



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE GENERAL CHIROPRACTIC COUNCIL  
HELD ON 10 MARCH 2016 at  
PREMIER MEETINGS, DUKE STREET, LONDON WC1H 9PL**

**OPEN SESSION**

Present:

Roger Dunshea (Acting Chair of Council)  
Marie Cashley  
Tom Greenway  
Gareth Lloyd  
Julie McKay  
Grahame Pope  
Liz Qua  
Julia Sayers  
Gay Swait  
Phil Yalden

Apologies:

Sophia Adams Bhatti  
Carl Stychin

In attendance:

David Howell, Chief Executive and Registrar  
Penny Bance, Director of Education, Registration and Standards  
Paul Ghuman, Deputy Chief Executive (Director Resources & Regulation)  
Neil Johnson, Policy and Communications Manager

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| C-1603/1              | <p><b>Apologies and declarations of interest</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Sophia Adams Bhatti and Carl Stychin.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the member in attendance from the Osteopathic Council.</p> <p><u>Declarations of interest</u><br/>All members made a declaration of interest in relation to item 9, 'Update on Council Remuneration Committee' and a Registrant member on item 6, 'Guidance notes'. A declaration of interest was made by GCC staff present at the meeting on the Grievance and Disciplinary policy. Gay Swait made a declaration of interest in relation to item 4a, 'Update on RCC annual meeting'.</p> <p>There were no other declarations of interest.</p> |
| C-1603/2<br>C-1603/2a | <p><b>Draft minutes of the meeting of 3 December 2015 and matters arising</b></p>   |

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|          | <p>The minutes of the meeting of December 3<sup>rd</sup> were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>All items on the action log were noted as either completed or on the agenda for the meeting.</p>   |
| C-1603/3 | <p><b>Chair's report</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked both Council and the GCC staff for all their hard work in 2015 and commented on the professionalism of staff and the commitment of Council members.</p> <p><u>Joint GCC/Royal College of Chiropractors (RCC)/Professional Associations meeting</u><br/>The Chair reported on the GCC/RCC/Professional Associations meeting that took place in January, saying that the meeting had been a very positive and productive one.</p> <p><u>Meeting with the PSA</u><br/>The Chair said he and the Chief Executive (CER) had met with Harry Cayton, Chief Executive of the PSA and George Jenkins, the new Chair of the PSA. The meeting was held to discuss regulatory performance and governance and there would be a follow-up in the next few weeks on the latter. He also said that the Council governance seminar, held the day before (March 9<sup>th</sup>), had been part of that process.</p> <p><u>Council appointment of lay member</u><br/>The Chair said that the appointment panel had met with Chris Dearsley, the independent assessor, to interview the shortlisted candidates. He reported that the position had attracted a strong calibre of applicants and said they hoped to reach a decision shortly.</p> <p><u>Council appraisals</u><br/>The Chair thanked Council members for completing their appraisals. He said there were no major concerns, that members felt they were contributing well and Council was working effectively.</p> |
| C-1603/4 | <p><b>Chief Executive's report</b></p> <p><u>Advertising</u><br/>The CER said that the GCC was currently in the process of analysing 42 complaints about registrants' improper use of websites and categorising them using the revised three-category approach previously agreed by Council. Initial analysis was that, of the 42 complaints, it appeared only four met the threshold for immediate investigation by the GCC. Ten of the complaints had been dismissed as they were not in breach of the rules on advertising and the remainder were being referred to the ASA. He said the GCC were now looking to move to the next stage, whereby the results of the analysis could be communicated to registrants.</p> <p><u>Use of the title 'Dr'</u><br/>The CER provided Council with an update on discussions had between the GCC and the Committee of Advertising Practise (CAP) on the use of the courtesy title 'Dr'. He said that CAP had initially said chiropractors should not use the courtesy title 'Dr' but that they had allowed dentists to use the title. Upon review, they agreed that chiropractors should also be able to continue to use the title and have updated their guidance accordingly.</p>  |

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|          | <p><u>Non-practising register</u><br/>The CER updated Council on the non-practising register, or, to be more precise, those individuals annotated as non-practising, being as there is no separate register. There were 322 registrants not intending to practise in the UK during the current registration year paying the £100 non-practising rate.</p> <p><u>Update on RCC conference and AGM</u><br/>Council member Gay Swait provided an update on the RCC Annual General meeting which took place on 27 January. She talked about the programme and said that the conference had been fully booked, with 250 delegates in attendance. She said that it had been a very good event and made particular mention of a lecture by Professor Charles Greenough on the 'Pathfinder' national pathway for care of the lower back and radicular pain. Professor Greenough had talked about statistics for the management of low back pain in the NHS and the 'pathfinder' system for triaging patients through care; a role that chiropractors would be qualified to fulfil.</p> <p><u>Meeting with the Department of Health on legislation</u><br/>The CE said that he and the ex-Chair had attended a meeting, along with the chairs and CEs from the other regulators, with Ben Gummer and the Department of Health on legislation. He said that the thinking around new legislation was still in its early stages.</p> |
| C-1603/5 | <p><b>Governance Review</b></p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) updated Council on the Governance Review.</p> <p>He said that the Governance manual was still a work in progress and that a tender was under way to progress this work. He noted that the Governance manual had not yet been formally agreed as it had been recently amended. The Chair added that he felt the manual was fit-for-purpose and needed only minor updating. This was expected to be completed by June 2016.</p> <p>Instructions had been given to a HR lawyer to independently review the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures along with the complaints policy against Council members within the Governance manual, to ascertain whether these were consistent with other regulators' manuals.</p> <p>Council agreed that the final version of the Governance manual would be brought to Council, highlighting any major changes, once the work was completed.</p> <p>Council agreed the new Grievance and Disciplinary procedures for staff and the Complaints policy against Council members, for insertion in the revised Governance manual.</p>   |
| C-1603/6 | <p><b>The Code – Guidance notes</b></p> <p>The Director of Education, Registration and Standards provided Council with an update on the six Guidance notes for the new Code which were expected to be published in late June 2016. She said there had been a good level of response to the consultation on all of the guidance documents. She also said that if any major issues arose there was an option to review, however she cautioned against frequent review because of the fitness to practise implications of doing this. The GCC intended to publish the Guidance notes alongside publishing of the Code. Council felt it was a very good piece of work and congratulated all those who had been involved in putting together the Guidance notes.</p>  |

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|          | <p>Council discussed how the GCC might respond to any queries about the Guidance and the Director of Education, Registration and Standards said that queries would be dealt with in the same manner queries were already handled and that this would be 'business as usual'.</p> <p>Council also discussed the management of external website links being provided in the documents as these were often landing pages. It was suggested that any updates to links or direct links would be given in the GCC newsletter.</p>  |
| C-1603/7 | <p><b>Audit Committee report and review of Strategic Risk Register</b></p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee updated Council regarding the Audit Committee report and the Strategic Risk Register. The Chair said the Audit Committee had recently met with Adam Halsey of Haysmacintyre and was satisfied that the GCC's audit plan was robust.</p> <p>Particular emphasis was on the review of retention income; checking where internal controls could be overridden by management such as in accruals, coding and other journals; to review the investment valuations and consider compliance by Cazenove, GCC's Investment manager, against agreed tactical asset allocation and the investment strategy.</p> <p>She said that the Audit Committee would be reviewing the accounts under the new reporting standard and that the auditing statements would be reviewed in May by the Committee and brought to Council for adoption in June 2016. The audit fee had been increased by £650 plus vat to cover this additional work.</p> <p>The Chair said the Committee had contacted law firm Fieldfisher to seek advice as to whether Council was able to designate a senior independent director and that Fieldfisher had advised there was no provision to do so within the current Constitution order of Council.</p> <p><u>Strategic Risk Register</u></p> <p>The Audit Committee provided an update on the Strategic Risk Register. The Committee had agreed a new risk of "Failure to maintain confidence of stakeholders". This was clearly evidenced from the last Council meeting where it was agreed that the reputation and credibility of the GCC had been damaged with the Professional Standards Authority (PSA), the Department of Health and the Privy Council as a result of recent actions. Council noted the action plan put in place by the Committee to address these matters and thereby provide assurance to all external stakeholders. The Committee agreed a score of 16 for this risk.</p> <p>The risk "Failure of council to work effectively and make policy decisions in the public interest" had been upgraded to a risk of 16. Council noted that the training session held the day prior to the Council meeting had been held to minimise this risk. The review of the governance manual would also reduce this risk.</p> |
| C-1603/8 | <p><b>Performance Report</b></p> <p>The DCE presented the Performance Report covering the period up to the end of December 2015.</p> <p>In regards to KPIs, the listing of PCC cases within 9 months was still showing an adverse variance. This was largely due to an increase of complaints in prior years</p>   |

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|           | <p>which had led to bulge in cases awaiting determination by the PCC. Council had agreed an increased number of hearing days in the last two years to combat this and, as a result, the number of cases in the pipeline had reduced by approximately 65-70%. The target of listing cases within 9 months was expected to be met in 2016.</p> <p>He said that Business Plan activities scheduled for 2015 had mostly been achieved.</p> <p>The financial summary showed a surplus of nearly £7k at the year-end, with income of £2,443k. There had been a 1% reduction in expenditure, mainly due to FtP costs being lower than forecast.</p> |
| C-1603/9  | <p><b>Update from Remuneration Committee</b></p> <p>Council discussed the paper prepared by Sylvia Doyle, Remuneration Committee member, which evaluated remuneration of the GCC non-executive roles of the GCC. These roles included the Chair, Council members, Committee Chairs and Committee members.</p> <p>Council agreed the remuneration rates contained in the paper and no changes were required.</p>  |
| C-1603/10 | <p><b>Council work plan</b></p> <p>It was noted that the Annual Registration report would be included under the Performance report in June.</p> <p>Council agreed the 2016 work plan.</p>  |
| C-1603/11 | <p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>There was no other business.</p>  |
|           | <p><b>Date of next meeting: 16 June 2016</b></p>   |