

Chief Executive's Report for 1st September to 30th November 2005 Contents

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Meetings 2005

1. Completed Meetings 1st September to 30th November 2005

Association of Educational Psychologists	1 st Sept
Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists	1 st Sept
Non-Medical Professional Regulation Advisory Group	7 th Sept
Skills for Health	8 th Sept
Department of Health (Leeds)	16 th Sept
Association of Genetic Nurses & Counsellors Registration Bd	20 th Sept
Crossing Borders conference	21 st Sept
Council for Professionals as Resuscitation Officers	27 th Sept
British Association of Art Therapists	28 th Sept
HSJ Advanced Practitioner Conference	29 th Sept
Registrars of Health Regulatory Bodies	30 th Sept
Architects Registration Board	3 rd Oct
Healthcare Professionals Crossing Borders Consensus Conference	13 th /14 th Oct
EIPA (Mutual Recognition of Diplomas event)	25 th Oct
Royal College of Surgeons	27 th Oct
Andrew Foster, Department of Health	27 th Oct
Skills for Health	1 st Nov
Non-Medical Professional Regulation Advisory Group	2 nd Nov
Voluntary Registration Council	2 nd Nov
Ministry of Health, Tanzania	4 th Nov
Review of Non-Medical Regulation Conference	8 th Nov
Modernising Healthcare Science Programme Board	9 th Nov
Scottish Executive	11 th Nov
Royal College of Anaesthetists	17 th Nov
Council member visit (Helen Davis)	23 rd Nov
Association of Clinical Scientists Assessors meeting	29 th Nov

2. Scheduled Meetings

NHS CFSMS	1 st Dec
Non-Medical Professional Regulation Advisory Group	7 th Dec
Non-Medical Professional Regulation Advisory Group	8 th Dec
Recognition of Qualifications Workshop, Cyprus	9 th /10 th Dec
Department of Health (Leeds)	12 th Dec
SMAE	13 th Dec
QAA Regional Seminar	14 th Dec
Various professional bodies	Dec/Jan

1. Listening Events

Listening events were held in Inverness and Stirling on the 8th and 10th November respectively. The Inverness event was the first ever video conferencing event held by the HPC. It was broadcast live to the Highlands and Islands using ISDN lines. This is the first time a UK health regulator has used this mechanism. Future listening events will be held in Chelmsford and Kettering in January.

2. Publicity

The car stickers and posters are proving to be a success. We have received over 130 requests for car stickers by email alone. This type of marketing is effective and very low in cost. There has been no further advertising to the public since the buses, advertising will resume in March/April 2006. Adverts have been placed in professional journals when a profession is approaching their renewal period. The adverts ask registrants to make sure their details are up to date.

3. Media relations

See attached log for launch of www.HPCcheck.org
Further coverage is expected in regional press throughout the UK

4. Website

An HPC microsite under the URL www.HPCcheck.org has been launched as part of a media campaign encouraging the public to check their health professional is registered. This will be used in future publicity material to try to push members of the public toward our on-line register.

5. Customer Service

Following a high volume of complaints from health professionals who were required to complete a readmission form, the number of complaint letters and emails has dropped back to around 5 per day.

6. Newsletter

The first newsletter was sent out by email on 4th November. The newsletter was also published on the website. Since then, over 550 people have signed up to receive the newsletter. The second edition will go out on the 2nd December and on the first Friday of the month after that. The feedback so far has been very positive.

1. Corporate Services

Corporate Services covers Information Technology, ISO, Offices Services, and Information Services.

2. Information & IT Employees

Following the resignation of the incumbent Back Office Administrator and Developer, a new employee has been hired due to start December 20th (Richard Welsby).

Projects

3R's (Renewals, Resourcing and Re-engineering)

The ICR solution is working with a team of 4 users. The workflow around using the systems end to end has been modified to improve through put. We are looking at changing the way data is uploaded to LISA from the scanning validation programme, and increasing the speed of the production server to achieve maximum benefit from this technology.

It should be noted that the ICR solution incorporates capture of renewal notice images and links them automatically to LISA, previously a separate manual process. A running history of address confirmation is also recorded automatically.

BACS-IP & AUDDIS

The direct debit scheme used in the UK is undergoing changes to use internet technology. The new file delivery mechanism is already in place. Initial testing of the developed software linking LISA and the direct debit process has taken place. Minor work is required before Registration Officer training can commence.

APU (Fitness to Practise tracking system) Additional functionality was defined in mid March, and is being completed. Reports from the system have been defined and will be developed to assist in budgeting and workload planning.

An Office Services helpdesk. This is on hold as testing of the ICR Renewal systems and Fitness to Practice systems are carried out. Work on a system for Education & Policy *SELMA* will commence following correction of any post roll out issues with the FTP system. Again shared functionality will cut development and support time long term.

We expect refinements to the processes to be finalised before commencing work following analysis by the Operations Director.

Authentication of Users. (Abraham). Project. The development model has now been forwarded to Digital Steps for design work. More detailed operational practice is being worked through with DSL, as the initial Finance and ICR enhancements for renewals near completion.

Authentication cards are in place. The back end functionality will be rolled out later, to help secure registrant details.

All high value hardware, PC's and laptops are asset tagged upon purchase, in line with audit suggestions.

3. Document Control – FOI

Tom Berrie has returned to work and is now being trained on Freedom of Information matters. Tom will continue building an electronic archive of critical historic information.

4. Business Continuity & Security

A paper test of the Disaster Recovery plan will occur when the new renewal systems have bedded down later this year, along with a live test early in the new year.

A power outage in the Kennington area on 22nd November following an ongoing gas leak highlights our vulnerability to loss of electricity supply. A series of cables were strung together to provide a temporary supply to the server room, from the Stannary Street building, enabling the on line register to be presented even though the Park House building was without power.

A hard wired solution to this will be investigated. However we are unlikely to be able to afford a generator of sufficient capacity or be allowed to run it in the immediate area. Penetration testing of our security boundary took place with NCC (our Escrow / LISA partner) in Mid October. Initially no vulnerabilities were found. Under guidance from HPC one obscure issue was found that was fixed within minutes. Logs indicate this was not compromised at any time. No major issues were found. A few minor changes are required to be “secure as a bank”.

5. Applied Psychologists New Profession

No information on start date yet.

6. ISO 9001:200 Update

Result of the most recent assessment successfully passed on 12th October 2005.

Next assessment April 2006, for Quality Management, Education – new professions, HR – Employees.

7. IT Training throughout HPC

IT training has been completed for 2005. We will be evaluating feedback and looking at cost effective ongoing training methods for 2006.

8. Office Services

It has been decided that partial use of the new premises (22-26) will be an effective use of funds and will create almost immediate desk space.

We are aiming at completing this work in early December allowing occupation as soon as possible.

A drinks and snacks machine has been installed in the main kitchen for employee use. This is operated by an external organization and is provided as service to improve our working environment.

1. Approvals Visits			
Name of Education Provider	Title of Programme(s)	Date of Visit	
Anglia Polytechnic University	Supplementary Prescribing	27-Jul-05	
Bournemouth University	Dip Higher Education ODP	27-Jun-05	
Glasgow Caledonian University	MSc Dietetics	03-Aug-05	
Glasgow Caledonian University	Bsc (Hons) Human Nutrition & Dietetics	03-Aug-05	
Glasgow Caledonian University	PgDip Dietetics (Pre-reg)	03-Aug-05	
Glasgow Caledonian University	Local Analgesia with Nail Surgery for Podiatrists - LAPOMS	21-Oct-05	
Guildhall School of Music & Drama	MA Music Therapy	14-Sep-05	
Oxford Brookes University	Dip Higher Education Paramedic Emergency Care	20-Jul-05	
Sheffield Hallam University	MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-reg)	12-Jul-05	
Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists	Local Anaesthesia - LAPOMS	15-Nov-05	

The Robert Gordon University	BSc (Hons) Biomedical Sciences	25-Oct-05
University of College Chester	Supplementary Prescribing	28-Sep-05
University of Abertay Dundee	BSc (Hons) Biomedical Sciences	19-Sep-05
University of Central Lancashire	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Practice	28-Jul-05
University of East Anglia	Dip Higher Education Paramedic Science	30-Jun-05
University of Essex	Supplementary Prescribing	07-Oct-05
University of Hertfordshire	Supplementary Prescribing	25-Oct-05
University of Huddersfield	BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	07-Jul-05
University of Lincoln	Supplementary Prescribing	07-Oct-05
University of Nottingham	Supplementary Prescribing	07-Oct-05
University of Portsmouth	FdSc Paramedic Science	28-Jun-05
University of the West of England	MSc Music Therapy	23-Nov-05

Approvals Visits contd

Education providers have responded positively to the email sent in August by the Education Manager and to date, we have a total of 44 approval visits scheduled for the period between November 2005 and June 2006. We are currently finalising the appointment of HPC Visitor Partners to each Visit.

We are still receiving a steady flow of request for visits and the calendar is filling very quickly. Every attempt is being made to accommodate the education providers' own timetables, however it should be noted that the months of March, April, May and June are almost at capacity with approximately three visits a week already.

2. Refined Approvals Process and Flowchart

As a result of the experience we have gained over the last 12 months and feedback from education providers and Visitors, we have become aware of the need to revise and build on the current Approvals Process. More detail will be included in the flowchart to ensure that HPC's role and remit is clearly understood by Visitor's and education providers alike and that the process is as transparent as possible.

3. Annual Monitoring

The Education Department submitted the final draft of the Annual Monitoring Self Declaration form, Annual Monitoring Audit form and Annual Monitoring guidance note for education providers. These documents will form the basis of the HPC Annual Monitoring process and be underpinned by the Standards of Education and Training Guidance document which is currently being developed by the Policy Department. It is intended that the documentation for Minor/Major Change and the Approvals processes will be in a similar format.

4. Minor and Major Changes

The Education Department submitted the final draft of the Minor/Major Change guidance notes and Minor/Major Change application form to November Approvals Committee for decision. It is intended that the information contained will be in two parts. The first part being a booklet providing information about the process, and the second being a separate

application form, that can be downloaded from the HPC website or completed in hard copy, as required. It is expected that the Annual Monitoring and Approvals process information (outlined above) will be in a similar format, and that these documents, along with the SETs guidance will form part of a comprehensive information package for Education Providers.

5. Employees

A new team administrator, who commenced on 16th November 2005, is now in post. The wider induction programme and role-specific training for arranging visits to education providers are proceeding well. Further, a new Education Manager is expected to commence on 23rd January 2006. In the interim, Karen Scott will be the Acting Education Manager. With regard to annual monitoring, two AMR administrators will be recruited in early January and commence in time for the first round of annual monitoring.

1. Introduction

After six months of the financial year, HPC budgeted an operating deficit of £396,322. The actual result for the year to date period was a surplus of £466,603 a favourable variance of £862,925.

After 6 months, actual income including investment income totalled £5,746,826 with costs at £5,078,465, thus giving the overall surplus of £668,361.

2. Income

Year to date Registration income is £258,642 above budget. Three professions have a favourable variance of over 15%. Grandparenting income for Chiroprodists, Clinical Scientists and Paramedics is significantly higher than budgeted and makes up the majority of the £116k, £28k and £52k favourable variances. This has a knock-on effect of increasing registrant assessor costs. Paramedics have also had a relatively large amount of readmission income in September due to the lapsing process for this profession in September.

It is a little early to say whether all of the variances are permanent and some analysis will be needed to be carried out to distinguish between permanent and timing differences for registration income.

Year to date Investment income is £2k above budget, but over the course of the year may fall below budget depending on the timing of loan repayment and capital expenditure commitments. Unrealised gains on investments (UK and International shares and fixed interest product portfolio) accounted for a £134k favourable variance against budget¹. In summary, some variances will remain as consistent under or over-spends against budget (permanent differences), while other variances currently appearing, will disappear by financial year end, either through tactical re-allocation during the year (line re-allocations, bottom line-neutral for the budget-holder) or simply because the timing of the spend is difficult to determine precisely (timing differences). Making these distinctions is difficult to do early in the year.

3. Departments

Year to date (YTD) departmental expenditure at £5,078,465 is £585,775 lower than budget.

All departments have YTD savings except Chief Executive, Registration and Finance depts. Registration printing and stationary and improving the internal financial controls were under-budgeted. Some of the registration printing and stationary overspends are due to timing and will be investigated.

Favourable variances in other depts include delaying the Mezzanine refit, deferring some LISA Registration project costs, delays in some staff permanent appointments (Education, F2P, Comms depts), premature budgeting of potential early retirement costs (budget-phasing error) and premature budgeting of some Comms costs.

4. Overheads

The “Overhead Total” schedule provides a breakdown of HPC-wide costs by type of cost, rather than by department. Overall YTD Payroll costs are £115k below budget. This reflects the delays in some permanent appointments compared to budget and delays in potential early retirement costs occurring. Delays in permanent staff hires typically impact salary, national insurance and staff recruitment costs.

Staff Travelling and Subsistence costs are £34k under-spend against budget on a YTD basis. The delays in hiring additional Education staff are reflected in reduced travel costs.

Council and Committee costs are £72k under-spend against budget. Likely reasons are a lower than expected meeting attendance rate and delays in some expense claims made, compared to budget. Also the HPC’s AGM was cancelled in July and deferred until later in the year.

Property Services costs are £47k below budget. Most of this is explained by the recent decision to delay the commencement of the planned Mezzanine refit beyond March 2006. Instead, the £47k will be spent in the next few months on 22-26 Stannary St basic refit to ease current office space pressures. The 22-26 Stannary St refit had been planned to commence from April 2006, so has in effect, been brought forward.

Office Service costs are £16k below budget, mainly in the cost areas of room hire and office equipment under £1K. These areas are difficult to predict on a monthly basis and hence the favourable variances could just be timing variances.

Computer Services costs are £116k below budget. This is largely in deferment of LISA Registration system enhancements (project dependencies) and a change in the pattern of how Digital Steps bills HPC (was upfront, now progress billing). The over-spend in Internet Maintenance is partly offset by Disaster Contingency (DC) plan under-spends.

The Disaster Contingency actual costs are less than budgeted. Communications costs are £189k under-spent against budget. £15k of this favourable variance is delayed spending on 2005 Annual Report production & distribution, reflecting delays (new auditors) in producing and publishing the final annual financial accounts compared to budget-phasing. Advertising is £58k under-spent against budget, this is a timing difference.

The £127k under-spend against budget for Partners is mainly due to lower actual recruitment and training costs for partners and less approval visits to date than budgeted.

The £132k over-spend against budget includes £151k Kingsley Napley¹ legal expenses under-budgeted (annual budget also likely to be under-budgeted by an even larger amount). This is offset by a £81k timing difference for legal advice from Bircham Dyson Bell. Other overspends are £114k Other Professional Fees (Council Election costs under-budgeted and Baker Tilly Audit work) and £23k Pension Administration costs (delays in obtaining a budgeted refund on the legacy closed pension fund to offset the pension management cost). Professional Liaison Groups are currently £37k under spent. This is a timing difference and costs will be incurred in the second half of the year.

5. Balance Sheet

Net Assets since 1 April are up £543k; comprising a £906k increase in fixed asset cost (mostly acquisition of the 22-26 Stannary St building and some disposals of computer equipment), increase in Working Capital of £58k, increase in deferred income of £51k and taking out a short term loan, £464k of the original £500k loan remaining unpaid. The increase in Working Capital of £58k comprised a reduction in cash balances of £227k, decrease in creditors of £296k and a decrease in debtors and prepayments of £11k. The Net Assets balance of £1,448k is

represented by the Capital Grant Receivable (being progressively released to the Income and Expenditure Account) of £230k, Accumulated Funds of £1218k (£550k at the beginning of the financial year plus the 668k net surplus for the year to date).

Liquidity Ratio (a suitable ratio in most companies is about 1.5 plus) Current Ratio (current assets divided by current liabilities) = 3.06, Annual Budget Current Ratio = 4.43

Debt to Current Assets Ratio (ability to repay residual loans with current assets – should be less than 1) Ratio = 0.17, Annual Budget Ratio = 0.

Although YTD expenditure is currently tracking 10% below budget, further analysis has yet to be carried out to separately distinguish timing differences from permanent differences making up the underspend. This also applies to registration income. The early signs are that some of the income and expenditure favourable variances are permanent and will contribute to HPC meeting the operational budget for the year.

6. Cash Flow

The Cash Flow Statement³ indicates the cash movement from 1st April to the current month, broken down into three types, Operating Activity movements, Finance Activity movements and Capital Activity movements (assets purchases and sales). The net cash movement was a reduction in cash of £227k.

The net cash outflow from Operating Activities from 1st April 05 to September 30th was an increase of £453k, mostly due to the surplus over expenditure (taking off depreciation), offset by a reduction in creditors. Other cash movements totalling £680k were the cash inflow when the £500k loan was acquired, the cash outflow of £1,095k (22-26 Stannary St purchase and minor IT purchases) and net purchases of investments by the Fund Managers (from cash holdings).

7. Conclusion

Overall, HPC's operating position is solid. Base funds are supplemented by a £464k residual bank loan, with interest currently being charged at 6.5% per annum. This loan was made to cover the purchase of an adjoining property (22-26 Stannary St) in expectation of further work expansion. Subject to meeting the 05/06 HPC Operating budget by financial Year End, we expect to be able to repay the residual loan, in full by financial Year End.

1. Striking off order

Thomas Wildman, paramedic

2. Entry removed

Peter Hockley, operating department practitioner

Anabella Arscott, chiropodist

Julian Soons, chiropodist

3. Suspension order

Judith Spooner, dietitian

Minette Magno, physiotherapist

Aliyar Asarath, physiotherapist

4. Conditions of practice order

Jane Hewitt, physiotherapist

5. Caution

Gillian McFarlane, dietitian

6. Adjourned

Liyana Banda, physiotherapist

Rosemary Fisher, speech & language therapist

Margo Sharpe, speech & language therapist

7. Referred to the Health Committee

Rachel Winnard, physiotherapist

8. Review hearings

Richard Adams, physiotherapist, conditions of practice revoked, suspension order imposed

Esther Randall, physiotherapist, suspension continued

Kayode Balogun, radiographer, suspension revoked, caution order imposed

Ian Blakely, paramedic, suspension continued

Naveed Khan, physiotherapist, suspension continued

9. ODP transfer cases

2 cases were considered and in both instances the individuals were not admitted to the register

10. Investigating Committee

84 allegations were received between August and October 2005. Panels of the Committee considered 57 cases between August and October 2005.

There was a case to answer in 31 case. At the end of October there were 114 cases within the remit of the Committee. This includes two cases of incorrect entry. Panels of the Committee considered 3 cases of incorrect entry.

11. Conduct & Competence Committee

At the end of October there were 106 cases within the remit of the Committee. This number includes 35 cases where a suspension or conditions of practice order has been imposed and the cases will require a review hearing

12. Health Committee

At the end of October there were 16 cases within the Committee's remit. This includes 8 cases where a suspension of conditions of practice order has been imposed and a review hearing will be required.

13. Interim orders

1 interim order has been imposed

3 interim orders have been reviewed

14. Health and character

112 declarations were received between August and October 2005-11-22

15. Protection of title

132 complaints about the use of title were received between August and October 2005

16. Other information

Meetings have taken place with

Health Care Commission

Council for Health Regulation Excellence

AVMA and POPAN

GB training

Employee Assistance Programme

Emma Bowman joined the team on 3rd October 2005. She is the new FTP team administrator.

1. Employee Recruitment

A permanent Education Manager has been appointed following successful interviews on 21st October 2005. Abigail Creighton is due to commence with HPC on 23rd January 2005. A Team Administrator for the Education Department has also been sourced, with Osama Ammar due to commence on 14th November 2005.

Further in the Education Department, due to the difficulty of finding Education Officers with university backgrounds despite repeated nation wide advertising, Nicole Borg (an Education Officer from Australia who has been employed on a contract with HPC) has been sponsored. This enables her to continue her work in England for the HPC and benefits the organisation immensely due to her university background and experience she brings to the role.

Following the promotion of Catherine Dawson, Events Manager, Communications Department to the position of Communications Officer within the same Department, a new Events Manager was appointed. Phillippa Richardson commenced in this role in September 2005.

The position of Policy Manager (Education) within the Policy and Standards Department will be advertised on 29th November 2005. An interview panel has been organised and it is the hope that interviews will be held in late December.

Following the resignation of the IT Department's Back Office Systems Administrator and Developer, interviews were held on 18th November 2005 to replace this role. A very experienced candidate was found, and Rick Welsby will start with HPC on 20th December 2005.

A six month secondment opportunity was advertised in October for a Policy Officer, Policy and Standards Department. Michael Guthrie (currently a Case Manager in the Fitness to Practise Department) was successful in being appointed to the secondment position. He transfers to the secondment position on 14th November 2005. An advertisement has been placed to backfill his substantive Case Manager position

Following the promotion of Emma Pearce (former Team Administrator, Fitness to Practise Department) to the position of Case Officer within the same team, a new permanent Team Administrator has commenced within this Department. Emma Bowman joined HPC on 3rd October 2005.

2. Other Employee Matters – Training

Performance management training was held for HPC Management on 31st October 2005 for a full day. The training was very successful with all attendees reporting back very favourably.

Training in how to deal with stressed and upset witnesses and Registrants has been organised for the Fitness to Practise Department employees for 31st January 2006. This will be conducted by HPC's Employee Assistance Program (PPC).

Human Resources Management training has been planned for 24th February 2005. All of the management team will attend. This will be conducted by the Work Foundation and includes training on targeted interviewing skills, competency based recruitment, and managing employee performance issues and disciplinary situations in a lawful manner.

1. Telephone Calls

As expected, the volume of telephones calls has increased slightly following the end of the transitional period (Grandparenting). In September we received 3,117 calls, up 12.2% from 2,778 in August, yet the answer rate stayed at 91%. In October calls received dropped to 2,459 with the answer rate at 91%.

2. International Registration Application

The volume of applications has been steady at approximately 400 applications per month. This is expected to continue until the New Year when we expect an increase of 20% over January, February and March. The peak in Grandparenting applications in June and July is still having an effect on the processing times of International applications however, this is being addressed by focussing resources on International applications.

3. Grandparenting Registration Application

Following the end of the transitional period for the first 12 professions, approximately 1-2 Grandparenting applications are being received a month from ODP's. We anticipate that all outstanding Grandparenting applications will have their assessment by February/ March 2006.

4. Application Status Update (International & Grandparenting)

On the 8th July, the amount of applications awaiting assessment reached a peak of 2,662 however, this has been reduced to 1,807. We must also take into account the receipt of 1,633 International applications since this date.

1. Recruitment.

Interviews for the 2 Accountancy vacancies on the Finance & Resource and Audit Committee took place on 28th November. The Interview Panel consisted of Norma Brook, Robert Clegg and Michael Schofield, from the Office for the Commissioner for Public Appointments. 6 applications were received further to an advert in The Times and on HPC’s Website. Successful candidates’ names will be submitted to Council for approval before a formal offer is made.

The interviews for the P&O Committee Member for Education and Training Committee will take place on 13th December 2005. The interview panel will consist of Norma Brook, Eileen Thornton and Michael Schofield (OCPA). Adverts were placed on the HPC and BAPO websites. The BAPO newsletter also promoted this vacancy, as did Salford and Strathclyde Universities.

In addition, Fitness to Practise are seeking to appoint 4 P&O Panel Members. An advert has gone to the HPC and BAPO website. So far 3 applications have been received.

2. Training

The next Visitor training is planned for the 7th and 8th December. A total of 153 Partners are still awaiting training. Dates for 2006 have yet to be scheduled.

3. Partner Performance Appraisal

The Visitor and Registration Assessor performance appraisal systems have now been piloted among a small group of Partners. They will be presented to both the Education & Training and Registration Committees for discussion before Christmas. The system for Panel Members and.

Panel Chairs is currently undergoing internal approval with the Director of Fitness to Practise. They will be presented to the Fitness to Practise Committees in January for discussion. Approval for all the Partner appraisal systems will be sought by Council in March 2006.

1. Meetings:

- Allied Health Professions Federation Joint Education and Practice leads meeting, 21st September
- Healthcare professionals crossing borders conference, 13th – 14th October
- Health, disability and registration briefing for charities, 4th November

2. Current Projects: Returners to practice

The responses and decisions document has been drafted, and is going to the Education and Training committee on December 15th for their consideration.

3. Health, disability and registration

The draft guidance prepared by the PLG is currently the subject of a consultation. Due to a high level of interest, and corresponding requests for documents, the documents have been reprinted, and the end date of the consultation has been extended to December 9th.

4. Professional Liaison Group on Standards of Education and Training Guidance for Education providers

The final meeting of this PLG took place on 29th September, where final amendments to the document were discussed and agreed. A final draft was agreed by email, and has been submitted to this Council meeting, where it is suggested that they should be the subject of a consultation in the new year.

5. Review of the Standards of Proficiency

The first meeting of this group took place on October 12th, where the group considered the various groups they would be consulting with, and heard presentations from three research organisations. The research with registrants is now underway, and the next meeting of this group is planned for the new year.

6. Continuing professional development additional information

The second meeting of the CPD PLG will take place on December 15th. Work is ongoing with the professional bodies on the compilation of example profiles, and additional information for registrants will be published for the Council’s deadline of April 2006.

7. European Affairs

I have been part of the project group, working as part of the UK EU Presidency. The work of this group culminated in the conference in Edinburgh, in October, where a series of recommendations for improving communication and sharing of information between competent authorities were adopted by representatives from European regulators.

8. Policy and Standards employees

Michael Guthrie has joined the Policy & Standards department on a six month secondment from the Fitness to Practise team. An advert has been placed in the Times for the position of Policy Manager, Education.

1. Council Members’ Induction

An induction will be held on 2 December 2005 for those Council members who did not attend the two day induction for new Council members in June.

2. Committee meetings since the last meeting of Council on 5 October 2005

- 27 October 2005 – Communications Committee
- 7 November 2005 – Health Committee
- 11 November 2005 – Investigating Committee
- 16 November 2005 – Conduct and Competence Committee
- 21 November 2005 – Finance and Resources Committee
- 22 November 2005 – Approvals Committee
- 28 November 2005 – Registration Committee

3. Committee Recruitment

We are currently recruiting for an accountant to sit on the Audit Committee and an accountant to sit on the Finance and Resources Committee. Interviews will be held on 28 November 2005.

We are also recruiting for a Prosthetist and Orthetist member of the Education and Training Committee. Interviews will be held on Tuesday 13 December 2005.

4. Council Members’ Information Pack

The Council members’ information pack is currently being updated and will be available by the end of December.

5. Corporate Governance

The Secretariat held an internal training meeting to review corporate governance on 3 November 2005.

6. External Meetings

A meeting was held with a staff member from the Architects Registration Board to discuss mutual issues of corporate governance.

7. Electoral Reform Services

Work in the design of the nomination and ballot papers for the July 2006 elections is ongoing.

8. Council Workshop

The Secretariat is organizing the Council Workshop which will be held on Tuesday 7 February 2006. The meeting will be held at Avonmouth House, 6 Avonmouth Street, London, SE1 6NX

1. Telephone Calls

The volume of telephone calls to the department continued to decrease during this period as anticipated. Overall, the team received a total of 7,491 calls and achieved a 97% answer rate. Calls were answered in 18 seconds on average.

2. Registration Application

The volume of applications received during this period remains manageable. The team expects the volume to start to increase from the middle of June 2005.

3. Registration Renewal Project

The project team continue to meet on a weekly basis. The registration renewal form has been redesigned so that it can be scanned and the information contained machine read. This information will then be automatically fed into the registration database. This improvement will speed up the process helping us to improve the service we provide to registrants.

The guidance we send to registrants with their renewal forms also been revised and now takes the form of an easy to read booklet.

The first professions to register their registration this year will be Paramedics, Orthoptists, Clinical Scientists, Speech & Language Therapists and Prosthetists & Orthotists. Registrants will receive renewals forms at the beginning of July 2005.

4. Flexible Working

The registration teams are extending their opening hours from the 6th June 2005. Both teams will be available from 8am – 6pm, Monday – Friday.

Registration Officers across both teams have pledged a significant number of additional hours which will be used during our peak period from July – October 2005.

The additional hours given will be re-paid to employees, and can be taken either as time off or shorter working days/weeks during our trough period.

Registration managers are working on a schedule to cross-train registration officers so that we can utilise their expertise across both teams.

5. Registration Seminars, 2005

A total of eight registration seminars were held around the country during April and May. Registration managers visited Glasgow, Belfast, Southampton, Cardiff, Salford and Birmingham. Two seminars were also held at the HPC. The purpose of the seminars was to provide an overview of the application and renewal processes. The events were extremely well attended and very positive feedback was received from many attendees.

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