

To approve

Minutes of the Meeting on 10 December 2014*

Members present

Peter Rubin, Chair

Shree Datta
Christine Eames
Michael Farthing
Helene Hayman
Deirdre Kelly

Suzi Leather
Jim McKillop
Denise Platt
Enid Rowlands
Hamish Wilson

Others present

Niall Dickson, Chief Executive and Registrar
Susan Goldsmith, Chief Operating Officer
Anthony Omo, Director of Fitness to Practise
Neil Roberts, Director of Resources and Quality Assurance
Terence Stephenson, Chair designate
David Pearl, Chair of the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (item 5)

Christine Payne, Council Secretary
Paul Buckley, Director of Strategy and Communication
Una Lane, Director of Registration and Revalidation
Judith Hulf, interim Director of Education and Standards
Vicky Osgood, Assistant Director of Postgraduate Education

*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** The Chair welcomed Terence Stephenson, Chair designate, who was attending to observe the meeting as part of his induction prior to taking up the role on 1 January 2015.
- 2** It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Ajay Kakkar, who was being sworn in as a Privy Counsellor following his recent appointment to the role.
- 3** The Chair reported that he had re-appointed His Honour David Pearl, under Council's agreed delegation, as Chair of the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service for a further period of three years from 1 February 2015. Council noted its thanks to David Pearl for his service and contribution to date.
- 4** The Chair reported that the Professional Standards Authority had advised the Privy Council that it could have confidence in the process for the appointment of the new Council member. Council noted that the recommendation for appointment was being considered by the Privy Council, and a decision was expected during the week commencing 22 December 2014.
- 5** A declaration of interest was noted from Hamish Wilson as Vice Chair of Healthcare Improvement Scotland in relation to the reports on Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, referenced in paragraphs 23 and 24 of the Chief Executive's Report.

Minutes of the meeting on 25 September 2014

- 6** Council approved the minutes of the meeting on 25 September 2014 as a true record.

Chief Executive's Report

- 7** 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 2 October 2014.
- 8** During the discussion, Council noted that:
 - a** The Smith Commission had set out further powers to the Scottish Parliament which had in effect left health professional regulation under the authority of UK legislation, which was to be welcomed.
 - b** The need for further legislative reform continued to be pressed, but there was no indication as to when this would be taken forward.
 - c** The consultation on the Indicative Sanctions Guidance had closed, with over 2000 responses being received, the biggest known response to any consultation in the GMC's history.

- d** UK Advisory Forum meetings had been held in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in October and November, with positive feedback received from members of the Forum.
- e** Action had been taken in relation to the findings of reports by Healthcare Improvement Scotland and the Royal College of Surgeons which had looked at the quality and safety of care at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, and that a further review would be undertaken to ascertain whether any further steps needed to be taken. It was noted that pressures across the healthcare system across the UK had an impact on the scale of the GMC's work and its responsibilities across all areas of work, including revalidation, registration, fitness to practise, and medical education.

Chief Operating Officer's Report

9 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 2014.
- d** A financial summary to 31 October 2014.
- 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.

10 During the discussion, Council noted:

- a** That this was the first report from Susan Goldsmith, Chief Operating Officer, since taking up the post on 6 October 2014.
- b** The exceptions to the service targets being met as outlined in the Report.
- c** That over 70,000 doctors had been revalidation, and that the GMC was on track to revalidate most licensed doctors by March 2016.
- d** Basic criminal background and right to work checks would be extended to include non-GMC employees for a range of GMC appointments, which would also include Council members.

- e Progress on the review of performance information, which would be reported to Council for consideration in the first quarter of 2015.

Report of the Chair of the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service

- 11 Council considered a report on the activities of the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service and its work and performance since the previous report to Council in February 2014.
- 12 During the discussion, Council noted:
 - a The work of the Case Management Working Group, including a new protocol for expert witnesses which had been implemented in October 2014.
 - b That a pilot telephone helpline scheme, staffed by volunteer postgraduate law students from the BPP Law School and the University of Law in Manchester, was about to be launched together with a factsheet to provide help and information for unrepresented doctors.
 - c That there was some difficulty in securing medical panellists for hearings listed for longer than five days due to pressures in the system, and the current requirement for medical panellists to have a licence to practice.
 - d That consideration would be given to providing members with the top five statistics, including fitness to practise cases.

2015 Business Plan and Budget

- 13 Council considered the proposed 2015 Business Plan, budget, and fee levels.
- 14 Council:
 - a Approved the 2015 Business Plan.
 - b Approved the 2015 revenue expenditure budget of £104.6 million and the capital programme of £7.7 million.
 - c Approved an Annual Retention Fee of £420, and a fee increase of 7.7% on all other fees.
 - d Agreed to delegate authority to the Chair of Council to make the revised GMC Registration Fees Regulations and GMC Certification Fees Regulations, effective from 1 April 2015.

15 During the discussion, Council noted that:

- a** An increase in the Annual Retention Fee, the first since 2010, was necessary to enable the GMC to meet its obligations, responsibilities, and regulatory functions, and that a robust process had been followed to reach a Business Plan and Budget that enabled the GMC to meet its statutory and strategic objectives.
- b** The GMC had seen an increase in demand for its services across all of its functions.
- c** Setting the Annual Retention Fee at £420 included provision for the new statutory levy to fund the work of the Professional Standards Authority, which would be applied from 2015. This worked out at about £3 per registrant.
- d** The changes in fee levels would not take full effect until 2017 due to the distribution of Annual Retention Fee payments through the year and the effect of the standard accounting treatment for deferred income. Council noted that the full impact of a rise in fee levels would be analysed in considering any further changes in the future.
- e** Options for a further reduction in costs, potential savings, and the development of GMC services would be brought back to Council, following a review led by the Chief Operating Officer, for consideration in 2015.

Report of the Audit and Risk Committee

16 Council considered the report of the Audit and Risk Committee's activities since its last report on 21 May 2014.

17 Council agreed an amendment to the Audit and Risk Committee's Statement of Purpose to clarify the responsibilities of the Committee in providing independent assurance to Council on the effectiveness of arrangements.

18 During the discussion, Council noted:

- a** Its thanks to Hamish Wilson, as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, for leading the Committee and its work during a period of significant change.
- b** That the Committee was satisfied that the proposed 2015-17 internal audit programme supported the requirements of adding value to GMC business, and was focused on output and outcomes, as well as compliance with process and procedure.
- c** That Moore Stephens LLP had been appointed as internal auditors from 5 January 2015, following a procurement process overseen by Suzi Leather and Elizabeth Butler, co-opted external member.

- d** That a procurement exercise would be undertaken in 2015 to appoint an external auditor, and that the contract with Crowe Clark Whitehill had been extended to the end of December 2015.

Report of the Remuneration Committee 2014

19 Council considered the report on the work of the Remuneration Committee in 2014.

20 Council:

- a** Agreed that the Senior Medical Adviser and GMC Responsible Officer role should be included in the remit of the Committee's responsibilities.
- b** Approved the related amendment to the Committee's Statement of Purpose to incorporate reference to the role.

21 During the discussion, Council noted:

- a** The Committee's thanks to Jim McKillop, who would be leaving the Committee to join the Audit and Risk Committee; and its welcome to Shree Datta, who would be joining the Committee from 1 January 2015.
- b** A correction to paragraph 13 of the Report which should have stated that the 'Committee reviewed and agreed its work programme for 2015'.
- c** That the Committee would review the arrangements for the appointment of the Chair of the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service in 2015 in time for a new appointment being made.
- d** That the Committee would review the proposed policy statement on pay and remuneration for the roles within its remit for inclusion in the annual report following the new guidance from the Charity Commission.

Regulations to introduce a Time Limit on Provisional Registration

22 Council considered the outcome of the consultation on regulations to implement a time limit on the period for which a doctor may hold provisional registration.

23 Council:

- a** Agreed to make the Provisional Registration (Time Limits) Regulations 2015.
- b** Authorised the Chair of Council, and the Chief Executive, to apply the Corporate Seal to the Regulations.

Council forward work programme 2015

- 24** Council noted its proposed forward work programme for 2015. This would be brought to Council for approval at its meeting on 24 February 2015, to enable a further review in early 2015 following the appointment of the new Chair of Council.

Report of the Governance Review

- 25** Council noted the findings of the review of the new governance arrangements.

Review of Committee membership

- 26** Council noted the outcome of the mid-term review of Committee chair and membership.
- 27** Council:
- a** Approved the proposed chair and membership of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Remuneration Committee.
 - b** Approved the continuation of the current Chair of the Board of Pension Trustees for a further two years, and approved the continuation of Hamish Wilson as a member of the Board of Pension Trustees for a further three years.
 - c** Agreed that membership of the Investment Sub-Committee should be increased to three Council members, and approved the proposed chair and membership of the Investment Sub-Committee.

Report of the Performance and Resources Board 2014

- 28** Council noted a report on the work of the Performance and Resources Board in 2014.

Report of the Strategy and Policy Board 2014

- 29** Council noted a report on the work of the Strategy and Policy Board in 2014.

Education and Training Standards Consultation

- 30** Council noted a report on proposals for a consultation on the GMC's standards for medical education and training.
- 31** Council noted:
- a** That the Strategy and Policy Board had agreed to launch a consultation on the standards for medical education and training from 28 January 2015, for a period of eight weeks.

- b** That following consultation, the standards for medical education and training would be submitted to Council for approval in June 2015.
- c** The draft proposals for the standards for medical education and training.
- d** A summary of the communication strategy and pre-consultation engagement.
- e** That consultation documentation was being prepared for approval by the interim Director of Education and Standards in December 2014.

Report of the Credentialing Working Group

- 32** Council noted the Report of the Credentialing Working Group, and noted the intention to consult on the proposed regulatory framework for credentialing in the second quarter of 2015.

Publication of evidence on undergraduate education

- 33** Council noted a report on the evidence on undergraduate education that was published to accompany the *State of medical education and practice in the UK 2014* report. This included reports on the preparedness of medical graduates and on the audit of assessment in undergraduate education, as well as statistical data on the progress of doctors in training at each medical school.

Any other business

- 34** Council noted its thanks to Hamish Wilson for his significant contribution to the work of the GMC over the past six years, and its thanks for agreeing to continue to serve as a member of the Board of Pension Trustees.
- 35** Council noted its thanks to Peter Rubin, for his leadership and commitment to advancing medical regulation and to the work of the GMC while serving as the Chair of Council, and to the significant range of his achievements over this time.
- 36** Council noted that the next meeting would be on 24 February 2015, in London.

Confirmed:

Terence Stephenson, Chair

24 February 2015