



Council
2 February 2023
Business Plan and Budget 2023-24

Classification	Public
Purpose	For decision
Issue	This paper provides Council with the draft Business Plan and Budget for 2023-24
Recommendation(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To consider the draft Business Plan 2023-242. To consider the draft Budget 2023-24.3. To consider the Equality Impact Assessment.
Financial and resourcing implications	These are set out in the paper and specifically Annex B, the budget for financial year 2023-24.
Equality and diversity implications	<p>The Business Plan 2023-24 includes activities that relate to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.</p> <p>In relation to project activity outlined in the Business Plan, Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as required, with the results reported to Council.</p> <p>Finally, an Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is annexed to the paper.</p>
Communications implications	The Business Plan and Budget are public documents and available on our website.
Annex(es)	<p>A: Business Plan 2023-24</p> <p>B: Budget 2023-24</p> <p>C: Equality Impact Assessment</p>
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Key messages from paper:

- The draft Business Plan for 2023-24 is presented at Annex A and represents the final year of the Strategic Plan 2019-24. The budget is presented at Annex B.
- Business Plan activities are set out against the four Strategic Plan goals, with the plan identifying new activity introduced in 2023-24.
- Headline activities per Strategic Goal can be found at paragraph 10, with a summary of new activities described at paragraph 13 of this paper.
- The income budget has been prepared with registration fees being frozen for the ninth successive year, following a period of fee reductions 2012-14. This means the GOsC has absorbed +£300k of lost income over the same period.
- The 2023-24 budget has been balanced with a small surplus of c.£15k forecast.
- The expenditure budget is similar to previous years but with some noticeable differences that demonstrate the Executive have taken active steps to rebalance where resources are to be deployed.
- An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the introduction of the Business Plan and Budget 2023-24 and is presented at Annex C.

Background

1. The General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) Strategic Plan covers the period 2019-24.
2. Underpinning each year of the Strategic Plan is an annual business plan and budget approved by Council. At every Council meeting the Executive team will report to Council progress against the delivery of the business plan objectives and the performance against budget. Performance against year four of the Strategic Plan, 2022-23, is covered elsewhere on the Council agenda.
3. This paper presents to Council the proposed business plan and budget for the final year of the strategic plan, 2023-24, and which builds on the Budget Strategy discussions held at Council in November 2022.

Discussion

Strategic Plan 2019-24

4. The Strategic Plan 2019-24 sets out a vision and four strategic goals. The vision statement of the Strategic Plan is as follows:

A partnership in professional standards that fulfils our statutory duty to protect the public and promote patient safety and well-being through modern regulation which supports and develops osteopaths.

5. The four strategic goals as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2019-24 are:

We will support the osteopathic profession to deliver high-quality care, which will protect patients and the public in the context of changes in the dynamic landscape of healthcare.	We will develop our assurance of osteopathic education to produce high-quality graduates who are ready to practise.
We will build closer relationships with the public and the profession based on trust and transparency.	We will be an exemplar in modern healthcare regulation - accessible, effective, innovative, agile, proportionate and reflective.

Business Plan development

6. The Business Plan for 2023-24 can be found at Annex A.
7. The plan has been structured to follow the four strategic goals with the detailed activity articulating the work which underpins each area. We have structured the plan to identify which activities are new, and which represent ongoing business.
8. The cost of each activity (and the overhead) has not been listed in the draft plan. The Executive consider that the programme is achievable within the budget set out at Annex B.
9. The Business Plan describes how we wish to empower and support our registrants; it describes collaboration with our partners across the regulatory sector; it strengthens our approach which is to place the patient at the heart of what we do; but importantly, the plan does not deviate from delivering our core statutory functions.
10. Headline activities for each goal include:

Goal 1: We will support the osteopathic profession to deliver high-quality care, which will protect patients and the public in the context of changes in the dynamic landscape of healthcare.

- Commission work to understand the needs of registrants in relation to health and wellbeing to support good professional practice
- Continue to raise awareness of issues relating to boundaries
- Collaborate and engage with regional and local osteopathic groups to understand their needs

Goal 2: We will develop our assurance of osteopathic education to produce high-quality graduates who are ready to practise.

- Explore the implementation of the principles of consent in the student environment
- Consider an extension of the current Quality Assurance service provider contract and the plan for a full tender to happen in the next business year
- Provide further support to education providers in the effective implementation and evaluation of the Graduate Outcomes and Standards of Education and Training

Goal 3: We will build closer relationships with the public and the profession based on trust and transparency.

- Undertake a registrant and stakeholder perceptions survey
- Consult on and publish amendments to the Fitness to Practise Publication Policy
- Consult on and publish amendments to the Guidance on Imposing Interim Suspension Orders and the Undertakings Practice Note

Goal 4: We will be an exemplar in modern healthcare regulation – accessible, effective, innovative, agile, proportionate and reflective.

- Develop and publish a new Strategic Plan which is informed by stakeholder feedback
 - Undertake a significant range of non-executive recruitments
 - Develop an action plan for the implementation of new Welsh Language Standards and begin to implement the actions identified
11. The plan builds on our successes to date and reflects our pride in being a high-performing regulator which does not allow the size of our organisation and available resources, which are small in comparison to others, to limit our own expectations about what we can achieve. While we recognise that the regulatory landscape within which we operate may change in ways beyond our control, i.e. the potential for reconfiguration in the number of healthcare regulators, we do not think this should limit our ambition or scale of activity.
 12. We feel we have been realistic about what we can achieve within the context of an ever changing environment and the new activities we have set out in the plan, build on activities Council have previously discussed and/or approved.
 13. New activities which have been included in the Business Plan include, but are not limited to:
 - Commission work to understand the needs of registrants in relation to health and wellbeing to support good professional practice
 - Consider the potential for scoping and developing filmed/animated resources which explore professional boundaries
 - Host a roundtable with insurance providers to understand any emerging issues in relation to osteopaths and their delivery of high-quality care

- Explore the implementation of the principles of consent in the student environment
- Consider the extension of the Quality Assurance service provider contract and the plan for a full tender to be undertake in 2024-25
- Undertake a registrant and stakeholder perceptions survey
- Consult on and publish amendments to the Fitness to Practise Publication Policy
- Consult on and publish amendments to the Guidance on Imposing Interim Suspension Orders and the Undertakings Practice Note
- Develop an agreed approach to ensuring patient involvement in governance and strategy.
- Develop and publish a new Strategic Plan which is informed by stakeholder feedback
- Undertake the significant volume of non-executive appointments in 2023-24
- Undertake a market options analysis and develop a resourced plan for the upgrade of the GOsC CRM database
- Develop an action plan for the implementation of new Welsh Language Standards
- Engage with, and undertake, our first Periodic Review year as part of the revised PSA Performance Review three-year process
- Consider the implications arising from the proposals to reform the legislation of the healthcare regulators and advise registrants and stakeholders accordingly

Budget

14. Total income is expected to be c.£2.89m with expenditure forecast to be c.£2.88m resulting in a small surplus of £15k.
15. Within the income forecast is money received from registration fees. At its meeting in November 2022, Council agreed that registration fees should be held constant in 2023, the ninth year in succession that fees have been held steady, following three previous years of fee reductions between 2012-2014.
16. Council recognises that by not increasing registration fees in line with inflation, the organisation has absorbed +£300k of lost income, which demonstrates the cost efficiency and effectiveness of the GOsC.

17. In preparing the income budget we have not relied upon any potential future income streams which may materialise in year, for example, rental income. The exclusion of such potential revenue streams means the budget has once again been prepared on a cautious and prudent basis and that our available resources are tight.
18. Council members will recognise that the budget for 2023-24 is similar to previous years, however we have recognised that there needs to be a tightening of spend due to the rising inflationary pressures all organisations are currently facing.
19. The budget takes account of:
 - Our Education Quality Assurance costs.
 - The need to ensure our organisation infrastructure is maintained.
 - The need to ensure sufficient funds are available for our statutory fitness to practise processes.
 - The cost of undertaking a significant amount of non-executive appointments.

Budget stress-test

20. A financially responsible organisation will continue to look hard to identify where it can streamline its work and make better use of its resources, both people and financial. This approach is something we are familiar with, and in 2023-24 we will continue to think hard about the work that we do, the value that it adds and how we operate to ensure we are modern, outward-looking, lean and importantly, fit for purpose.
21. It was reported to Council in November 2022 that as part of the budget setting process, a stress-test of the budget takes place. The Executive felt that it was important to reiterate the findings of this for Council in this paper.
 - The budget 'stress test' of the Business Plan considers to what extent it would be deliverable if we were to experience a sudden drop in resources (whether financial or of personnel in the order of 10-15%).
 - Our conclusion from this work is that the core statutory functions have to take priority above all other activities. By core statutory functions we mean the education quality assurance programme; fitness to practise regime; registration assessment pathways and the governance structure.
 - In addition, we would have on-going running costs to maintain the IT infrastructure and Osteopathy House, as well as having employment cost

commitments. However, in the event of a significant downturn in available resources, a rationalisation of the staffing structure would be required.

- When taken as a total sum (employment costs included in full before any rationalisation), this equals c.94% (£2.49m) of the budgeted expenditure. In addition to using its reserves, Council would need to slow the pace on, or bring to a conclusion, other activities, which would have to be classified as discretionary in the event of a significant drop in resources.
- If such steps were necessary due to a sudden reduction in financial resources, this would inevitably result - in the short-term - in the need for reserves to be utilised, which justifies Council's prudent financial management approach in terms of building up reserves for unforeseen or one-off events.

Equality Impact Assessment

22. In preparing the Business Plan and Budget for 2023-24, the Executive have also prepared an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). This is attached at Annex C.

23. Key headlines from the EIA are:

- The activities contained within the Business Plan will be individually assessed for EDI implications. Council and/or its Committees will consider those implications as part of the papers presented to them.
- The Business Plan includes specific activity relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- The income budget is predominately funded by registrants who pay their annual registration fees. Council in November 2022 agreed to freeze registration fees for a ninth successive year. The freeze in registration fees applies to every registrant on the GOsC Register.
- There is no data which suggests that approval of the Business Plan and Budget will adversely impact on people with each/any protected characteristic.

Recommendations:

1. To consider the draft Business Plan 2023-24.
2. To consider the draft Budget 2023-24.
3. To consider the Equality Impact Assessment.