



Council
29 January 2014
Corporate Social Responsibility

Classification	Public
Purpose	For decision
Issue	The paper sets out a range of activities indicating how the GOsC aims to be a socially responsible organisation.
Recommendation	To endorse the CSR framework and activities set out in the annex.
Financial and resourcing implications	Activities identified can be resourced from within existing budgets
Equality and diversity implications	These have been identified within the report
Communications implications	None
Annex	Corporate social responsibility framework
Author	Tim Walker

Background

1. Council and the former Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GPC) had a number of discussions about whether the GOsC should have a corporate social responsibility (CSR) policy. The most recent discussion was at the F&GPC in November 2012 at which an overall framework for the GOsC's CSR activities was considered.
2. This paper sets out progress in this area since that meeting and seeks Council's endorsement of the activities set out in the annex.

Discussion

3. The F&GPC endorsed an overarching description of CSR activities thus:

'The GOsC's CSR framework aims to integrate social and environmental thinking into its business planning and decision making within its Executive and non-executive team. Our aim is to operate in a socially responsible manner which befits the expectations that stakeholders and society may have of a healthcare regulator.'

4. The Committee also recognised that CSR activity needed to be tailored to the GOsC to ensure that it is relevant to our operation and that it remained proportionate given the size of the organisation as well as the pressures on resources.
5. While much of the activity listed in the draft framework was already taking place, the SMT took the view that it was important to engage all staff in considering proposed activities. During the course of the spring and summer the Council and Executive Support Officer (Marcia Scott) and a Professional Standards Officer (Meera Burgess) consulted all staff on the initial proposals and then presented their conclusions to the SMT.
6. The activities set out in the annex cover the following areas:
 - a. Staff and non-executives
 - b. Registrants and other stakeholders
 - c. Finance
 - d. The environment, including supply chains
 - e. The local community.
7. As well as current activity the framework also identifies future activities which we hope to pursue, timings of current and future work as well as progress already achieved in some areas.
8. What is less clear within the framework is the precise 'ownership' of the framework and the activities it contains. Some actions are for staff, some for the SMT and others for Council and its committees. While the initial idea came from

Council members, staff have been very engaged in its development and to be successful it is important that the framework is seen as something that belongs to the whole organisation, executives and non-executives alike.

9. It is intended that the framework is kept under review and a progress report presented to Council annually.

Recommendation: to endorse the CSR framework and activities set out in the annex.

Corporate Social Responsibility framework

Area	Component elements	What we do and how we do it	Future actions	Timings/progress
Staff and non-executives	Safe and pleasant working environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We adhere to health and safety requirements • GOsC facilities personnel are trained in health and safety matters • We provide staff with an 'at-desk assessment' conducted by an osteopath • Staff are encouraged to consider and understand health and safety as a natural part of everyday working life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will consider whether we need to formalise any further health and safety training for staff 	By April 2014 – part of annual staff development plan and ongoing
	Flexible working arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We consider all flexible working arrangement requests made by staff, taking extra consideration where it relates to parents and/or carers • We consider requests from staff members for time off to sit on external bodies outside of GOsC core business • Where non-executives are unable to attend meetings in person, if practical, we consider and offer alternative methods of participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will raise staff awareness of flexible working options 	By April 2014 – revisions to staff handbook and ongoing Occasional meeting and interview participation undertaken by Skype

Annex to 16

Area	Component elements	What we do and how we do it	Future actions	Timings/progress
	Training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We aim to meet all relevant staff and non-executives training and development needs • Training and development needs are discussed at all appraisal meeting • An annual training needs schedule is developed by the HR Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to encourage staff to identify training and development opportunities • We will explore with our fellow regulators whether there are any opportunities for shared training and development 	Ongoing Shared training took place with the General Optical Council in December 2013
	Study support mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We support staff members undertaking relevant extracurricular study providing financial assistance and/or study leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will raise staff awareness of study support mechanisms 	By April 2014 – revisions to staff handbook and ongoing
	Work life balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We consider the needs of our business against the work life balance of staff and non-executive • We promote a culture where staff members are encouraged not to work long hours • Peak periods of work are planned for as far ahead as possible 		Ongoing

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Area	Component elements	What we do and how we do it	Future actions	Timings/progress
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-executives are informed as far ahead as possible where their participation is required 		
	Equality and diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have policies in place to ensure the GOsC meets its equality and diversity responsibilities as an employer We regularly provide training for staff and non-executives to ensure that they understand the latest developments with diversity legislation and best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to review our policies and we will provide training where appropriate 	<p>Annual report to Council on equality and diversity due July 2014</p> <p>Staff and Council training in 2013, further event for new appointees planned in 2014</p>
	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We support the health and wellbeing of staff through the provision of a benefits package including private health insurance, health checks, access to osteopathic treatment and an employee assistance programme 		Ongoing
	Work place recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have a performance related pay progression scheme for those staff members who demonstrate highly effective performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will explore further ways to enhance recognition of high performance 	To be considered by Remuneration and Audit Committee in 2014-15

Registrants and stakeholders	Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have published our customer service goals on our website • We have surveyed and will continue to survey our registrants to find out about the performance of the GOsC staff team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will monitor our performance against the service standards • We will survey registrants in the future to see how we are performing against the 2012 benchmark 	<p>Service standards monitoring under consideration by SMT</p> <p>Survey of registration process for graduates from January 2014</p> <p>Registrants' survey to be conducted in 2015</p>
	Clear consultation with stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We undertake consultations with stakeholders on all key policy areas • Our consultations are always available in accessible formats • We publish the results of our consultations on our public website and the registrants' website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure that project planning allows for sufficient consultation periods 	<p>Business Plan 2014-15 includes development of new consultation protocols</p>
	Ensure services are suitable for a range of diverse users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We communicate through a range of media in order to reach a diverse range of users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will explore whether there is further work we can undertake to ensure our services are available for a diverse range of users 	<p>To be reviewed by Communications team in 2014-15</p>

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Finance	Ethical investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council keeps the GOsC's investments under review and, where possible, seeks to ensure that investments meet high ethical standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will consider further the scope for an ethical investment policy 	Dependent on Council discussions on investment strategy and charitable status in 2014
	Pension scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current pension scheme provider offers ethical funds to staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure these are maintained in any future review • We will promote scheme to non-participating staff and promotion of range of funds available to all scheme members 	By April 2014
The environment, including supply chains	Reduce and recycle waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We actively encourage recycling. • We have recycling bins available throughout the office to encourage recycling • We are encouraging more online working to reduce paper usage and waste. This includes encouraging the use of portable e-devices like e-notebooks and pads for meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will take further steps to encourage staff to reduce and recycle paper through measures such as enforcing double-sided printing 	By Autumn 2014
	Use recyclable paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We use environmentally friendly sourced paper for day to day printing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will explore whether we should 	By Autumn 2014

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We ensure that writing pads and other supplies are from environment friendly sources • Our suppliers are reviewed for environmental compliance on regular basis 	<p>use recycled paper for more communication material</p>	
	Reduce energy and water consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We consider our energy and water requirements and use. • During periods of cold weather we ensure that heating is provided during core hours only • When using air-conditioning during periods of warm weather where practical doors and windows are shut to minimise energy loss • We have eliminated water coolers from the office reducing our use of plastic cups • We have an energy efficient zip-tap facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will explore the use of low-energy light bulbs for the office • We will explore new ways of reducing our energy usage and water consumption 	By Autumn 2014
	Reduce unnecessary travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We consider our travel needs to reduce our carbon footprint • We only travel to meetings by air when this is essential and without undue disadvantage to those for whom this is the most viable travel option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will explore the potential for expanding our use of Skype for meeting participation 	Video evidence guidelines being considered in 2014-15

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have significantly reduced our usage of taxis, using public transport where possible • We have held some meetings by teleconference and Skype and continue to review the best options for the organisation 		
	Where possible, use local suppliers for goods and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible we aim to use local suppliers for goods and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will review the procurement of our services to see whether we can increase the use of local suppliers 	By Autumn 2014
The local community	Where possible, create sustainable partnerships with community and voluntary organisations in the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We consider our place in the local and wider community, how we can contribute and make a positive impact • We have had friends/family members complete work experience placements • We are a member of the Southwark Chamber of Commerce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will consider how to advertise locally for suitable vacancies as they arise • We will make contact with the local school to establish community links such as work experience placements 	By Autumn 2014

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will consider whether there are any local volunteering opportunities for staff which GOSc could support through flexible working arrangements 	
	<p>Donations (computers, office equipment, other supplies to local charities, schools)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We consider how to contribute to the local and wider community through direct and indirect means Our annual Christmas card budget is donated to charities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will review what we can donate charities, e.g. redundant computer equipment 	<p>By Autumn 2014</p>