

Communications Committee minutes May 4th 2005 – unapproved

Present

Morag MacKeller
Shaheen Chaudhry
Ros Levenson

In attendance

Chris Middleton – Director of Communications
Victoria Nash – Communications Officer

ITEM 1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Jo Manning, Jackie Stark, John Camp and Clare McGartland.

ITEM 2 **MINUTES**

The minutes from the previous meeting held on February 28th 2005 were confirmed as correct.

ITEM 3 **MATTERS ARISING**

It was confirmed that the new website was launched on April 28th. It had been noted by the committee in the past Minutes from committee meetings had not always been updated on the website regularly. The content management system of the new website would help speed this up as each secretary can individually update their own webpages from now on.

NOTE; The committee wanted Council to note the responsibility of secretary's for updating their committee sections with minutes.

ITEM 4 **COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

The committee were presented with the communications strategy for the following year.

Morag felt that although the CPD consultation event had stretched the organisation resource wise it had been an excellent communications exercise. The committee agreed.

Shaheen asked if Council members had been consulted on service standards? While it was accepted generally that this was an operational standard it was felt there may be some relevant skills among council members that could benefit the standards. They will be brought to the next communications committee meeting as an item to note.

Ros felt that the strategy had not raised the profile of HPC among the public and that the committee should debate further how HPC interacted with patient and public groups. It was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the next meeting as the committee saw this as a fundamental part of what HPC was about. Other council members would be asked to contribute to this meeting.

The committee asked if media training was to be part of the council induction for new council members. Chris explained he did not have the budget this year but would let Niamh know the matter was raised. On top of this it was suggested that council members inductions include expectations that will be placed on them in terms of use at events and time wise. It was also suggested that specific guidance, in the form of a Q&A, be given to participants before listening events and consultations in the future. It was also suggested that experienced council members could be used as a mentors to new Council members post July 9th. Chris said he would speak to Niamh about the inductions and take on board the specific points about briefing notes being produced before events.

On media relations Morag suggested that interviews conducted with council members could be sent to professional journals several times a year. Victoria agreed this could be done although there was no guarantee a journal would take them. It was agreed to trial this and use the interviews on the website at the very least.

Language translations were discussed and Ros suggested using an agency to help talk people through our publications in their own language. A telephone number could be provided on the back of every document rather than the expensive route of getting documents translated in many different languages. Chris would look into this.

Morag asked to ensure that the surgery mailing be sent to the Practice Managers rather than simply GP's so that they could determine if our posters were to be displayed. Victoria said she would ensure this was the case. Shaheen asked to confirm that the advertising of our services was unique to HPC as a regulator. Chris believed this was the case, certainly within health regulation in the UK.

Ros commented that she found the layout of the strategy unsatisfactory and although it was user friendly, it didn't allow for in-depth debate or allow the committee to manage the on-going work. Ros felt it should be set out with an objective, target date, lead officer and potential problems that could be overcome. The committee agreed that Chris was to present the timetable at the back of the presentation in more detail.

ITEM 5 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The date and time of the next Communications Committee meeting was confirmed as 24th May 2005, 1100-1500. Venue to be confirmed.

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