, in October 2020.

- 8.2 The Chief Executive framed the discussion by setting out that the current pandemic created significant uncertainty around predicting expenditure, income and determining which planned activities could or should continue. This uncertainty would be exacerbated by a second wave of the virus. The CCP and budget for 2021 would need to be designed to cope with this level of uncertainty and risk.
- 8.3 The organisation was conducting MOSCOW prioritisation exercises in relation to the CCP and costing prioritised projects.
- 8.4 The Council was reminded that EMT only had authority to operate within the strategic and policy framework that the Council set.
- 8.5 The Council **discussed** the following:
- a. The Council heard from the Chair of FPC that the Committee had scrutinised this work and established a number of budgeting principles with the Executive. The Council had agreed a programme of work which, in turn, established the cost of regulation from which the level of ARF would need to be derived. The Executive were expected to produce a balanced budget against a reasonable likelihood of income risk.
 - b. The work on revisiting the corporate strategy was running in parallel with this work on the CCP and Budget and the flexibility in the planning approach allowed for a re-balancing of work to ensure that Council's strategic priorities could be delivered on at the appropriate time.
 - c. The income risk had been fluctuating over the past few weeks in relation to the volatile DCP ARF collection. As of the date of this meeting, the collection profile was less than 1% lower than the previous year. The Council heard that the team had proactively communicated with the registrant base around the need to renew their ARF and prioritised resource to enable restoration applications to be dealt with promptly.
- 8.6 The Council **agreed** that it was supportive of the process approach.

9. Board Development – Committee Terms of Reference

- 9.1 The Head of Governance presented the paper which was a second review of the proposed new Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Remuneration Committee (Remco), following the Council's consideration of draft TORs at its June meeting.
- 9.2 The Council **discussed** the following:
- a. The Council agreed that the wider strategic piece about culture, talent, leadership and encouraging a diverse and inclusive workforce within the organisation should sit with the Council and should be incorporated into the forward plans for the Council. The People Strategy work should be developed with the Council as part of the wider strategic piece. The work of the Committee on the EDI strategy, with a focus on the organisation's approach to its employees, should be brought to a natural conclusion and the progress reported to the Council in the near future.
 - b. The name of the Committee should be changed to the Remuneration and Nomination Committee to reflect the expansion its remit in this area.
- 9.3 The Council **approved** the proposed TORS for the newly named Remuneration and Nomination Committee.

10. Standing Orders – Review

- 10.1 The Secretariat Manager presented the paper which was a light touch review of the Standing Orders of the Council, pending a fuller review later in the year.
- 10.2 It was proposed that the Standing Orders were amended to formalise the process for decision making between scheduled meetings and provide for decisions by correspondence in circumstances where Chair's Action was not the appropriate approach.
- 10.3 The Council **approved** the proposed amendments to the Standing Orders, including the additional amendment above and the changes to the TORs of the Remuneration and Nomination Committee decided above. The Council made Standing Orders for 2020, and revoked the previous versions of the Standing Orders:
- a. The General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business 2017;
 - b. The General Dental Council Standing Orders and Resolution for the Non-Statutory Committees of Council 2018; and
 - c. The General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Appointments Committee 2016.

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

11. Strategic Risk Register

- 11.1 The Executive Director, Registration and Corporate Resources and Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit presented the paper outlining the current strategic risk position for the Council.
- 11.2 The Council discussed and **approved** the SRR.

12. Education Quality Assurance - Update

- 12.1 The Executive Director, Strategy introduced the paper providing an updated position in relation to the Education QA function and the ongoing pandemic situation.
- 12.2 The Council discussed the following:
- a. In relation to the 2020 [and 2021] graduate cohorts, the team had worked with Higher Education institutions and a wide range of providers who supported the DCP qualifications to ascertain the planning approach for this cohort.
 - b. In relation the 2021 graduate cohort, the position was far less certain. These students would have significantly less clinical experience at the anticipated point of graduation and providers were taking varying approaches, around planning for deferred graduation or other options. Local lockdowns might lead to different dental institutions being at different stages of readiness in relation to preparedness for graduation.
 - c. Close communication and an appropriate use of levers of influence would be vital over this issue which could have a significant impact on public safety, particularly given of the lack of Registrar discretion as to registration when presented with a UK dental degree certificate.
- 12.3 The Council **noted** the update.

13. Thematic Review Report: Preparedness for Practice

- 13.1 The Executive Director, Strategy introduced the paper which outlined the proposed publication approach to the thematic review report into the preparedness for practice of UK dental graduates. The Council were asked to approve the approach to publication, in line with the publication protocol.
- 13.2 The Council discussed the following:
- a. The research was useful and would help frame discussions with dental training providers.
 - b. Engagement with students would continue to be important and the team were continuing that work remotely.
 - c. The piece provoked thought about how the organisation, as a regulator, might wish to remove barriers to supply, rather than create them.
 - d. The research documents and reflective paper should be published with advance thought given to carefully seeding the communications context for the work.
- 13.3 The Council **approved** the approach to publication.

The Head of FtP Case Progression joined the meeting.

14. Fitness to Practise Timeliness – Action Plan

- 14.1 The Head of FtP Case Progression presented the paper on the ongoing action plan to address Fitness to Practise timeliness in relation to case progression.
- 14.2 The Council were given an update on overall FtP caseload and were reminded that older cases held in casework would continue to have an impact on the current KPIs.
- 14.3 The Council **noted** the update.

15. Any Other Business

- 15.1 The Council discussed recent media coverage about GDC registrants being exempt from self-isolation requirements and asked the team to take this away and correct any false information that was being circulated.
- 15.2 The Council also discussed the need to hold meetings in public as soon as feasibly possible, given the imperative for transparency around Council business.

16. Review of the Meeting

- 16.1 The Council noted that a questionnaire regarding the meeting would be circulated for feedback.
- 16.2 The Council would meet for a special Council meeting on 24 September 2020, where it would consider a first review of the CCP and Budget 2021-2023, the reserves policy and Committee Appointments. Incoming Council Members would be invited to join that session to observe and this would be the last meeting for outgoing Council members, Kirstie Moons, Margaret Kellett and Geraldine Campbell.

The meeting was closed at 12:25pm