

GENERAL OSTEOPATHIC COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Public Session** of the 78th meeting of the General Osteopathic Council
Thursday 13 December 2012

Unconfirmed

Chair: Alison White

Present:

John Chaffey
John Chuter
Jorge Esteves
Jonathan Hearsey
Nick Hounsfeld
Ian Hughes

Kim Lavelly
Brian McKenna
Kenneth McLean
Haidar Ramadan
Julie Stone
Jenny White

In attendance:

Fiona Browne, Head of Professional Standards
Alan Currie, Head of MIS
Matthew Redford, Head of Finance and Administration/Acting Head of Registration
Marcia Scott, Council and Executive Support Officer
Velia Soames, Head of Regulation
Brigid Tucker, Head of Policy and Communications
Tim Walker, Chief Executive and Registrar

Observers

Michael Watson, Chief Executive of the British Osteopathic Association
James Kellock, Chair, Investigating Committee

Welcome and opening comments

1. The Chair welcomed Michael Watson, Chief Executive of the British Osteopathic Association (BOA) and James Kellock, Chair of the Investigating Committee.

Item 1 – Apologies

2. Apologies for absence were received from Geraldine Campbell and John Chaffey advised he would be leaving before the close of the public meeting. Geraldine Campbell had submitted comments on the agenda items to the Chair prior to the meeting and these would be taken into account during the course of discussions.

Item 2 – Questions from observers

3. Michael Watson, Chief Executive of the BOA, raised the following questions:
 - a. Financial surplus (Item 7b) – in light of the considerable underspend which, if trend continues, will lead to a growth in reserves is there any intention to reduce further the proposed new fee levels for registrants?
 - b. Medical assessments (Item 10) – is there information available from other health regulators on medical assessments which have highlighted issues or problems regarding alcohol and drug use, and is this proposal a necessary layer of risk assessment?
4. The Chief Executive responded to the questions as follows:
 - a. Financial surplus – although there has been an underspend in this year’s budget due to a lower number of fitness to practise cases, a rising number of complaints make it prudent to retain reserves. There would be no further reduction in fee levels beyond that proposed elsewhere in the agenda but this might be possible in the future. It is also the intention of Council to review the level of reserves.
 - b. Medical assessments – the reason for the policy stems from an initiative undertaken by the Nursing and Midwifery Council to introduce compulsory medical assessments for registrants with drug/alcohol convictions which highlighted a number of underlying health problems. The GOsC view is rather than apply the policy across the board, to look at the circumstances and criteria around each individual case.

Item 3 – Minutes and matters arising

5. The minutes of the public session of the Council meeting held on 10 October 2012 were **approved**.
6. There were no matters arising.

Item 4 – Chair’s Report

7. The Chair gave an oral report to Council. The main points were:
 - a. **Lay member appointments to Council, Professional Conduct and Investigating Committees** – the Chair was pleased to note the large numbers of applications received for all vacant positions, and high calibre of

lay applicants from all walks of life, many with very impressive backgrounds and qualifications. The Executive is seeking approval from the PSA and Privy Council for the Council appointments and re-appointments, and recommendations will be brought to Council at its March meeting for the PCC and IC appointments and re-appointments.

- b. **'Team Osteopath' reception** – towards the end of October, the Chair hosted a reception for those osteopaths who participated as 'Team Osteopath' in the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Prior to the reception, the Team held a meeting to review the London 2012 experience and to discuss action for building a legacy.
- c. **Development of the profession and stakeholder meetings** – the meeting to discuss the future development of the profession took place on 7 November at Osteopathy House and was conducted in an open and very positive manner. The meeting agreed that continued collaboration was critical and that there was a need to develop an overarching vision for the future of the profession, from which a programme of work could later emerge. The group agreed to meet again to propose a vision for consideration by the wider profession at the end of January 2013. During the autumn the Chair also attended meetings with the British Osteopathic Association and the osteopathic educational institutions.
- d. **GOsC committee meetings** – at the end of October, the Chair observed a PCC hearing in order to further build an understanding of the operation of the fitness to practise processes. The Chair also met the Chief Executive and Head of Regulation to examine a range of fitness to practise issues that will come before Council in due course. Council has previously expressed its wish to become more substantially involved in this area, and the Chair proposes that Council use their seminar session in March to further develop its understanding. The Chair also observed a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, and particularly thanked the Treasurer for his hard work and long service as his term of office draws to a conclusion, and the Committee concludes its work.
- e. **GOsC Patron** – the Chair reminded Council that she had previously written to the Private Secretary to the Patron, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales. An acknowledgement of her letter has been received and a more substantive response is awaited.
- f. The Chair extended her personal best wishes to all members of Council, to all staff, and their families for a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

8. Members welcomed the Chair's report and were pleased to learn that the discussion on the development of the profession had been constructive. Members asked whether the meeting had been externally facilitated or managed within the group. The Chair confirmed that the meeting had been self-managed quite well but took onboard the suggestion that as discussions progressed and became more detailed the use of an external facilitator might be an option to consider.

The Chair's Report was noted

Item 5 – Chief Executive's report

9. The Chief Executive highlighted the following points in his report:
 - a. **Key data report (Annex C)** – it was confirmed the key data report would follow in the New Year once the 9 month figures have been prepared. Members were advised that the Executive would review the preparation of the reports so that in future publication would be aligned to the revised timetable of Council meetings.
 - b. **Monitoring report (Annex A)** – members were advised that the Patient Focus Group meeting, reported in section 2.3, page 10, scheduled as taking place on 4 December, has in fact been postponed.
 - c. **Future development of the profession** – there had been a meeting of a small group of stakeholders (GOSC, COEI, BOA, NCOR and the Osteopathic Alliance) to work on a further draft setting out a vision, principles and potential activities for presentation to the wider group meeting in January. The Chair's positive feedback on the development of the profession discussions were echoed by the Chief Executive adding there had been full support from all the groups who had taken part.
 - d. **The PSA Performance Review** – members were advised the submission had been circulated to Council Members for information.
 - e. **Meeting with the Chief Allied Health Professions Officer, DH** – the meeting with Karen Middleton, Chief Allied Health Professions Officer at the Department of Health, had been positive. However, Ms Middleton, though personally supportive of osteopathy and the profession, was not in a position to lend departmental support to osteopathy. The meeting's purpose however was to look at how osteopathy could work within Department of Health structures. The meeting proved very useful with a number of helpful recommendations which have been passed to the BOA to take forward.

- f. **Social media** – the use of social media – Facebook, Twitter and YouTube – have all been successful and are proving to be very useful communications tools.
 - g. **Business plan** – Council members were advised there was some delay in taking a small number of projects forward but there should not be too much concern about this as it is better to ensure they were done effectively rather than rushed.
 - h. **Staff changes** – Joy Bolt, Senior Professional Standards Officer, has been appointed as Education and Training Manager at the General Optical Council and therefore will be leaving the GOsC after eight years of service.
10. In discussion the following points were made by Council Members:
- a. The Chair and Council Members added their congratulations on Joy Bolt's appointment to the GOC staff and also congratulated Fiona Browne on her appointment as Chair of the United Kingdom Inter-Professional Group (UKIPG) on CPD.
 - b. The meeting was informed a number of Council members had also joined various social media sites and were pleased that it was being used as a constructive communication tool. There was some reservation in terms of risk but it was agreed that if used correctly and thoughtfully there should be no untoward risk involved.

The Chief Executive's report was noted.

Item 6 – Fitness to practise report and Investigating Committee Annual Report

11. The Head of Regulation updated Council on the following:
- a. **PSA Initial Stages Audit Report** – the Initial Stages Audit for the GOsC had been published. The GOsC has been put on a three-year audit cycle for future initial stages audits as the PSA is now taking a risk-based approach to such audits.
 - b. **Osteopathic Practice Standards** – the Regulation team has given a number of talks to osteopathic second year students on the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*. After a number of talks it has been impressive to see how engaged and responsive students have been especially in using tools like the **o** zone and on-line quiz.

12. Members raised a number of questions about the Spencer appeal which were responded to by the Chair and Head of Regulation:
 - a. It was confirmed that disagreement with a decision was not grounds for appeal.
 - b. There had been in-depth discussion of the case and its outcome between the Chair, the Chief Executive, and the Head of Regulation. It was agreed the distinction between the roles of Council and the Executive, and where it was appropriate for Council to be involved in decisions, must be maintained with these issues.
 - c. Members questioned the definition/category of admonishment and unprofessional conduct, as they did not appear to have the same status, with admonishment seeming less harsh than a finding of unprofessional conduct. It was explained that the term 'Unprofessional Conduct' appears in the Osteopaths Act and would require a change in statute to be altered. It might be possible for panels to say that an offence was not so severe to amount to a finding of UPC but still to be able to give advice to a registrant.
 - d. Members asked whether there would be an opportunity to review this subject once the Law Commissions' Review was finalised and find solutions to some of the problems that have arisen. It was thought that the Law Commissions' Review would assist in applying more common standards across the regulators and helping to fill a gap in how findings are applied.
 - e. Members asked whether there were learning points from the judgement to be taken on board by the GOsC as the language and terminology used was not to be taken lightly. Members were advised that training had been already been given to the IC. Plans are being made to provide updated information to panellists and others involved in proceedings. The Chair of the Fitness to Practise Policy Committee had also been advised this would be brought to their next meeting for discussion.
 - f. Members raised the point that on page 3, paragraph 10, the sentence included to the expression 'a good use of registrants' money'. It was agreed it was important the phrase should read 'a good use of the GOsC's money'.
13. The Investigating Committee Chair, James Kellock, thanked the meeting for his warm welcome to the GOsC. He introduced the Committee's Annual Report 2011-12 highlighting the following:
 - a. **Appraisals** – the IC Chair impressed on the meeting the recent appraisals he had conducted with IC Committee members who had reflected on how much

they enjoyed their work. He was also impressed with the dedicated interest in serving the profession by Committee members.

- b. **IC process** – with few cases and meetings at wide intervals there are challenges for the Committee where decisions could not be made at the initial meeting for a case. He was pleased with the good quality of support the IC received especially with issues like the Spencer decision and the PSA audit. He also welcomed the opportunity to feed into the Fitness to Practise Policy Committee which has been particularly helpful.
14. The Chair thanked James Kellock for his reflections, noting it was good to see 'the join-up' in the process between stakeholders in the fitness to practise process. The Chair then invited members to comment:
- a. Members welcomed the report and the IC Chair's reflections and hoped to receive similar insightful reports in the future as they were very helpful.
 - b. Members asked for clarification on the comments made by the PSA on the IC's written decisions. Members were advised that this was not seen as a criticism by the PSA but more a note on best practice and the IC had now moved to writing more substantive decisions. The Regulation team also ensure that the IC receives a more detailed background on each allegation so there was more complete understanding.
 - c. Members asked if it would be possible to have a numbered overview for the list of issues and it was agreed that this would be provided.
 - d. In response to the question what would be considered a more appropriate time scale for an Interim Suspension Order, the IC Chair suggested that six months might be more appropriate than the current period of two months.
15. The IC Chair was thanked for his report and contribution to the meeting.

The Investigating Committee Report was noted.

Item 7 – Corporate Plan, Business Plan and Budget 2013-14, Registration fees and amendments to fees rules

GOsC Corporate Plan 2013-16

16. The Chief Executive informed the meeting that the comments from members at the meeting of 10 October had been incorporated into the plan. The Chair asked members to note in particular the revised underpinning principles.

17. Members were also advised that comments had also been incorporated from a number of key interest/stakeholders groups following a short consultation. As a result the language was clearer and aspects of the report which appeared directional had been amended. The draft Plan had also been presented to the Audit Committee at their meeting of 5 November and their comments had also been incorporated. The Chief Executive also advised the meeting following discussion with the BOA they had been reassured that the role of the GOsC in relation to development as shown in the Corporate Plan would be facilitative and supportive rather than directional.

Council approved the Corporate Plan 2013-16

Business Plan and Budget 2013-14

18. Introducing the item the Chief Executive highlighted the following:
 - a. Council had agreed the Budget Strategy at the meeting of 10 October and this formed the basis for the consultation on fees. Members were also advised the PSA would not be introducing their levy in 2013-14 which meant there was more scope in the 'budget envelope' to consider a further fee reduction.
 - b. After the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting which endorsed the content of the Business Plan, the Executive agreed there were some aspects such as language and timescales which required some refinement. Some of the work to date has been incorporated into the draft but as there are some areas still to be completed, it is suggested that the Business Plan is returned to Council at its meeting in March 2013 for final approval.
 - c. In relation to the budget and the level of reserves, projects are anticipated to be identified consistent with the development agenda, to be funded by reserves. It is proposed that an item be brought to the June 2013 meeting so that the Executive can review reserves levels once the year-end figures are available to get a better idea of the financial position and what projects can be undertaken.
19. In discussion, the following responses were given to questions raised:
 - a. It was confirmed that there had been no change to the activities or content of the Business Plan and that the amendments were about timings and making the wording clearer.

- b. The Chair asked for clarification on paragraph 22 Annex B to 7b – budget for registration activity. The Chief Executive explained that there was not always a clear picture about the cost of activities and the registration budget line was not a true reflection of actual cost. Work is underway to breakdown the cost of registration for a more accurate picture.
- c. Members asked for clarification and sought assurance on the budgeting for research activities as it appeared that the research budget would come from reserves. The Chief Executive explained how the research budget worked and assured members budget allocations had been made for all activities and projects.
- d. Members were advised that if they did have any substantive comments on the Business Plan 2013-14 these should be sent to the Chief Executive before the Christmas break in order to be incorporated into the Business Plan in the early New Year.

Council approved the Budget for 2013-14

Registration fees and amendments to fees rules

20. Introducing the item, the Head of Finance and Administration reminded members of the outcome of the recent fee consultation where respondents had favoured a reduction in the higher fee level. At the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, November 2012, it was agreed that although the consultation outcome favoured a reduction of the higher fee level the committee considered and agreed there should be a reduction in fees across all levels, recognising the importance of passing on reductions especially to those who were starting out in practice.
21. Members were also reminded there would need to be an amendment to the fees rules to reflect the decision of Council and the proposed process would be to circulate the draft amendment by e-mail to members for approval, for the approved document to be signed by the Chair and then sealed before being sent to Privy Council.
22. The F&GP Committee Chair explained the decision to recommend a reduction across the board, that it was to ensure all registrants were able to gain from the fee reduction and that differentials were maintained. It was felt on balance it was fairer to all registrants to agree to a reduction across all levels.
23. In discussion the following points were made and responded to:

- a. Although 20% of registrants were on a reduced fee it was highlighted that 34% supported an across the board reduction. It was suggested that if there were further consultations to be conducted learning should be taken from this exercise and that it would be useful to have more data on the demographics of those taking part.
- b. Members were assured there would be no precedent set, nor intentions to raise expectations for fee reductions to always be across the board. The initial 2012 reduction had focused on those who had been paying the top rate for longest but any future reduction would be reviewed in the round.
- c. It was advised that the Executive should take particular care in communicating issues around the fee reduction considering the favoured consultation option.

Council agreed:

a. The levels of fees from 1 May 2013 as follows:

Year 1 practising	£340
Year 2 practising	£455
Year 2 reduced rate	£230
Year 3+ practising	£610
Year 3+ reduced rate	£340

- b. To authorise the circulation of the Fees Rule amendment by e-mail to Council Members for approval, followed by the signing by the Chair and sealing of the Statutory Instrument following the agreement of a draft with the Department of Health.**

Item 8 – Risk Register

24. The Chair introduced the item highlighting that regular review by Council of the Risk Register represented good practice. The Chair welcomed transparency of the risk management process and its being in the public domain.
25. The Chief Executive advised members that the Risk Register was currently owned and managed by the Audit Committee. As laid out in the Audit Committee Terms of Reference the Register is reviewed and revised at each of its meetings. The Senior Management Team also review the register on a regular basis and it was important that Council to have sight of the register also. The Chief Executive stressed that all risk cannot be included, anticipated or mitigated, but assured

Council that they should not be overly anxious when an area is listed as high risk, as it is important to identify and manage that risk.

In discussion the following points were responded to:

26. It was confirmed that the examples in the Register listed inherent risks but members were concerned that even after mitigation there would still be residual risk which could still be high. Members thought it important to show what risk would remain high even after mitigation and asked that the Audit Committee review the Register with this concern in mind.
27. Members were happy that the Audit Committee reviewed the Register regularly but it should be clear that ownership was with the Council. Members agreed the Register should be seen by Council on more than an annual basis and even more so where a risk/incident became an issue.
28. The Chief Executive reminded members the GOsC was not a high risk business and the Council was not exposed to high levels of risk. It was right to be aware of issues that might arise but members should not be overly concerned with the risk profile of the GOsC.

The Report was noted.

Item 9 – Research activities and funding

29. The Chair introduced the item informing Members she had reviewed the minutes of previous Research Strategy Working Group meetings and with the Chief Executive agreed it was time to propose a new approach to research activity.
30. In presenting the report, the Head of Policy and Communications asked the meeting to note an omission on page 3, paragraph 9, advising that the second sentence should read 'It was also worth noting that 'regulating and developing' are activities which can be undertaken not only by the regulator.'
31. The Head of Policy and Communications reaffirmed the suggested three-fold approach in going forward with research activities and funding which were to:
 - a. Commission and/or conduct research that supports and informs policy development and decision making relating to osteopathic regulation (including testing the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of GOsC processes and services) to ensure that we conduct our activities to maintain and enhance patient safety and quality in a proportionate and effective way.

- b. Support profession-led data collection and research-related activities that will have the effect of maintaining and enhancing patient safety and the quality of osteopathic care that will support osteopaths to demonstrate that they continue to meet our standards and to inform public/patient information relating to osteopathic care.
- c. Work in partnership with key osteopathic organisations to develop a research infrastructure that will build research capacity and capability in the UK osteopathic profession, and promote evidence-based practice and research development in osteopathic practice in order to continue to maintain and enhance safety and quality in practice.

32. In discussion the following points were noted:

- a. Members commended the report and agreed the suggested framework and approach very helpful.
- b. Members asked whether there was scope for joint working with other health regulators as well as private health care providers. The Chief Executive advised that to date there had been discussion with Bupa and they were being encouraged to discuss data collection issues with NCOR.
- c. It was suggested that the less emotive phrase 'evidence informed' should be used rather than 'evidence based' in describing research projects and results.
- d. It was noted that implementation following research findings were not included in the report, but Council was advised that implementation and capacity building would be areas for discussion at a future meeting.
- e. Members were advised caution should be exercised in promoting research findings to practitioners as, unless a part of the regulatory process, it was not for the GOsC to compel registrants to implement or act on research outcomes.

Council agreed the approach to research activities and funding

Item 10 – Medical assessments in FtP cases involving drink or drugs

33. The Head of Regulation introduced the item. She explained it had taken some time to find the right level for the policy, when to refer for assessment and the underlying factors to be taken into account. The Head of Regulation also pointed out a number of corrections to the policy:
- a. Page 1 paragraph 3: insert 'that there will also be a health case' between the words presumption and may be rebutted.

- b. Page 2 paragraph 7: insert in reference to Section (1) (a) in second line.
34. Members raised the following points in discussion:
- a. Would there be an opportunity for rebuttal by registrants where there were allegations of alcohol or drug abuse? It was explained this was referred to in the policy. Members also asked about convictions for use of prescription drugs and it was advised these would also be dealt with as health cases.
 - b. It is preferable to show alcohol levels as numerical figures rather than percentages and a footnote would be included in the final draft explaining this.
 - c. Should the policy should include the use of 'legal highs' which could also be a risk to the well-being of an individual? Council was advised this would be dependent on the notifications received by the GOsC but could be included in the policy. It was suggested that the GOsC could consult with the other health regulators on their approaches on drug use including the use of legal highs and performance enhancing drugs.

Subject to amendments, Council approved the draft policy on referring registrants with convictions or cautions for drink or drug related offences for a health assessment.

Item 11 – Indicative Sanctions Guidance and Formulating Conditions of Practice Orders

35. The Regulation Manager explained that the Indicative Sanctions Guidance needed to be amended due to a number of factors including publication of the new Osteopathic Practice Standards. The Guidance for the PCC on Formulating Conditions of Practice Orders also reflects changes to the constitution of the PCC which is now independent from Council.

Indicative Sanctions Guidance (ISG)

36. Members asked for clarification ISG paragraph 49 e. page 10: 'convictions of findings of a sexual nature, including involvement in any form of child pornography' and whether the paragraph could be made more robust.
37. Members asked for a word change on paragraph 47 page 10: 'At any time while a suspension Order is in force, the PCC may (whether or not of its own motion)'. Members were advised the word 'motion' was already included in the Order.

38. Members asked for an amendment to the wording to page 1, paragraph 4, sentence 2: 'It will take its decisions within the framework provided by this guidance'.
39. It was also asked if the guidance would not only cover the PCC but also the IC. It was confirmed that the guidance was for both PCC/IC.
40. Members also asked whether the ISG restriction page 1, paragraph 3 was intentional and if it should be made clearer. It was also pointed out there was no mention of cautions and how these would be dealt with. Members were advised cautions were not mentioned as a specific allegation therefore the tariff would come under Unprofessional Conduct. It was not clear that the section would be the correct place to include caution. It was agreed this would be useful to include in the guidance and a clarification would be included.

Guidance for the PCC on Formulating Conditions of Practice Orders

41. Members suggested that the patient panel should also be included in the consultation when the documents were ready for review.

Subject to the suggested amendments Council agreed the following recommendations:

- a. **To approve the Indicative Sanctions Guidance for consultation**
- b. **To approve the Guidance for the Professional Conduct Committee on formulating Conditions for consultation**
- c. **That the results of the consultation on the Indicative Sanctions Guidance and the Guidance for the Professional Conduct Committee on Formulating Conditions will be considered by the Osteopathic Practice Standards Committee at their meeting in September 2013.**

Item 12 – Registration appeals

42. The Chair introduced the item advising members that with the introduction of the new governance structure there would be a committee that would consider issues relating to registration.
43. It was suggested that the paper be presented to the Education and Registration Standards Committee at the meeting on 14 May 2013 and any comments be sent to the Head of Regulation for inclusion prior to presentation to the Committee.

Council agreed Item 12, Review of Registration Appeals Guidelines and Procedures would be presented to the Education and Registration Standards Committee at their meeting 14 May 2013

Item 13 – Revised Council and Committee Member Performance Review Scheme

44. The Chair introduced the report and advised the meeting that following the review of the previous Council/Committee Performance Review Scheme the Remuneration and Appointments Committee were recommending a revised scheme for Council and Committee Members.
45. The following points were raised and responded to:
 - a. It was confirmed that Committee Members would also have a process to appeal against their appraisals. Where there was an appeal the Chair would act as arbitrator.
 - b. Members were not certain the term 'Development Point for improving your performance in the year ahead' (Annex B, page 3) was the correct phrase to use on the appraisal form. Members were advised that in order to move away from an objective based approach to the scheme the phrase on this occasion was the better term to use.
 - c. Although overall members approved of the revised scheme it was thought the previous system did have merits especially on behaviours.
 - d. Members were also informed that in order to review the effectiveness of Council as a whole a number of approaches had been collected and a proposal would be put together for discussion at the meeting of Council in March 2013.
 - e. There were some concerns on collecting third-party feedback but members were assured there was enough flexibility to ensure information could be obtained without causing discomfort to those who might be requested to give feedback.
 - f. It was agreed that there should be additional detail on the confidentiality of appraisals to clarify who would have access and how the information was stored.

Subject to amendments Council agreed the adoption of the new Performance Review Scheme for members of the governance structure.

Item 14 – Indexing of Council Committee Member Remuneration

46. The Chief Executive introduced the report highlighting the conclusions of the Remuneration and Appointments Committee that there was a choice to be made

between reviewing allowances periodically – perhaps every four years – or to raise them each year using an index system. Within this it was important to have regard to the issue of ‘catch up’ when remuneration has been frozen for any length of time.

47. The Chair also reminded members that the remuneration for members of the governance structure did not deter the quality of applicants as shown in the recent recruitment exercise which had attracted a large number of high calibre candidates.
48. The following points were raised and responded to during discussion:
 - a. There was a potential impact on equality and diversity from remuneration at non-executive level. It was agreed that equality and diversity was an important issue and a review was to be conducted on the appointments process. The data from the review would be available in due course.
 - b. Members agreed it should be clear that Council and Committee roles were not jobs and those applying for the roles should understand and apply the Nolan Principles for work in public service when considering positions. Remuneration should not be the first consideration but it was agreed that for some it was an issue.
 - c. Even if indexing was not adopted it is important to conduct regular checking against the market.
49. The Chair summed up the discussion, thanking members for their candidness and concluded that the issues of remuneration should be reviewed again before Council is reconstituted in 2014.

Council agreed that the Remuneration and Audit Committee would present a proposal to Council on Members’ remuneration from 2014.

Item 15 – Research about the effectiveness of regulation

50. The Head of Professional Standards presented the item in which she reiterated the link to Item 9 – Research activity and funding – specifically in relation to the three-fold approach agreed by Members. The Head of Professional Standards also stressed the importance of researching the effectiveness of regulation in understanding what regulatory interventions have supported regulatory outcomes including development of professional behaviours and safe and effective practice, understanding what regulatory approaches are effective to better target regulatory approach in the future and support patient safety and enhance patient care.

51. The Chair then invited the Chair of the Education Committee for any further comments from the Education Committee. He informed the meeting that the Committee were broadly in favour of the proposed commission but cautioned the research should focus on osteopathic regulatory practice.
52. In discussion the following points were made:
 - a. Members welcomed the proposal and believed the research would be valuable especially in evidencing professionalism. It was believed to be an important work for the GOsC as a way of reviewing how decisions worked in practice within the profession.
 - b. Members wondered how far the research would go to improve practice and patient safety. It was pointed out that in the recent registrant survey although there was 80% confidence in the regulator more than half of registrants would take no action if they discovered a problem which could be viewed as an unintended consequence of the regulator only focusing on patient safety. The Chief Executive also advised just because no complaints are being received did not mean the regulator was succeeding but you need to be able consider what influences high standards of practice and behaviour.
 - c. It was intended to put together a tender to take the work forward initially focusing on the Osteopathic Practice Standards. It was suggested that including relevant members of Council and the Education Committee to assist with the research would be useful.

Council agreed to commission the research on effectiveness of osteopathic regulation.

Item 16 – PSA Review of the Cost Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Health Professional Regulators

53. The Chair introduced the paper highlighting that both she and the Chief Executive agreed the Professional Standards Authority's (PSA) Report raised more questions than answers but it was interesting to note how the other Health Regulators categorised their costings.
54. Members suggested the report should be published on the GOsC website but the Chief Executive advised against this as the report was not being publicised by the PSA.

Council noted the PSA's Review of the Cost Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Health Professional Regulators Report.

Committee minutes

55. The minutes of the **Audit Committee 5 November 2012** were **noted**.
The Chair informed the meeting that since her appointment in April she had as yet to attend a meeting of the Audit Committee but it was her intention to do so during the coming year.
56. The minutes of the **Remuneration and Appointments Committee 27 November 2012** were **noted**.
57. The minutes of the **Finance and General Purposes Committee 28 November 2012** were **noted**.
58. The minutes of the **Education Committee 27 November 2012** were **noted**.
59. The minutes of the **Fitness to Practice Policy Committee 18 September 2012** were **noted**.

Any other business

60. There was no other business.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 20 March 2013 at 10.00.