

To approve

Minutes of the Meeting on 10 December 2013¹

Members present

Peter Rubin, Chair

Shree Datta
Christine Eames
Michael Farthing
Helene Hayman
Ajay Kakkar
Deirdre Kelly

Suzi Leather
Jim McKillop
Denise Platt
Enid Rowlands
Hamish Wilson

Others present

Niall Dickson, Chief Executive and Registrar
Paul Philip, Chief Operating Officer
Paul Buckley, Director of Education and Standards
Anthony Omo, Director of Fitness to Practise
Christine Payne, Council Secretary

Ben Jones, Director of Strategy and Communication
Una Lane, Director of Registration and Revalidation
Neil Roberts, Director of Resources and Quality Assurance

¹ These Minutes should be read in conjunction with the Council papers for this meeting, which are available on our website at <http://www.gmc-uk.org>

Chair's business

- 1** It was noted that no apologies for absence had been received.
- 2** The Chair paid tribute to Paul Philip, Chief Operating Officer, and to Ben Jones, Director of Strategy and Communication, who would be leaving the GMC at the end of January 2014 and December 2013 respectively. The Chair thanked them for their contribution to our work during 20 years of combined service, and offered his congratulations and best wishes to both in their new appointments.
- 3** Council noted that it had agreed, on action taken between meetings, amendments to the following sections of the Governance Handbook, which had been inadvertently omitted from the document approved by Council at its meeting on 23 April 2013:
 - a** Annex C4: Procedure for dealing with complaints against members.
 - b** Annex C5: Appointment of the Chair of Council.
- 4** The Chair reported that no declarations of interest had been made.

Minutes of the Meeting on 25 September 2013

- 5** Council approved the minutes of the meeting on 25 September 2013 as a true record.

Chief Executive's Report

- 6** Council considered the Chief Executive's Report, noting developments in the external environment and progress on our strategy, and key outcomes of note from the Strategy and Policy Board meeting on 21 November 2013. During the discussion, it was noted that:
 - a** The post of Chief Operating Officer would be advertised early in the New Year in anticipation of Paul Philip's departure at the end of January 2014.
 - b** Paul Buckley, Director of Education and Standards, would be taking up the post of Director of Strategy and Communication from 1 January 2014, following the departure of Ben Jones. Judith Hulf, the GMC's Responsible Officer and Senior Medical Adviser, would take up the position of Director of Education and Standards on an interim basis, with the substantive post being advertised early in the New Year.
 - c** Following a request from the Secretary of State for Health, we were working with the Nursing and Midwifery Council and other regulators to look at developing common wording in our guidance on the issue of candour.

- d** The Law Commission's draft Bill on the regulation of health and social care professionals was expected to be published in Q1/Q2 2014, and the Department of Health had set up a Bill team to oversee the work.
- e** The Scottish Government had stated in its White Paper on independence that it would wish to continue with UK wide professional healthcare regulation and to maintain the existing regulatory bodies.
- f** Following findings from our National Training Survey in relation to reports of bullying, harassment and undermining, we would be working with the medical Royal Colleges, including the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, to follow up on specific areas of particular concern and to conduct check visits in 2015. We would also continue work to develop the data we hold and to work with professional and systems regulators to make better use of information available, including to identify any trends in the different parts of the UK.
- g** That we had received positive feedback from key interests in relation to the first UK Advisory Forum meetings held in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Chief Operating Officer's Report

- 7** Council considered the Chief Operating Officer's Report, noting:
- a** The commentary on significant issues potentially affecting operational performance.
 - b** A summary of progress in delivery of our operational plans.
 - c** Key outcomes of note from the Performance and Resources Board meeting on 4 November 2013.
 - d** A financial summary to 31 October 2013.
 - e** Operational performance and volumes of activity for fitness to practise, registration and certification work, Professional and Linguistic Assessments Board tests, contact centre and reception services, and revalidation.
 - f** Summary information on current judicial reviews and appeals.
- 8** During the discussion, Council noted:
- a** That December 2013 marked the first anniversary of the launch of revalidation.

- b** The launch, in September 2013, of our consultation on the proposed requirement for EEA doctors applying for registration with a licence to practise to demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge of English before the grant of a licence.
- c** An update on the number of cases in our fitness to practise procedures, including that there had been a 10% increase in the number of enquiries triaged into Stream 1 between October 2012 and October 2013.
- d** That we had submitted our evidence to the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) for the annual performance review of the healthcare regulators. Council also noted that PSA had recently published a report on its audit of fitness to practise cases in the initial stages of investigation in our procedures, and that the overall conclusion of the report was very positive.
- e** That we would shortly be publishing the number of complaints we have received about doctors by secondary care location in the UK for the period 2007-2012. Council noted that it would be helpful to include the outcomes as part of the breakdown of information to be published.
- f** That we had reduced our service target for the conclusion of 90% of fitness to practise cases from 15 months to 12 months, following advice from the Health Select Committee in 2012. This target was met in September 2013, with 94% achieved. Work would continue on improving the quality and timeliness of the service, including in relation to better case management.

Corporate Strategy and Equality and Diversity Strategy 2014-17

- 9** Council considered the draft Corporate Strategy: 2014-17, and the draft Equality and Diversity Strategy: 2014-17.
- 10** Council:
 - a** Noted that the draft Strategies required further work to be undertaken by the Executive following receipt of feedback requested from members on the current draft documents.
 - b** Agreed that revised versions of the draft Strategies would be circulated to members for further review and comment.
 - c** Agreed to authorise the Chair of Council to approve the final versions of the Corporate Strategy 2014-17 and the Equality and Diversity Strategy 2014-17 on behalf of Council.

2014 Business Plan and Budget

- 11** Council considered the draft 2014 Business Plan and Budget, and proposals relating to setting doctors' annual retention fee from 1 April 2014.

12 Council:

- a Noted that the draft 2014 Business Plan required further work to be undertaken by the Executive following receipt of feedback requested from members on the current draft.
- b Agreed to authorise the Chair of Council to approve the final version of the 2014 Business Plan on behalf of Council, subject to consideration of the feedback received from members.
- c Approved the 2014 revenue expenditure budget of £97 million and the capital programme of £8.1 million.
- d Agreed to freeze doctors' annual retention fee at the current levels.
- e Agreed to increase the threshold for eligibility for the income discount to £32,000, effective from 1 April 2014.
- f Agreed to delegate authority to the Chair of Council to make the revised GMC Registration Fees Regulations, effective from 1 April 2014.

Amending the List of bodies entitled to award UK Primary Medical Qualifications

- 13 Council considered and agreed a request to add Queen Mary University of London to the GMC's List of bodies entitled to award UK Primary Medical Qualifications.

Report of the Audit and Risk Committee

- 14 Council considered the report of the Audit and Risk Committee's activities since its last report on 22 May 2013.

15 Council:

- a Noted the issues considered by the Audit and Risk Committee at its meetings on 25 June, 5 September and 6 November 2013.
- b Approved the suggested amendments to the Committee's Statement of Purpose, in relation to its purpose and responsibilities as set out in paragraphs 1 and 9 of Annex A to the paper.
- c Noted the additional meeting of the Committee to be held on 25 February 2014, which would include finalisation of the 2014 programme of internal audit work.

Report of the Remuneration Committee 2013

- 16** Council considered the report on the work of the Remuneration Committee in 2013, noting its work on the 2013 pay award for the senior management team and Chair of the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service, the pay and reward review, and on-going work on the performance management framework for the senior management team. Council noted that no change to the Committee's Statement of Purpose was recommended at this time.

Council forward work programme 2014

- 17** Council agreed its forward work programme for 2014, noting that it would be further developed following on-going work to review and finalise Directorates' Operational Plans, and the executive Boards' forward work programmes for 2014.

Report of the Performance and Resources Board 2013

- 18** Council noted a report on the work of the Performance and Resources Board in 2013.

Report of the Strategy and Policy Board 2013

- 19** Council noted a report on the work of the Strategy and Policy Board in 2013.

Any other business

- 20** Council noted that the next meeting would be held on 25 February 2014, which would be held in London.

Confirmed:

Peter Rubin, Chair

25 February 2014