

Chair's Report – March 2020

1. Purpose of Report

To update Council about the Chair's activity and developments on HCPC issues.

2. COVID-19

In light of Covid-19 exigencies, the Council meeting will be conducted remotely. The CEO, Head of Governance and I have re-shaped the Council agenda in an attempt better to focus on key decisions and to be considerate of ever-more precious time. There are some discussions that would be more effective face-to-face, and these will be rescheduled for an occasion when that is possible. In keeping with our public openness duties, minutes and papers will be published and will seek to give a timely and appropriate account of decisions.

The impacts of COVID-19 have already been profound and are set to become more so. HCPC is basing its actions on the evidence-based advice from Public Health England and others, whilst working with fellow regulators, our registrants and partners in the broad sense. It is pleasing to note that HCPC's approaches, for example in respect of the opt-out for re-registration of recently retired professionals, has been helpful to other regulators. Communications with registrants have been informed by the latest position paper issued week commencing March 16th.

I am confident that the Chief Executive and his team are very capably responding to the imperatives of the Government, and working with UK healthcare regulators, NHS representatives across the four countries, the Council of Deans of Health and others to enact rational, proportionate plans.

We are keeping the protection of our colleagues, partners and the wider population at the forefront of HCPC thinking. Needless to say, we are mindful that this is a serious situation and we are therefore accelerating staged work-at-homes and virtual meetings to see how resilient our arrangements are. Whilst HCPC's contribution is of course mainly in respect of re-registration and extensions of arrangements, we are well aware that our registrants are likely to be in the front line of an already stretched healthcare system. We are doing everything we can to support colleagues through our wellbeing programmes and importantly, paying attention and acts of personal kindness.

Turning to the shorter term, I have, with the CEO’s support, initiated a dialogue with those to whom HCPC is accountable, about how to manage the cash flow impacts of this national emergency. We have been required to divert and augment resources to deal with the workforce imperatives. In addition, our ability to respond to queries arising from the latest PSA performance review is constrained and we anticipate that, not least because NHS Trust HR departments are focused elsewhere, there will be extensive knock-on effects to HCPC’s ability to expedite FTP hearings (for example).

Council has, I believe, an important role to play in thinking about, what does the post-COVID-19 future, look like? I would like us to roll these thoughts in to our emerging strategy. How, for example, should our remote working and estates footprint, look in future? What should our contingency planning do that it did not do, before? Are there implications for communications? Have new opportunities (and threats) emerged for HCPC? What workforce planning and development; and technology strategies do we need to be future-fit?

3. Chair’s meetings

Date	Meeting
January 30	GCC Chair – A productive discussion about working well together. Gatenby Sanderson – Update for sector specialist executive search firm. Institute of Biomedical Scientists, President’s inauguration – An excellent networking and bridge-building occasion.
February 4	Pelham Allen – Review of change plan progress
February 5	Council
February 6	CBI Head of Policy – potential connection points for HCPC
February 7	Appointments discussion
February 13	Learning Technologies exhibition, Excel – Opportunity to learn about the latest platforms, especially mobile ones
February 17	Harnessing Neuroscience to tackle AI – Round table discussion relating use of tech. to business need
February 18	PSA, Chair – Regular briefing and Q&A

February 19	HCPC – Short-listing for CEO role
February 21	FTP task-and-finish group
February 25	Anne Owen – Planning the HCPC development day
February 27	Dr. Robina Shah – Discussion with notable EDI expert
March 2	HCPC – CEO interviews
March 4	HCPC – Finance briefing
March 6	Pelham Allen – Change plan update
March 9	HCPC – Board and Executive Development Day
March 10	Anne Owen and Mary Calam – Debrief from March 9 Rohit Talwar – Meeting to explore potential input of futurologist to HCPC strategy.
March 13	Suzanne Rastrick – Regular mutual briefing with England AHP Lead Policy discussion – Future papers for Council
March 18	Prof. Choudhury – Debrief on communications needs

4. Strategy and Policy

A follow up to Council's initial workshop took place. It covered:

- Crystallising the new mission
- Agreeing the process for arriving at a new strategy
- How Council works together
- How the Executive and Council work together

4.1. Change Plan

Council agreed the mission-critical activities on which the Senior Management Team (SMT) was focusing till the advent of COVID-19. Nevertheless, the Executive is striving to maintain momentum on these.

4.2. Proposed fee increase

Communications and a plan to get the proposed fee increase laid before Parliament in April have been agreed with the DHSC and office of the Cabinet Secretary in Scotland. The timing is under review.

4.3. IT

The initial by-product of the baseline IT systems strategy review is the opportunity to reformulate deliverables for the final six-month period of the Registration Transformation and Improvement project work to achieve optimal outputs. The strategically important independent recommendations on HCPC's future approach are still under consideration.

It will need to address (inter alia):

- What are the system and platform options and what are the investment steps and strategies to realise them;
- How will the proposed approach deliver data-driven management information and intelligence in a joined-up way;
- What is HCPC's capability and capacity to manage a vendor or partnership;
- Where is the evidence to support recommendations on a possible partner.

5. Succession Planning

5.1. HCPC Leadership

The search for a permanent CEO culminated, after a robust and challenging process, in the appointment of the outstanding candidate – former Interim CEO John Barwick. Council ratified the appointment. The Chair, Senior Council Member and an Independent Member, Alistair Gray, formed the selection panel.

5.2. Senior Council Member

Eileen Mullan and I continue our regular engagement. Eileen is moving ahead with her agreed priorities: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; and a review of Committee purpose and governance.