

Agenda item:	4
Report title:	Policy Leadership Group – Terms of Reference
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Action:	To consider

Executive summary

The Moore Stephens policy audit in September 2017 identified a lack of a central function for the coordination of policy and policy development at the GMC. It concluded that an oversight group should be established to help address the gap.

The Policy Leadership Group (PLG) has been created in response to this recommendation. This paper asks the Executive Board to agree the terms of reference for the PLG and consider how it should relate to the GMC's formal governance structure, in particular the Executive Board.

Recommendations

The Executive Board is asked to:

- a** Approve the Terms of Reference for the Policy Leadership Group.
- b** Consider the relationship between the PLG and the Executive Board.

Background

- 1 One of the key recommendations made in the recent Moore Stephens policy audit is that an organisation-wide framework for the ownership, oversight and management of policy and policy development should be established. The review states that:

‘[...]. There is currently no articulation of what ‘policy’ means to the GMC at a strategic level and no overarching principles from which a more structured approach to policy development can be translated in to guidance and processes. Consequently whilst the need to plan and develop policy, including in response to live media issues, needs flexibility and agility, currently individual policies are ‘owned’ and managed by the originating directorate and there is no central forum for resource prioritisation, scrutiny, challenge and oversight.’
- 2 The report went on to recommend that we, ‘implement a policy oversight group that provides scrutiny, challenge and co-ordination of policy development and ensuring [sic] alignment with the GMC values, vision and strategic objectives’ [Recommendation 5]. The report was considered by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) on 14 September 2017 and we are due to report back on progress against the recommendations in March 2018.
- 3 The Policy Leadership Group (PLG) has been established to address the recommendation for an oversight group. The overarching objective of the PLG is to provide a collective vision for GMC policy in the context of the corporate strategy, and to help coordinate and guide policy activity in pursuit of this aim. It will also take the lead in developing the policy profession capability across the organisation.
- 4 The PLG comprises the Assistant Directors with responsibility for policy, as well as representatives from the Office of the Chair and Chief Executive, Strategic Communications and the Insight and Intelligence Unit.

Issues

PLG Terms of reference

- 5 The PLG has prepared terms of reference (Annex A) and is beginning to scope its work programme for the coming year, built around the recommendations of the Moore Stephens audit report. However, PLG has no formal position within the GMC’s governance structure. The Executive Board is therefore invited to endorse the draft terms of reference. This will give PLG the authority to take forward its intended tasks of co-ordinating and prioritising policy development and policy resource allocation across the business.

PLG relationship with the Executive Board

- 6** From 2018, the PLG will be chaired by the Director of Strategy and Policy. The Director of Strategy and Policy is also a member of the Executive Board. This will provide a direct line of sight for the Board into the work of PLG. The establishment of PLG raises questions about the escalation of policy work to the Board. It will be important not to create new layers of approval and bureaucracy which delay decision making. The proposal, therefore, is that policy issues and projects which might currently be referred to the Board would in future be disposed of by the PLG. The type of issues that the PLG might need to consider and decide upon are likely to include:
 - a** Whether policy projects are prioritised correctly and if there is any scope to co-ordinate projects more effectively (eg. opportunities to combine different communications that are sent to stakeholders).
 - b** Allocation of resources across policy projects and decisions on the commencement, timing, deferral and stopping of projects.
 - c** Whether there are opportunities for different directorates to work in a more agile fashion.
 - d** Whether there are any new areas of policy development that need to be resourced and undertaken.
- 7** Issues would only be escalated to the Board, by exception, if PLG concluded that a decision or input from all members of the Board was required. This general approach would be consistent with the organisation's intention to see more decisions delegated to the lowest appropriate level within the business.
- 8** In addition to the presence of the Director of Strategy and Policy on PLG, if the Board required extra assurance about the PLG's activities we could provide a 'for information' update on all the PLG's work over a set period (say every 12 months).

4 – Policy Leadership Group – Terms of Reference

4 – Annex A

Policy Leadership Group Terms of Reference

Overarching purpose of the Policy Leadership Forum:

- To provide a collective vision for GMC policy in the context of the Corporate Strategy, and to help coordinate and guide policy activity in pursuit of this aim.

Main functions:

- Provide oversight and co-ordination of policy priorities and projects from across the organisation. Identify emerging issues of relevance to the GMC and consider policy responses;
- In conjunction with the Senior Management Team, agree the corporate policy agenda priorities;
- Ensure alignment of policy initiatives with the Corporate Strategy. Develop headings against which policy projects report;
- Review resource allocation for policy activities;
- Maintain responsibility for the development of the policy profession capability;
- Commission work from the Policy Network to focus on particular issues. In turn, offer problem solving capability for specific issues that emerge from the Network;
- Provide thought leadership to inform Council/Senior Management Team away days. Give initial consideration to policy ideas emerging from SMT/Council;
- Synchronise policy-related work during the business planning process;
- Support Strategic Comms in communicating the overarching corporate narrative, and in order to improve stakeholders understand how the GMC's wide range of policy and operational activities fit together and interact with the wider health service agenda.
- Assist data teams with their prioritisation of data requests needed to support policy
- Agree key policy risks, ownership, and steps to mitigate such risks.

PLG Membership

- 1 The membership of the Forum will be drawn from Policy Assistant Directors, Data Assistant Directors, and Public Affairs Assistant Directors. The secretariat will be provided by the Regulation Policy Team.
 - Paul Buckley – Director of Strategy and Communications
 - Mary Agnew – AD, Standards and Guidance
 - Shane Carmichael – AD, Strategy and Communication
 - Stephanie McNamara – AD, Strategy and Communication
 - Judith Christie – AD, Policy and Regulatory Development
 - David Darton – AD, Data, Insight and Research
 - Martin Hart – AD, Education
 - Richard Marchant – AD, Regulation Policy
 - Anna Rowlands – AD, Policy, Business Transformation and Safeguarding
 - Steve Jones – AD, Office of the Chair and Chief Executive
 - Dan Donaghy – AD, Office of the Chief Operating Officer
 - Paul Spindler – Head of Relationships and Campaigns
 - Nico Kirkpatrick – AD, Policy, Information and Change
 - David Winks – Regulation Policy Manager (Secretariat)