

## **Meeting of Council: Session 2 - Public**

**Minutes of the meeting of Council held in public on Thursday 8 February 2024, at Osteopathy House, 176 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 3LU and online via Go-to-Meeting video conference**

### **Confirmed**

**Chair:** Dr Bill Gunnyeon

**Present:** Dr Daniel Bailey  
Sarah Botterill (Chair, People Committee)  
Prof. Deborah Bowman (Chair, Policy and Education Committee)  
Jo Clift (Chair Designate)  
Elizabeth Elander  
Caroline Guy  
Harriet Lambert (Council Associate)  
Prof. Patricia McClure (online)  
Dr Denis Shaughnessy (Chair, Audit Committee) (online)  
Deborah Smith  
Laura Turner (Council Associate)

**Presenting:** Fiona Browne, Director, Education, Standards and Development  
David Bryan, Head of Regulation (Items 9)  
Ria Corrigan, Senior Digital Communications Officer (Item 12)(online)  
Dr Jerry Draper-Rodi, Director, National Council for Osteopathic Research (Item 10)(online)  
Sheleen McCormack, Director of Fitness to Practise  
Liz Niman, Head of Communications, Engagement and Insight (online)  
Matthew Redford, Chief Executive and Registrar

**In Attendance:** Marcia Scott, Council and Executive Support Officer

**Observers:** Alan Clamp, Chief Executive, Professional Standards Authority, Stakeholder  
Michael Humphries, Scrutiny Manager, Professional Standards Authority (online)  
Glynis Fox, President, Institute of Osteopathy, Stakeholder Observer  
Jane Easty, Chair, Sutherland Cranial College (online)  
Olivia MacEachern (Ost. Student, ESO)

Marie-Pauline Otzen (Ost. Student, ESO)  
Anna-Maria Smith (Ost. Student, ESO)  
Julia Craig, Registrant (online)  
Jodie Harvey, Registrant (online)

### **Item 1: Welcome and apologies**

1. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.
2. A special welcome was extended to Jo Clift, attending the meeting in her capacity as Chair designate of Council. Jo's tenure will formally commence on 1 April 2024.
3. Apologies were received from:
  - Simeon London, Registrant Member of Council
  - Maurice Cheng, Chief Executive, the Institute of Osteopathy
  - Colette Byrne, Scrutiny Officer, the Professional Standards Authority

### **Item 2: Questions from Observers**

4. There were no questions from observers.

### **Item 3: Minutes**

5. The minutes of the 121<sup>st</sup> public meeting 22 November 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

### **Item 4: Matters arising**

6. The Chief Executive introduced the report which asked that Council note the actions completed and that one item remains ongoing.
7. It is planned that in future the Registration Report will include comparative data to inform trends, planning and the maintenance of the Register. The Executive are developing the report to submit for comment at the March 2024 meeting of the Audit Committee.
8. It was confirmed that the consultation on the Fitness to Practise Guidance was launched, 7 February 2024.

**Noted: Council noted the contents of the report.**

### **Item 5: Chair's Report: appointments and reappointments**

9. The Chair introduced the item which provided an update on the appointment and other relevant activity which has taken place since the November 2023 meeting.

10. The key messages and following points were highlighted:

- a. Since the previous meeting of Council, work had continued on a number of recruitment campaigns being:
  - lay and registrant members of the Investigating Committee
  - lay and registrant members of Council
  - registrant Council Associate.
- b. In December 2023 confirmation was received from Privy Council that Jo Clift was confirmed as the GOsC Chair Designate, to take office from 1 April 2024.
- c. The Council member selection panel met in January 2024 and recommended the appointment of two lay members of Council and one osteopath member of Council. Paperwork had been sent to the PSA and to the Privy Council to complete the process.
- d. It had not been possible for the Council member selection panel to identify a candidate from Wales. This post is to be readvertised.
- e. Interviews for appointments to the Investigating Committee also took place in January 2024 and the recommendations will be presented to Council in due course.
- f. Gabrielle Anderson was recommended for appointment as the next Council Associate, from 1 April 2024. Council Associate Harriet Lambert's term of office ends on 31 March 2024, and, on behalf of Council, thanks were extended to her for being one of the first successful candidates to participate in the Council Associate programme and for her contributions to Council.

### **Appointment of People Committee Chair**

- g. Elizabeth Elander left the meeting for the duration of this discussion.
- h. Members considered the recommendation for the appointment of People Committee (PC) Chair, to commence from 1 April 2024.
- i. Member were informed that the tenure of the current Chair, Sarah Botterill, would end on 31 March 2024. To ensure continuity the recommendation was to appoint People Committee Member, Elizabeth Elander, for one-year from 1 April 2024.
- j. Council made had no additional comments relating to the proposal and agreed the recommendation.

### **PSA Chairs' meeting**

- k. A useful meeting of the Health Regulator Chairs took place in January, hosted by the Chair of the Professional Standards Authority. The discussions

focused on a number of areas of common interest including regulatory reform and issues concerning case progression in Fitness to Practise.

It is planned for the Chairs' meetings to take place bi-annually.

### **Reflections as out-going Chair and member of Council**

- l. In his final Council meeting as the Chair of the General Osteopathic Council reflections on his tenure included:
  - The first and subsequent periods of 'lockdown' during the COVID19 pandemic and the swiftness of the Executive and staff team in adapting to the unforeseen changes and the most challenging of circumstances including:
    - the overall living and working environment,
    - the move and adaption to remote working,
    - maintaining systems,
    - maintaining the financial viability of the organisation.
  - Continuing to meet and maintain the performance standards set by the Professional Standards Authority while being aware of the need to continue to evolve and develop.
  - The success of the internal performance review of Council informing the development of the new strategy and Values.
  - The development of and successful implementation of the Council Associate programme which will facilitate the development of new leaders within the osteopathic profession.
  - The continuing development of the Patient Partnership programme.
  - The hope that the reform of healthcare regulation would take place with the fullness of time.
  - That the relationship between the GOsC and the profession would continue to improve.
  - That there would be more opportunities afforded for the Chair to meet and engage with members of the profession and osteopaths.
  - That the new CRM system would be successfully implemented along with the proposed and welcome development of the new GOsC website.
- m. The Chair offered his thanks to all who have supported him throughout his time as a Council Member and as Chair of the GOsC including the Chief Executive and Executive team, the members of Council and the Committees, and the GOsC's Stakeholders.

**Noted: Council considered and note the update on the current non-Executive recruitment campaigns.**

**Agreed: Council agreed the appointment of Gabrielle Anderson as the next Council Associate for a period of two years from 1 April 2024.**

**Agreed: Council agreed the appointment of Elizabeth Elander as Chair of the People Committee for a period of one year from 1 April 2024.**

### **Item 6: Chief Executive and Registrar's Report**

11. The Chief Executive introduced the item which presented a review of activities and performance since the last Council meeting and not reported elsewhere on the agenda.
12. The key messages and following points were highlighted:
  - a. Engagement with the PSA continues on the 2023-24 Performance Review.
  - b. The AAPA Order 2024, which will bring Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates under the regulation of the General Medical Council (GMC), was laid before Parliament and the Scottish Parliament in December 2023.
  - c. A productive meeting was held with the osteopathic insurance providers, NCOR and the Institute of Osteopathy in December 2023. An outcome of the meeting was that NCOR would be working more closely with the insurers and meetings between parties would be held on a more regular basis.
  - d. The launch of the Registrants and stakeholder perceptions survey pilot.
  - e. Following the tender exercise to identify a supplier for the new CRM system/product it has been agreed that Salesforce is to be the provider.
13. In discussion the following points were made and responded to:
  - a. The relationship between the PSA and the GOsC was considered to be constructive and positive, being more about learning and working in partnership. The performance review work for 2023/24 has been focused on Fitness to Practise and there have also been helpful discussions on Standard 3 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). The move towards a more collaborative way of working, while the PSA maintains its scrutiny of GOsC processes, ensures the best outcomes for patients and the public.

### **Business Plan and Monitoring**

- d. In response to the question whether there might be potential savings that could be made allowing the Banking Tender Exercise activity to become a

higher priority it was explained that potentially there maybe savings to allow for the activity but it was more likely this would be deferred to 2024-25.

- e. Council was advised that internal discussions are in progress to develop work on the expansion of the pool existing of Legal Assessors. The outcome of this activity would be reported to Council in due course.

### **Finance Report 2023-24 to 31 December 2023**

14. The Chief Executive presented the Finance Report to 31 December 2023. The key messages from the report were:

- a. Registration fees are on track to meet budget expectations.
- b. Expenditure is just over £2m and is line with budget forecasts for the nine-month position.
- c. The Balance Sheet is in a strong position, meaning we can face future challenges from a position of financial health.
- d. Cash at bank is up on the year-end position, reflecting that the spend will take place in the latter part of the financial year.

15. In discussion the following points were made and responded to:

- a. Council was informed that as at the date of the meeting there were no tangible concerns relating to GOsC's financial position over the next few months but it should be noted that IT expenditure would be above the set budget with the focus of the Audit Committee being on cyber security.

**Noted: Council noted the contents of the Chief Executive's report.**

### **Item 7: Business Plan and Budget 2024-25**

16. It was noted that Dr Daniel Bailey had a conflict of interest in relation to the National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR) and would not participate in any related discussions to NCOR.

17. The Chief Executive introduced the report which provided Council with the draft Business and Budget for 2024-24.

18. The key messages and following points were highlighted:

- a. The draft Business Plan for 2024-25 was presented and represents the first year of the new Strategy, towards 2030.
- b. The Business Plan had been streamlined to only focus on those activities which progress the Strategy, removing activities which are considered too operational in nature for Council.

- c. Therefore, the 2024-25 Business Plan is significantly shorter than previous iterations and had a different feel and tone.
- d. Given the change in style and tone, the Business Plan was presented in draft format for Council's consideration.
- e. The 2024-25 budget had been balanced with a small surplus of c.£13k forecast.
- f. The expenditure budget is similar to previous years but with some noticeable differences that demonstrate the active steps taken by the Executive to rebalance where resources are to be deployed.
- g. An Equality Impact Assessment was completed for the introduction of the Business Plan and Budget 2024-25.

## **Business Plan**

19. In discussion the following points were made and responded to:

- a. It was explained that the reason for expanding the pool of Legal Assessors was to ensure assessor availability for short-term hearings and meetings. Expanding the pool also increases the diversity of decision-making advice received and strengthens the quality of advice provided to FtP Panels.
- b. Members made the following comments in relation to the draft Business Plan:
  - The new high-level format appeared to lack the detail that had been presented in previous Business Plan.
  - There was no mention of the GOsC staff in the detailed section 'Championing inclusivity.'
  - There appeared to an imbalance between supporting osteopaths and the number of priorities for ensuring inclusivity.
- c. The Chair added to the comments on the thinking and mechanisms considered in the development of the Business Plan, and that in developing the Strategic Plan, specific actions would inform the Business Plan and timelines in order to progress the strategy. It was suggested that the listed priorities must be achievable and that there may be too many priorities to address at this time. It was also suggested the term 'priorities' might be an incorrect descriptor. It was suggested that timings should be included along with measurable success criteria.
- d. In considering Council comments the Chief Executive explained that in support of the Business Plan there is a detailed document which sets out the activities, resources, and timelines for ongoing activities, business and projects which is overseen by the Senior Management Team (SMT) who will consider what progress and goals, and, if required, the reprioritisation of workstreams.

- e. The Chief Executive thanked Council for its comments which would be taken into consideration to further develop the Business Plan to be returned to Council for further consideration in May 2024.
- f. In summary the Chair highlighted:
  - The need to ensure clarity and specificity of some of the listed priorities
  - The need to ensure that the priorities are achievable.
  - The need to ensure that the resources are available to deliver the expected outcomes.

## **Budget**

20. In presenting the draft budget the following points were highlighted:

- a. The registration fee forecast is based on the data held in the CRM system and is not influenced by any external forecast or data analyst.
- b. The forecast shows that registration fees will be lower in 2024-25 than in the current financial year, 2023-24, due to a challenging environment for the profession.
- c. Expenditure levels had been reduced where appropriate and prudent to do so.
- d. The establishment of designated funds from reserves for three key areas:
  - NCOR – £150k to be ringfenced over a five-year period from 1 April 2024
  - Governance appointments – £100k over a five-year period from 1 April 2024
  - Legal costs associated with fitness to practise – £150k as a risk mitigation should unexpected costs arise in-year from 1 April 2024
- e. The reserves held by the GOsC were in excess of the target range therefore the establishment of the designated funds should not impact on the financial position of the GOsC over the Strategic Plan period.
- f. The Auditors had been consulted and confirmed that they are comfortable with the approach which is being taken and were within established financial rules.

21. In discussion the following points were made and responded to:

- a. It was confirmed that quarterly reports are received from the GOsC fund managers, Brewin Dolphin, and regular conversation are held to consider the investment, risks and opportunities for the GOsC's investments.



## **The establishment of Designated Funds:**

### **NCOR**

- b. It was explained that during the five-year period the financial strategy would continue development to ensure continuing support for NCOR after 31 March 2029. It was also suggested throughout this period there would be continuous oversight and review of the processes by the Audit Committee.
- c. Council supported the recommendation of the designated fund for NCOR.

### **Legal costs associated with fitness to practise**

- d. It was confirmed that there was no time limit set for the use of the suggested designated fund of £150k. It was added that for any designated fund it was at Council's discretion to reduce or increase the specified fund.
- e. Council supported the recommendation of a designated fund for legal costs associated with fitness to practice.

### **Governance appointments**

- f. It was confirmed that there are protocols in place set and approved by Council for the use of reserves for specific activities and projects.
- g. It was explained that unlike other health regulators the governance recruitment process is an in-house process undertaken by the staff team, and there are no plans to change this approach. As with the recent 2024 recruitment round, there are a significant number of appointments to be made that will commence on 1 April 2025 with the significant and applicable associated costs. The People Committee, with the Executive team, will continue to consider how to make the process more cost efficient.
- h. It was confirmed that the use of reserves/funds complies with the charitable aims as set by the Charity Commission. It was explained that to permit an excess of reserves without a plan for use could at a later stage become a problem for the GOsC therefore a narrative has been set out demonstrating the use of designated funds and a medium-term financial strategy to ensure compliance with Charity Commission rules.
- i. Concerns remained about the establishment of a designated fund for governance appointments and it was considered this should remain as part of the operational budget.
- j. In summary of the discussion the Chair:

- Noted Councils concern about the establishment of a designated fund for governance appointments and suggested this should be removed from the budget.
- Noted that Council was content with the establishment of designated funds for NCOR and for legal costs for fitness to practise.
- Suggested that as the business plan is refined, specific projects might be identified and reviewed for specific funding from reserves.

22. The Chair thanked the Executive for the considerable work undertaken to present the draft Business Plan and Budget 2024-25.

**Council considered and agreed:**

**a. The draft Business Plan 2024-25 to be refined for final review at the May 2024 meeting.**

**b. The draft Budget 2024-25:**

- **The plan to establish a five-year designated fund to cover the costs of governance appointments should not be included as part of the budgetary plan and remain within operational cost.**
- **The draft budget 2024-25 to be revised for final review at the May 2024 meeting.**

**Council noted:**

**c. The Equality Impact Assessment.**

**Item 8: Approval of the new GOsC Strategy, towards 2030**

23. The Chief Executive presented the item which, following a three-month public consultation, asked Council to agree the GOsC Strategy, towards 2030, and would take effect from 1 April 2024.

24. The key messages and following points were highlighted:

- a. Council had been considering its future strategic direction over the previous 18-24 months. This was undertaken in a number of ways including through meetings, strategy days and workshops.
- b. A public consultation was launched in early September and ran for three months.
- c. In total 25 responses were received from osteopaths, patients and stakeholder organisations including the Institute of Osteopathy and NCOR.
- d. The consultation responses were varied ranging from endorsing the strategy to being critical of the approach outlined.

- e. An analysis of the consultation responses identified that there may be a wish to make some amendments to the strategy in the following areas:
- Vision statement
  - Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications
  - Defining the term 'collective regulation'
  - Publishing research
  - Demonstrating Trust (measure of success)
  - Equality Impact Assessments
  - Analysing the impact of equality monitoring data
  - Defining the term 'Environmentally social responsible'
- f. The paper contained questions on each of the above areas for Council to consider.
- g. At the outset of the public consultation an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had been prepared and, in light of the consultation responses, this has been reviewed and amendments to the EIA had not been identified.
- h. The GOsC Strategy, towards 2030, will come into effect on 1 April 2024. The Executive's approach to launching the GOsC Strategy includes:
- Promoting widely to osteopaths and other key stakeholders through the GOsC's communication channels. Utilising a 'you said, we did' open and transparent approach to the consultation responses.
  - Addressing some of the common misconceptions about the role of the GOsC reflected in a number of responses to the consultation.
  - The strategy is long-term and will have an ongoing impact on the work of the GOsC, therefore the organisation is committed to doing longer term engagement with osteopaths and other key stakeholders particularly over the first year of publication to discuss the new Strategy and listen to feedback.
  - It is planned to take a four nations approach and include the patient involvement group to help ensure inclusivity and raising awareness of the future direction with all key audiences.
  - The Strategy will be published in the Welsh language, and promoted to Welsh audiences.

25. In discussion the following points were made and responded to:

- a. It was noted that there had been two negative responses to the consultation and it had been agreed that these should remain as they were considered equally valid to other responses which had been received.
- b. Council considered the questions and suggested actions as set out. Issues highlighted were:
  - Collective Regulation - Paragraphs 17 – 19: It was suggested that the sentence '*an approach to regulation where a range of organisations and individuals work in partnership together to achieve a shared outcome*' be amended with either the word partnership or together removed.
  - Publishing research – Paragraphs 20 – 22: It was suggested that a caveat be included where in special cases there might be some degree of sensitivity the research would not be published. It was noted that if this was the case justification for not publishing would be required.
  - Environmental social responsible – Paragraphs 31 – 33: It was suggested that the term might be reviewed to ensure it is clear.
- c. A final version of the strategy would be completed by the 31 March 2024.

### **Strategy Launch**

- d. The Chair Designate informed the meeting she would be happy to support the launch and promote the strategy as widely as possible through communicating with and engaging directly with the profession including meetings with regional groups and other stakeholders.
- e. The Chief Executive thanked Council for their comments and would welcome any further feedback and suggestions on the strategy and its launch post meeting.

**Agreed: Council agreed the GOsC Strategy, towards 2030, subject to Council signing off the final amended version which should include the graphic design for formal launch.**

**Noted: Council noted the Executive's approach to launching the GOsC Strategy**

### **Item 9: Fitness to Practise Report (Q3)**

26. The Director of Fitness to Practise introduced the item which presented the quarterly update and dataset on the work of the Regulation department and the GOsC's Fitness to Practise Committees.

27. The key messages and following points were highlighted:

- a. In this reporting period a similar number of concerns were received in comparison to the last quarter.
- b. The screener KPI was exceeded, however, the IC KPI was not met. One case was considered at a PCC substantive hearing where the PCC referred the matter to the Health Committee.
- c. At the time of reporting, of the 18 cases referred by the Investigating Committee (IC) to the Professional Conduct Committee (PCC), 3 had been listed.
- d. The report provided further insight into the age of cases at each stage of the FtP process that have been impacted by third-party investigations.
- e. On 20 December 2023, the GOsC brought a successful prosecution against Nigel Graham for unlawfully describing himself as an osteopath whilst not registered with the GOsC. Mr Graham was due to be sentenced on 12 January 2024.
- f. The GOsC held the Investigating Committee (IC) annual training on 4 December 2023.

28. In discussion the following points were made and responded to:

- a. The third-party investigation data was welcomed, providing more detailed information on the delays to ftp proceedings due to circumstances that are beyond the control of the GOsC and continues to be a challenge. It was noted that the reasons for the delays were different for each of the FtP Committees including:
  - The Investigating Committee being mainly impacted by delays due to police investigations
  - The Professional Conduct Committee mainly impacted due to ongoing Court proceedings.
- b. It was suggested that PCC members are satisfied with the process and the information which is made available as it currently stands and the feedback from FtP Committee members was positive in terms of support and case management.
- c. It was explained that in terms of recruitment to the FtP Committees the GOsC has become much clearer with its messaging in the most recent recruitment campaigns ensuring that as much information is made available to prospective candidates about the Committees, the work and processes.

**Noted: Council noted the contents of the Fitness to Practise report.**

## **Item 10: Under Represented Groups Experience of Osteopathic Education and Training (UrGEnT)**

29. Dr Jerry Draper-Rodi, Director of the National Council for Osteopathic Research, introduced the item which provided a summary of the Underrepresented Groups' Experiences in Osteopathic Training study - the UrGEnT project – and the proposed next steps.
30. The key messages and following points were highlighted:
- a. There is a lack of evidence on the experiences of students from underrepresented groups during their osteopathic training.
  - b. Evidence from similar professions, such as physiotherapy and chiropractic, highlights regular incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment for underrepresented students.
  - c. Osteopathic students in the UK were invited to participate in a survey and a series of focus groups to begin to build a picture of their experiences and what Osteopathic Education Institutions (OEIs) could do to support them further.
  - d. A forum day was held in April 2023. Key stakeholders were invited to attend including UK OEIs, the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC), the Institute of Osteopathy (iO), the Osteopathic Foundation, and other healthcare profession organisations, NHS representatives, and Health Education England (HEE). Approximately 70 people attended the event.
  - e. The final manuscript of the mixed methods project was being finalised and should be submitted before the end of February 2024.
  - f. Training for OEI faculties is being organised by the GOsC, and will be facilitated by Dr Jerry Draper-Rodi in a hybrid meeting in March 2024.
  - g. A webinar on improving accessibility and promoting inclusivity in OEIs has been recorded by Ms Yinka Fabusuyi and Dr Jerry Draper-Rodi.
  - h. It was noted that additional work looking at new graduates from under-represented groups, their experiences and how they can be assisted in transitioning to practise and the professional working environment.
31. In discussion the following points were made and responded to:
- a. In recognition of the work undertaken the Chief Executive commented that he was proud of the work which had been completed to date and thanked the team on what had been achieved to date and also Council in agreeing to fund and support the project.
  - b. Members welcomed the report and asked how this would work with quality assurance processes and the providers of quality assurance? It was

explained in working and making submissions to the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement on Osteopathy (which sits alongside GOPRE - Graduate outcomes for osteopathic pre-registration education) this highlighted the issues and different views held relating to EDI and accessibility and how these should be implemented in the OEIs. It was felt important these areas be included in the assessment of OEI performance but would require careful thinking about how to implement during the validation process.

- c. It was agreed that a future research project looking at the experience of graduate tutors would be considered. A further research project would be to consider patient data and the impact of under-represented groups including:
  - patients and the complaints process,
  - access to osteopathic care,
  - views on culture and patient care
- d. It was noted that the Standards for Education and Training for OEIs includes specific requirements to support EDI. The institutions are required to report against and demonstrate how they are meeting these standards but experiences of students or others are difficult to measure.

32. On behalf of Council the Chair thanked Dr Jerry Draper-Rodi and NCOR for the work undertaken to date.

**Council noted and agreed the following recommendations:**

- a. Those interventions targeting OEI faculties, OEI institutional leaders/managers and students are needed to promote inclusivity in undergraduate education.**
- b. That the webinar recorded by Ms Yinka Fabusuyi and Dr Jerry Draper-Rodi for GOsC on improving accessibility and promoting inclusivity in OEIs should be promoted to OEI faculty.**
- c. That the training for faculties of OEIs organised by GOsC and facilitated by Dr Jerry Draper-Rodi in March 2024 should be promoted to ensure maximum participation of faculty members from different institutions.**
- d. That the work on equity, diversity and inclusion in undergraduate education and clinical care should continue as there are still many unanswered questions.**

**Item 11: Evaluation of shared decision-making resources**

33. The Head of Professional Standards introduced the item concerning the evaluation of resources to help patients make more explicit what is important to them in osteopathic consultation.

34. The key message and following points were highlighted:

- a. In 2022 six resources were produced and published, four aimed specifically at patients and two resources aimed at osteopaths.
- b. The purpose was to enhance shared decision making, and support patients in expressing what matters to them.
- c. The GOsC worked in partnership with the [Collaborating Centre for Values Based Practice](#), and launched the resources formally at an event held with the Collaborating Centre at St Catherine's College, Oxford in November 2022.
- d. Following a tender process, Professor Dawn Carnes and colleagues were appointed to conduct a review of the implementation of the resources.
- e. The evaluation is now complete and the findings can be summarised as:
  - Overall awareness of the GOsC resources could be improved
  - The GOsC resources were used adequately and appropriately
  - Adopting and integrating the resources into everyday practice requires additional motivation
  - The resources promoted patient-centredness
  - The osteopaths generally lacked awareness about shared decision-making
  - The osteopaths lack confidence in discussing treatments beyond their osteopathic remit
  - Patients found the resources very informative and useful and felt that their 'voice' was heard
  - The patients felt respected and understood.
- f. Recommendations made are:
  - Training and development for osteopaths in the process of shared decision-making.
  - Development of shared decision-making aids for osteopaths and patients outlining treatment options and their benefits and risks for the most commonly treated conditions that patients seek consultations for.
  - Putting all the patient resources on the GOsC 'Visiting an osteopath' web pages.
  - Make the resources compatible for completion and saving electronically.
  - Selling the resources as a business tool to enhance the patient experience to ensure good practice.

35. In discussion the following points were made and responded to:

- a. Members welcomed the initiative and those who had already used the decision-making resources commented that they had be very useful. The



resources would also be a valuable aid to students as they prepared to graduate and transitioned into practise.

- b. It was noted that the resources would not be developed as a commercial entity nor sold as a business tool.
- c. It was explained that the focus of the shared decision-making process was to provide support and to reassure osteopaths and for patients to understand that they will be heard/listened to.

36. On behalf of Council the Chair thanked Dr Dawn Carnes and her research team for their work.

**Noted: Council noted the results of the evaluation of our shared decision-making resources.**

**Agreed: Council agreed to publication of this and the next steps as outlined.**

## **Item 12: Social Media Policy**

37. The Head of Communications, Engagement and Insight, introduced the item which presented the updated social media policy which would bring it into line with new Charity Commission guidelines.

38. The key messages and following points were highlighted:

- a. The Charity Commission published [new guidelines for social media](#) in 2023, following a consultation earlier that year. As a charity, the GOsC needs to comply with these guidelines.
- b. The social media policy had been updated to bring it into line with the Charity Commission guidelines.

39. In discussion the following points were made and responded to:

- a. It was agreed that issues relating to Artificial Intelligence (AI) should be considered and included as part of the policy.
- b. The omission on the Charity Commission checklist 'moderating third-party content' was noted and would be completed.
- c. It was noted that the clarifications requested relating to paragraph 22: sharing and posting of social media comments, and paragraph 37: the specific use of the GOsC logo and trademark, would be made.

**Agreed: Council agreed the Social Media Policy subject to a final compliance check.**

### **Item 13: Any other business**

40. There was no other business.

### **Item 14: Questions from Observers**

41. It was suggested that Council might consider the inclusion of student representation in some form at Council to ensure the student voice is heard, to contribute to Council's discourse, and also for students to better understand the role of the GOsC.

### **Item 15: Reflections from departing members of Council**

42. The tenures of four members of Council and a Council Associate would end on 31 March 2024: Sarah Botterill (Lay), Professor Deborah Bowman (Lay), Harriet Lambert, Council Associate (Registrant), Dr Denis Shaughnessy (Lay, Deborah Smith (Registrant).
43. Each gave their personal reflections on their time as members of Council and the Committees, all welcoming the opportunity afforded and the learning gained as members of the GOsC.

### **Item 16: Introductory comments from the Chair Designate, Jo Clift**

44. In her introductory comments Jo Clift, Chair Designate, said that she was very pleased to have been appointed as the new Chair of the GOsC and was looking forward to working with members of Council, the Committees and Stakeholders and the learning that would be afforded to her in the role.

**Date of the next meeting: Thursday 16 May 2024 at 10.00**