

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
General Dental Council
held at 12:45pm on Thursday 24 June 2021
in Closed Session via MS Teams**

Council Members present:

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

Executive Directors in attendance:

Ian Brack	Chief Executive and Registrar
John Cullinane	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:

Joanne Rewcastle	Head of Communications and Engagement
Colin MacKenzie	Head of Nations and Engagement (items 8 and 9)
Samantha Bache	Head of Finance and Procurement (item 8 only)
Manjula Das	Head of Education Policy and Quality Assurance (item 11 only)
Patrick Kavanagh	Policy Manager (item 12 only)
Osama Ammar	Head of Public Policy (item 12 only)
Katie Spears	Head of Governance
Rebecca Ledwidge	Secretariat Manager
Tey Hassan	Principal Advisory Lawyer (observer)

Apologies:

None

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that there were no apologies.

2. Declaration of interests

2.1 In relation to the items on the substantive agenda, the following interests were declared:

- a. New Ways of Working – all Council Members and staff
- b. Education QA Update – Catherine Brady as she had a relative studying in their final year at a dental institute.
- c. Payment by Instalments – Lessons Learned – all Council Members and staff.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

3.1 The Council **noted** that the full and abbreviated minutes of the closed meetings held on 18 March and 5 May 2021 had been approved via correspondence and that the abbreviated minutes had been approved 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.

5. Decision Log

5.1 The Council **noted** that it had considered three papers via correspondence:

- a. Appointment Recommendations for Chair and Council Member – the Council had approved the recommendations of the Selection Panels on 20 May 2021 and the recommendations had been submitted to the PSA (for assurance) and Privy Council (for appointments to be made).

5.2 The Council also noted that the following reappointments had been made by the Privy Council. Terry Babbs was reappointed for a three-year term. Anne Heal was reappointed for a four-year term. Jeyanthi John was reappointed for a two-year term.

6. Chief Executive's Report

6.1 The Chief Executive provided the Council with an update on the following topics: Covid-19, regulatory reform and an appeal in relation to an Information Commissioner decision.

6.2 The Council **noted** the update.

7. New Ways of Working

7.1 The Chief Executive provided the Council with an update on the ongoing work to shape New Ways of Working for the organisation following the Covid-19 pandemic. The Council heard that the EMT had been working to develop detailed flexible working proposals for when the Government revised its guidance and stopped encouraging home working. Key principles had been agreed, a pilot scheme had been planned alongside a decision, control, and management framework. There were complexities driven by the needs of different areas of the organisation, staff perceptions, the lack of clarity around timescales, guidance and the focus had been on ensuring safety for all who attended the GDC's

offices and business requirements. The EMT were planning to take a decision on the finalised plans shortly, and these would be scrutinised by the Council's Committees to ensure that they were robust, proper, and identified and mitigated risk appropriately. There would be ongoing monitoring of any new scheme, to assess impacts on performance and the Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, had set parameters and criteria for the EMT to meet in developing proposals.

- 7.2 The Council **noted** the update.

The Head of Nations and Engagement and Head of Finance and Procurement joined the meeting.

8. Annual Report and Accounts 2020 (ARA)

- 8.1 The Executive Director, Strategy, supported by the Head of Nations and Engagement, the Head of Finance and Procurement and Head of Governance, presented the paper accompanying the proposed final draft of the GDC's Annual Report and Accounts for 2020. The Council heard that the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) had scrutinised both the process and the contents of the document and had recommended it to the Council for approval.

- 8.2 The Council heard that the financial statements had been prepared in line with the Government Financial Reporting Manual and the National Audit Office had confirmed that the draft met its requirements.

- 8.3 The Council heard that the provisional date for the Comptroller and Auditor General signing the accounts was 1 July and there was a provisional laying date of 14 July 2021 for the laying of the reports at the Scottish and UK Parliaments.

- 8.4 The Council **approved** the final ARA 2020.

The Head of Finance and Procurement left the meeting.

9. Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2021

- 9.1 The Executive Director, Strategy and Head of Communications and Engagement presented the proposed strategic approach to communications and stakeholder engagement for the GDC in 2021. The new Head of Communications and Engagement outlined her preliminary thoughts around the priorities and approach for the team this year.

- 9.2 The Council heard that, given the recent arrival of the new Head of Communications and Engagement, the team were proposing that the current strategy document be approved as a baseline to allow further development of priorities as she embedded into the role.

- 9.3 The Council noted the planned approach and **approved** the proposed Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for 2021.

The Head of Nations and Engagement left the meeting.

10. Strategic Risk Register (SRR)

- 10.1 The Executive Director, Registration and Corporate Resources presented the paper which outlined the strategic risk position for the organisation. The Council heard that there were eight active risks on the SRR and noted that one risk (SRR10) was currently outside of risk appetite, the rest were within appetite.

- 10.2 The Council **approved** the strategic risk register.

The Head of Education Policy and Quality Assurance joined the meeting.

11. Education Quality Assurance – Update

- 11.1 The Executive Director, Strategy and the Head of Education Policy and Quality Assurance presented the paper providing an update on the work of the Education Quality Assurance team.
- 11.2 The Council heard that ongoing liaison with the key stakeholders was taking place and the Council noted that the GDC was working hard to ensure that the key messaging landed; that its standards remained the same and it would not accept providers graduating students that were not of safe beginner standard.
- 11.3 The Council noted that there was good work being carried out by the team in this area and suggested communications work to ensure this message was disseminated more widely.
- 11.4 The Council **noted** the update.

The Head of Education Policy and Quality Assurance left the meeting and the Policy Manager and Head of Public Policy joined the meeting.

12. International Registration – Update

- 12.1 The Executive Director, Strategy and Policy Manager presented the paper which outlined the updated policy around the reform of the international registration framework.
- 12.2 The Council heard that several initial concerns had been mitigated but this work would be monitored closely. The Council noted that any delay in the implementation of a standalone section 60 on international registration would create real difficulties for organisational implementation – a fact which had been continually pressed on the Department of Health and Social Care.
- 12.3 The Council **noted** the update.

13. Payment by Instalments – Lessons Learned

- 13.1 Sheila Kumar, Council Member, outlined the findings of her report on lessons learned around the decisions taken on the proposals to pay the Annual Retention Fee by instalments. She outlined preliminary areas for consideration from her discussions with Council Members and the Executive team.
- 13.2 The Council noted the update and that a full report would follow in due course.

14. Any Other Business

- 14.1 The Chair updated the Council on discussions he had held with the Chair of ARC and the Accounting Officer around the organisation's previous use of the furlough scheme.

15. Review of the Meeting

- 15.1 The Council noted that it had been happy with both the discussion and papers, and the time allowed on the agenda for discussion today.

The meeting was closed at 15:20pm.