

To consider

Joint Co-ordination Group: Progress Report

Issue

1. A report from the Joint Co-ordination Group on progress towards the merger of PMETB with the GMC.

Recommendation

2. To endorse the assurance provided by the Joint Co-ordination Group that the project to merge PMETB with the GMC is on track (paragraphs 6-32).

Further information

3. If you require further information about this paper, please contact us by email: gmc@gmc-uk.org or tel. 0161 923 6602

Background

4. Key Aim Two of the 2009 Business Plan states that we will make all necessary preparations for the merger of PMETB with the GMC.

5. This paper provides a report on progress and includes a statement of assurance by the JCG, following its most recent meeting on 25 November 2009.

Discussion

DH(E) funding

6. The full business case for the merger was approved by DH(E) on 23 October 2009. It includes the provision of £7.1 million of DH(E) funding to achieve: co-location by 1 April 2010, integration of PMETB and GMC IS and other infrastructure work over the following two years (2010 - 2012) and gap funding over the following three year period (2010 - 2013).

7. Detailed discussions are now underway to formalise the precise terms under which the funds will be transferred and the position in relation to the transfer of assets and liabilities. We anticipate that a contract with DH(E) will be agreed shortly. We are also in the process of agreeing with DH(E) the content of a Privy Council Order that will transfer property, rights and liabilities from PMETB to the GMC.

Governance

8. The JCG reported to Council in October 2009 on the proposed approach to the integration of PMETB's governance arrangements within the GMC. Following further work and discussion by the JCG, we are now preparing the necessary amendments to our governance framework and governance handbook. They will be brought to Council on 16 February 2010.

Legislation

9. We continue to work closely with DH(E) officials, through the JSG, to mitigate the risks associated with a tight legislative timetable. Good progress has been made since the JCG last reported in October 2009: the draft Section 60 Order, abolishing PMETB and transferring its statutory functions to the GMC, has been laid before Parliament and consultation on subordinate legislation is underway.

10. The JCG has recognised that there remains a residual risk to achieving the legal transfer of functions by 1 April 2010 given the inevitable uncertainties around the Parliamentary timetable. However, with the JCG's encouragement, and by agreement with PMETB, we intend to bring about the organisational merger of PMETB with the GMC (which is under our control) in accordance with the agreed timetable of 1 April 2010 even if there were to be some minor slippage of the timetable for transferring PMETB's functions. The practicalities of doing so are currently under consideration.

Accommodation

11. We remain on track to co-locate PMETB staff to our London office in March 2010. Architectural services have been procured and are currently working up plans for the fit-out contractor, who is due to commence work on 7 December 2009.

12. The closure of the Clinical Assessment Centre in London on 3 December 2009 and relocation to Manchester also remains on schedule. The fit-out of the space vacated by the Clinical Assessment Centre is scheduled for completion by the end of February 2010.

Finance

13. We have identified three strands of finance-related work:

a. Basic financial processes, including the harmonisation of financial years, chart of accounts, and transaction processing.

b. Financial planning, including co-ordinating and consolidating business and budgetary plans for 2009 and 2010.

c. Financial modelling, including detailed scoping work on the post-merger fees framework and the recovery of costs for Quality Assurance.

14. Work in all three areas is progressing and the financial teams from both organisations are working well to integrate PMETB systems into the GMC's systems. Co-ordinated and consolidated business and budgetary plans for 2010 and future financial modelling have been discussed with the Resources Committee and will be brought forward for a discussion at Council (see agenda item 4b, 2010 Budget and Business Plan).

Information systems

15. The initial phase of work, required to achieve co-location on 1 April 2010, remains on track. We are also planning a number of other system changes that result from ongoing PMETB integration activity at the end of 2010.

16. In order to mitigate the risks associated with the transfer of the PMETB Survey work, we have agreed to bring forward the co-location of the Survey team to January 2010. A plan for the relocation of the team is currently being developed and analysis around the information systems requirements is underway.

Human resources

17. Significant progress has been made on all the main human resource aspects of the transfer since the last JCG report to Council and we have worked closely with the senior team at PMETB to bring the process forward as much as possible.

18. We are on schedule to issue individual contract offers to PMETB staff early in 2010. We are also close to finalising the arrangements that will allow transferring staff to remain on in the NHS pension scheme, ensuring that we meet our obligations under the 'fair deal' guidance.

19. We have developed a detailed induction programme for transferring PMETB staff.

20. Four members of the GMC staff have been seconded to PMETB in order to support knowledge transfer and to fill some short-term vacancies that exist in PMETB. At the same time, a number of GMC Managers and staff are now regularly spending time with teams at PMETB in order to gain a better understanding of the work involved.

Business integration

21. Joint business integration workshops have taken place to determine how PMETB's operational business requirements might best be integrated into the GMC. Our approach at this stage is to achieve a smooth transition using the 'lift and shift' approach (that is, transfer of the functions largely as they are), so far as is practicable.

22. Integration packs have been prepared for each of the key business areas which include a summary of the post merger processes; a gap analysis summarising key changes to documents and systems; and a detailed business integration plan summarising specific actions that are required in order to facilitate and ensure operational readiness at the point of merger.

23. Further integration work is planned from April 2010 onwards to maximise the benefits of the merger.

Communication

24. Regular updates on the merger are circulated monthly to staff across PMETB and the GMC. More detailed information relevant to specific groups of staff is cascaded via PMETB and GMC managers, as appropriate, and further internal communications support is provided by Human Resources, as required, for example, to deliver Joint Open Forums for staff, HR workshops, induction and training programmes and a welcome event in April 2010.

25. The PMETB and GMC communications teams are working closely together on the integration of operational activity in preparation for the merger. This activity includes brand transition for PMETB publications; the merger of website content; data migration and the transfer of PMETB's 'Engage' contact information to the GMC's relationship management system.

26. PMETB is continuing its Partners' Programme, for which communications support will be required post-merger, including a Partners' Conference which is planned for February 2010, and to which we will contribute.

Post-merger benefits

27. The review of the regulation of medical education and training, led by Lord Naren Patel, continues. The Advisory Group, comprising members of the Education and Training Reference Group and members nominated by PMETB, met most recently on 20 October 2009.

28. The wider Reference Group met on 24 November 2009. Key emerging themes were discussed and tested. They included: the continuum of medical education and training, entry to medical school, the undergraduate years, outcomes of undergraduate training and entering the profession, the Foundation Programme, postgraduate education and training: the training environment, postgraduate education and training: doctors not in training leading to a CCT and CPD.

29. Following consultation early in 2010, Lord Patel's report will be considered by the Board of PMETB and Council in March 2010, leading to further work thereafter involving the Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Continued Practice Boards.

30. The Postgraduate Board continues to prepare to assume responsibilities from PMETB and has received a number of presentations from senior PMETB staff including about the Future Doctors work and stakeholder engagement. The Director of Certification, Lesley Hawksworth, will present to the Board at its February 2010 meeting about the work of her Directorate.

31. Joint working on equality and diversity activities between PMETB and the GMC is progressing well. A review of the action plans for both organisations' Equality Schemes has been undertaken and a consolidated plan has been drafted highlighting cross-organisational activities. The GMC's Equality and Diversity Reference Group will receive an update on 3 December 2009.

Assurance and risk management

32. We continue to make very good progress against the Phase 2 project plan. On the basis of the progress review, the JCG is able to give assurance that delivery of the objectives of the merger of PMETB with the GMC is on track.

Recommendation: To endorse the assurance provided by the Joint Co-ordination Group that the project to merge PMETB with the GMC is on track.

Next steps

33. The next JCG meeting will take place on 25 January 2009. A further progress report will be provided to Council on 16 February 2010.

Resource implications

34. There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

Equality

35. An Equality Impact Assessment was conducted as part of the process of agreeing the draft Section 60 Order.