

Communications Committee minutes July 5th 2004 - unapproved

Present

Jo Manning - Chairman
Claire McGartland
Morag MacKeller
Ros Levenson
John Camp

In attendance

Chris Middleton – Director of Communications
Victoria Nash
Rachel Tripp

ITEM 1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Jackie Stark

ITEM 2 **MINUTES**

The notes of the meeting held on February 26th 2004 were confirmed as correct

ITEM 3 **MATTERS ARISING**

The committee were alerted to the fact that there could be a move for the Irish language to be officially recognised in the same way that Welsh has.

ITEM 4 **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

Chris outlined the communications activities that had taken place since the last meeting of the Committee. The committee noted that customer services seemed to be slightly on the up – with calls being answered more professionally. The Committee asked if the contact scheme Communications initiated with the CSP, surrounding renewals, could be rolled out across all professions in the future.

There were several suggestions for inclusion in the Partners conference to be held in Manchester later in the year. These included individual presentations from the professions, introducing themselves to the others, a paper on disability, equality and diversity, plus the suggestion that HPC council members should present 'The role of a Council member'. All suggestions would be taken on board.

The Committee asked if different phrases could be used instead of 'founded' and 'well founded' for press releases regarding fitness to practise hearings.

Regarding the planned 'Public involvement day', the Committee stressed the need for it to be independent and further suggested that another day involving PAL's and CAB's be planned for the future.

These agencies could help take the HPC message forward. Further to this Communications should look at organising a one day conference for advice giving agencies in the future. The Committee stated their belief that a lot of internal development and support was required to support the organisation in communicating and dealing with 'How to make a complaint' inquiries. The communications team were asked to work on ensuring the organisation had an appropriate process and appropriate people to deal with these sorts of communications.

The Committee asked what the feedback mechanism was with regards to the FTP Annual report. In particular if an area e.g. record keeping is highlighted as an area of concern, will HPC issue guidance on areas such as this?

At conferences such as 'HR in the NHS' the Committee asked that messages be targeted to the audience more specifically. One such example to be used at this conference is the 'fit for purpose versus fit to practise' debate, and an explanation of HPC's role versus that of the employer.

ITEM 5 HEALTH AND DISABILITY POLICY

Rachel Tripp outlined the draft Health and Disability policy which will be debated by a specially formed PLG. Highlights in the document were that HPC should publish its measurements on-line showing how we deal with anyone who wants information from HPC.

The policy also outlines training from staff at HPC. The training will cover;

- . Language
- . Signs and buildings
- . Best practise lip reading
- . Room layout

There was general support in principle for the policy, but specific questions on mental health were raised. These would be dealt with specifically by the training organisation chosen.

Additional points were raised by the Committee linking the health and disability policy to the overall communications strategy. These were;

- The team are to look for venues with audio loops or look to buy our own one
- Translators for the deaf should be used at all venues
- Facilitators with a disability should be considered for events
- Disability photos should be sourced in the patient and professional role for use in publications
- 48 hours notice requesting special assistance should be changed to 'two working days'
- Can we seek the 'double tick' symbol for the HPC website

It was also mentioned that a health and disability workshop should be held to discuss some of the issues an organisation such as HPC faces when implementing such a policy. Again there was general support in principle for this, especially if both registrants and members of the public were involved.

ITEM 6 **WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME**

It was asked if it was possible to get a grant for the implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme? It was agreed that the second draft of the scheme, incorporating the comments received from the Welsh Language Board, would be presented for sign-off at a future Communications Committee meeting, before going to Council.

ITEM 7 **ADVERTISING**

A review of the advertising strategy was presented to the Committee. Various comments were made about the suitability of one publication over another. The target for the campaign was to reach as wide a target audience as possible for the money spent.

It was suggested by the Committee that the advertising kit, be sent to PALS, sports injuries clinics and the Care Commission in Scotland. It was agreed all avenues would be explored, but we would only be able to do what the organisation could afford.

ITEM 8 **NEXT MEETING**

The date and time of the next meeting was agreed as 28th October, 2004 in the Bath, Hilton (this was to link in with the CPD consultation event planned for that day)