



Council
10 May 2022
Chief Executive and Registrar's Report

Classification	Public
Purpose	For noting
Issue	A review of activities and performance since the last Council meeting not reported elsewhere on the agenda.
Recommendations	To note the content of the report.
Financial and resourcing implications	An oral update on the preparations for the financial year-end will be provided at the meeting by the Head of Resources and Assurance.
Equality and diversity implications	The paper sets out what we have done since the previous Council meeting on matters related to equality, diversity and inclusion.
Communications implications	These are discussed in the report.
Annexes	None
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Key messages from this paper:

- The report sets out the activities undertaken by the team since the previous Council meeting not reported elsewhere on the agenda. Headlines include:
 - Induction meetings with new members of the GOsC governance structure (Council Associates, Audit Committee, Investigating Committee and Professional Conduct Committee) have been held.
 - We note the update from the Charity Commission to consider the potential for an increase in cyber-attacks, and we already have a workstream in place to enhance our existing systems.
 - We attended the PSA annual conference, Regulation in the Welsh Context which was exploring the theme of 'Safety under pressure – protecting patients through challenging times'.
 - We have attended the Institute of Osteopathy workshop on Evolving Careers and the Osteopathic Foundation strategy development day.
 - We have been engaging with osteopaths and students in a variety of settings. This includes final-year students as they approach the point of applying for registration and we will be attending the Institute of Osteopathy roadshows which are being held between May and October 2022.
 - We are considering the need to lengthen the timelines for some business plan activities as the staff team has been impacted by some absences including from covid.

Introduction

1. This report gives an account of activities of note that have been undertaken by the Chief Executive and Registrar and colleagues since the previous Council meeting, which are not reported elsewhere on the agenda.

Council activity

2. Induction meetings for our new members of the Governance structure have been held through March and April with the new members having the opportunity to hear about the work of the GOsC and to question the approach we are taking. At the May Council meeting we welcome our new Council Associates to their first meeting.
3. Members of Council are also Trustees of the GOsC Charity and when the Charity Commission sends out a newsletter this is shared with all members of Council. In March 2022, the Charity Commission issued its latest newsletter and there are a couple of areas to reference for Council's attention.

- The government is warning institutions to be on the lookout for potential cyber-attacks. The Executive have been discussing with Audit Committee our plans for further enhancing our approach to cyber security and the budget for 2022-23 includes increased financing for this activity. Our IT Manager has previously introduced a range of measures to increase our security and continues to take this matter extremely seriously. We also recognise we need to continue to provide training to our staff team and all members of staff are currently retaking online training for cyber security and GDPR.
- The Charities Bill 2022 has received Royal Assent and has been passed in law as the Charities Act 2022. The Charities Commission will now commence activity to implement the new Act and will advise charities when each of the relevant provisions come into force. We will keep Council and Audit Committee abreast of any relevant impacts on our operation as well as any learning from other related Charity Commission reports.

Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA)

Performance review:

4. Our performance review year 2021-22 is ongoing. We understand the PSA Scrutiny Panel have met to consider our performance this year and when the outcome is publicly available we will advise members of Council immediately.

PSA report – ‘State of Regulation’:

5. The PSA will be publishing a new report in May 2022 as the output from its ‘State of Regulation’ project. The report will provide themes and insights from the PSA’s oversight of the healthcare professional regulators and Accredited Registers and its policy work, as well as its contribution to the debate on some of the key patient safety and regulatory challenges within health and care.
6. PSA aim to launch the report at an afternoon tea reception in Parliament in June 2022 followed by exploring the themes and issues arising at a one-day conference (dates to be confirmed).

Department of Health and Social Care

Healthcare regulation: deciding when statutory regulation is appropriate

7. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) launched a consultation on 6 January 2022 on [‘Healthcare regulation: deciding when statutory regulation is appropriate’](#). We responded to the consultation before the 31 March 2022 deadline.

Regulatory reform

8. We continue to be involved in inter-regulatory meetings about the proposed reforms for all healthcare regulators, which will commence with changes to the General Medical Council (GMC) legislation. We anticipate that a public consultation on the reform of the GMC legislation will commence later in the year, around Autumn 2022.

Emergency Registers

9. There was a Ministerial Statement in March 2022 which announced that the emergency registers, established at the beginning of the pandemic, are to close by 30 September 2022. For those regulators who were granted legislation to open emergency registers – GOsC was not one – they will have six months to liaise with those on the emergency registers to assess whether these healthcare professionals wish to return to the full register or not.

Devolved nations

Scotland:

10. We responded to a questionnaire on the Scottish Government's commitment to create a Patient Safety Commissioner for Scotland which was one of the recommendations arising from the Cumberlege Review.

Northern Ireland:

11. We continue to recruit for a new Council member, Northern Ireland. A fuller update is provided in the Chair's Report at Item 5 on the public agenda.

Wales:

12. Executive and Non-Executive GOsC members attended a PSA conference on Regulation in Welsh Context held online in March 2022 which explored the theme of 'Safety under pressure – protecting patients through challenging times'.
13. Speakers included: Dr Frank Atherton Chief Medical Officer, the Royal College of Nursing, HCPC, the Board of Communities of Health Councils and Healthcare Improvement Wales.

Patients

14. The publication of the [Ockenden review: summary of findings, conclusions and essential actions](#) highlights again the harm that can be caused when patients voices are not heard and the culture of the environment (including governance) inhibits speaking up.

15. This is the final report of the independent review of maternity services at the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust. These are sadly familiar themes and they inform our own thinking and policy development. Our ongoing work on patient partnership contains a variety of strands about integrating and enhancing the patient voice in our policy development, our ongoing engagement, developing into our strategy development and ultimately our governance structure.
16. We are also working with the profession to highlight patient partnership through our CPD scheme and work on communication and consent and with our educational institutions. We have been working on culture by reemphasising the purpose of our CPD scheme focussing on engagement, support and community and by enhancing the focus on culture and hearing student and staff voices in our Standards for Education and Training. However, we are not complacent, and these themes are ones that return again and again in regulation and we must continue to work in partnership with patients and with osteopaths and other stakeholders to enhance patient care and public protection.

Evolving Careers

17. Fiona Browne, Steven Bettles and I attended an interactive workshop hosted by the Institute of Osteopathy (iO) which was looking to discuss the concept of 'Evolving Careers'. The workshop was attended by approximately 30 people in-person and around 10-15 people online, with a diverse range of experience and views.
18. For reference, the iO's Evolving Careers concept, which they have been discussing with osteopathic stakeholders since late 2020, is an initiative intended to enhance the recruitment and retention in the profession, and build the professional recognition of osteopathy among the broader health stakeholders.
19. The concept lies in the formulation of clear career pathways in both independent practice and NHS roles, based around an increase in skills, experience and where appropriate, specialisms, which can be properly supported by education providers and employers. The aim is that this will help to provide much better clarity and access to development by students and registrants, and provide more opportunities for onward development by experienced practitioners. This is not a new concept as such - practically every other health profession has this type of career pathway structure laid out already - so this is more about osteopathy learning from others to build its own frameworks for progression.
20. The half-day event was an excellent opportunity for attendees to consider the future of the profession and how developing and defining potential career paths may be used to attract students into osteopathic training if they are able to see how their career may develop. The iO will continue to lead on this work.

Osteopathic Foundation

21. I was invited to observe the board of the Osteopathic Foundation (OF) and to participate in a strategy development discussion hosted by the interim OF Chair, Duncan Empey. The discussion was stimulating and will hopefully lead to the OF being able to publish a clear strategy for how it intends to play its part in the future development of the profession.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

22. As part of inter-regulatory collaboration, a meeting was held with the General Chiropractic Council EDI lead, Richard Campbell, to share our experiences of developing our approach to EDI. Discussion ranged from our independent EDI audit, the development of the EDI Framework 2021-24 and our approach to diversifying the applications we receive for our non-executive positions.
23. The Remuneration and Appointments Committee met in March 2022 and considered the EDI monitoring data collected through the 2021-22 appointment processes. Further consideration of this topic will be held at the next meeting in June 2022, and this will inform any actions we need to take as part of our future recruitment processes.
24. We are progressing well with our pilot to explain why we want to collect more equality and diversity data from the profession. [Dr Stacey Clift's blog](#) on this matter has been well received and led to participants volunteering for a number of focus groups which have been held since the beginning of the year. We currently have 50 osteopaths who have completed the pilot as at 19 April 2022.

Engagement activities

25. In accordance with our communications and engagement strategy, we are increasing our face to face and online engagement and interaction with osteopaths and students this year as well as with patients. Since the Council meeting in February we have:
 - a. Held four online final-year student presentations - meeting with approximately half of those expected to apply - to discuss the process for obtaining registration and to highlight available resources/support for students as they transition into practice.
 - b. Presented on communication and consent to osteopaths in West Midlands and Bristol Osteopathic Groups (online) and Carlisle Osteopathic Groups (in person) (approximately 140 osteopaths).
 - c. Held three CPD Question and Answer sessions for osteopaths including one hosted by the Institute of Osteopathy (approximately 90 osteopaths).

- d. Held a number of 1 to 1 CPD interviews with osteopaths to seek qualitative feedback about the CPD scheme (approximately 20 osteopaths).
 - e. Held a series of focus groups on equality, diversity and inclusion as part of the development of our equality, diversity and inclusion survey pilot (approximately 15 osteopaths).
 - f. Held a series of focus groups on our adjunctive therapy guidance (approximately 4 osteopaths and 6 lay panellists) and have reached out to stakeholders on adjunctive therapy and remote hearings guidance to promote the consultations.
 - g. Held a stakeholder reference group with people representing the Osteopathic Alliance, Council of Osteopathic Educational Institutions, National Council for Osteopathic Research and the Institute of Osteopaths as well as a range of other stakeholders.
 - h. Continued our programme of speaking directly to the leads of our Regional Osteopathic Groups to hear what is important to them and to encourage them to invite us to their groups. (Spoken to 7 regional leads).
 - Most groups still meeting online but starting to make plans for in-person meetings. All leads spoke of a lack of engagement from their group throughout the pandemic, especially seen with low attendance to online meetings.
 - A lot of the osteopaths spoken to seemed keen for the GOsC to meet with their group in person. One lead has already arranged with Fiona Browne to attend a meeting in person in April 2022 to discuss communication and consent. We are also planning a meeting in Norwich.
26. Feedback received has informed our repackaging of resources and communications with regards to the CPD scheme (particularly around completing the CPD cycle), informed our policy development and our equality, diversity and inclusion survey.
27. In addition, we have a one and a half hour slot for a seminar on professional judgement and decision making on each of the in person Institute of Osteopathy Road shows taking place on 13 May - Midlands (Birmingham); 25 June - South Wales (Cardiff); 3 September - Scotland (Glasgow) – in collaboration with Scottish Osteopathic Society; 10 September North (Leeds) – In collaboration with Northern Counties Osteopathic Society; 28 October London (M25/Heathrow).
28. We have also submitted two abstracts for the Institute of Osteopathy convention in November and we await notification about these.

Principal Accounting Policies

29. The Audit Committee met in March 2022 and considered the external financial audit plan and the Principal Accounting Policies. No changes have been made to those policies which need to be raised with Council; however, there was a recognition that the impact of inflation may be something which is reflected within the Principal Accounting Policies at the time the accounts are signed.

Staffing

30. Since the previous meeting of Council there are some staff updates to share:

- Kabir Kareem, Quality Assurance Liaison Officer, has left the GOsC to take a promotion to Education Manager at the Health and Care Professions Council. We thank Kabir for his excellent contributions to our work and we wish him every success for the future. We are currently recruiting for Kabir's replacement.
- We have completed recruitment to a one-year fixed-term Senior Digital Communications Officer role. This role will support the communications team while we undertake the Cloud Engage project including an update to the o zone and the CPD Diary and will enable us to focus more on our digital offering including updating our websites. We are delighted that Ria Carrogan will join us from 23 May 2022.
- Brenda Buckingham, Registration Manager, is to retire from post at the end of November 2022 after c.15 years' service at the GOsC. We will have time to thank Brenda for her service at a Council meeting later in the year.
- We have held an internal recruitment campaign and Ben Chambers, Senior Registration Officer, has been successful and will be promoted to the position of Registration Manager on Brenda's departure. We will start a new process to identify any internal candidates who may wish to apply for the Senior Registration Officer position.

External meetings – bringing insight into our business

31. Since the previous meeting we have participated in several external events with stakeholders and partner organisations which ensure that we are able to bring insight to our work. These meetings, which have not been referenced elsewhere in the report, include:

- Chief Executives of the Regulatory Bodies forum
- Sub-group of the Chief Executives (CO-POD)¹
- DHSC: regulatory reform meetings

¹ NB: The GOsC has taken on the Chairing responsibilities for CO-POD in 2022 following the change in Chief Executive and Registrar at the General Optical Council.

- Department of Industry and Trade: Regulated Professions Advisory Forum
- Beverley Harden, Health Education England
- Suzanne Rastrick, Chief Allied Health Professions Officer, England
- Directors of Fitness to Practice forum
- Nick Jones, Chief Executive and Registrar, General Chiropractic Council
- Maurice Cheng, Institute of Osteopathy (iO)
- Bi-lateral meeting with iO
- Duncan Empey, Interim Chair of the Osteopathic Foundation
- Osteopathic Development Group meeting
- Ian Fraser, Chair of Council of Osteopathic Education Institutions
- Nockolds Healthcare Regulators Complaints Forum
- Emerging Concerns Protocol Forum
- Sharing Intelligence in Health and Care Group (Scotland)
- Speaking Up Partnership Group
- Inter-regulatory forums - multiple

Business Plan monitoring

32. We have not provided a monitoring report to this paper as we are just one month into the new business plan year.
33. However, we also wanted to alert Council that we are considering whether timelines for activities in some areas of our work may need to be slightly lengthened due to the impact of staff absence from matters including covid.
34. Our aim is to keep key strategic priorities (including our statutory duties) and business critical activities on track and the areas of work which may be impacted include:
 - QA Risk Framework: Initial response to the PEC Workshop in March 2022 will now be considered by PEC in October rather than June.
 - Patient perceptions survey: this may need to be delayed to later in 2022 / early 2023 depending on whether initial preparation work can be completed for PEC in June 2022.
 - Registrant and stakeholder perceptions survey: this will need to take place in early 2023 rather than October to December 2022. This is because the work to scope and develop the survey, with input from PEC, will need to take place for the October PEC, rather than from now in preparation for the June PEC.
35. The potential impact of absence on a small team such as ours can be significant and demonstrates that we have limits as to our overall team capacity, especially when there is a need to balance workload and wellbeing. We will provide a fuller report at the next meeting of Council when we have been able to fully assess the impact on our planned activities.

Financial report

36. The financial year end 2021-22 commenced on 1 April 2021 and concluded on 31 March 2022. As with previous years, the final results are subject to change arising from the audit and the Head of Resources and Assurance will provide a verbal report to Council as the dispatch of the May Council papers happens so soon after the year-end closes.

Recommendations: To note the content of the report.