

**Council**

**Public minutes of the 147th meeting of the Health and Care Professions Council as follows:-**

**Date:** Wednesday 07 December 2022

**Time:** 11am

**Venue:** HCPC Offices

**Present:** Christine Elliott (Chair)  
Meera Burgess\*  
Stephen Cohen  
Heeral Davda\*  
Maureen Drake  
Rebekah Eglinton  
Kathryn Foreman (from item 4)  
Sue Gallone  
Helen Gough  
Eileen Mullan  
David Stirling  
Kathryn Thirlaway (from item 3)  
Valerie Webster  
Steven Vaughan (from item 8)

**In attendance:**

Zoe Allan, Governance Officer  
Claire Amor, Executive Director of Governance, Assurance and Planning  
John Barwick, Chief Executive and Registrar  
Alastair Bridges, Executive Director of Resources and Business Performance  
Laura Coffey, Interim Executive Director of Regulation  
Cornelia Ma, HR Systems and Data Officer  
Priscilla Musuele, HR Administrator  
James Penry-Davey, Capsticks LLP  
Anna Raftery, QA Lead  
Laura Ryan, Kingsley Napley  
Andrew Smith, Interim Deputy Chief Executive  
\*Council Apprentice

## Public Agenda

### **Item 1. 22/139 Chair's welcome and introduction**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed those present to the 147th meeting of Council.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed Laura Coffey to her first meeting of the Council as the Acting Executive Director of Regulation and Andrew Smith as Interim Deputy Chief Executive.

### **Item 1.i. 22/140 Apologies for absence**

- 1.i.1 There were no apologies for absence.
- 1.i.2 The Council noted that members, Steven Vaughan, Katie Thirlaway and Kathryn Foreman would be delayed in joining the meeting due to transport issues.

### **Item 1.ii. 22/141 Approval of Agenda**

- 1.ii.1 The Council approved the agenda.

### **Item 1.iii. 22/142 Declaration of Members' interests**

- 1.iii.1 Members had no interests to declare.

### **Item 1.iv. 22/143 Minutes of the Council meeting of 28 September and 20 October 2022**

- 1.iv.1 The Council approved the minutes of its meetings of 28 September and 20 October 2022.

### **Item 1.v. 22/144 Matters arising**

- 1.v.1 The Council noted those matters arising from previous meetings.

## Standing reports

### **Item 2. 22/145 Chairs report**

- 2.1 The Council noted the report.

### **Item 3. 22/146 Chief Executive's performance report**

- 3.1 The Council received a report from the Chief Executive.

### 3.2 The Council noted the following points:-

- stakeholder engagement in the period had focused on the HCPC's financial sustainability and proposed fees consultation, this had included a number of meetings with the trade unions, professional bodies and government officials, alongside a series of webinars enabling registrants to directly ask questions on the HCPC's proposals. HCPC had also undertaken dedicated engagement across the four nations;
- continued changes to the political landscape throughout October and November had contributed to delays in government announcements relating to regulatory reform. HCPC was maintaining close engagement with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and other regulators;
- HCPC had signed a joint letter with the Chief Allied Health Professions and Scientific Officers and other parties expressing support for registrants in the busy winter period and to provide assurance that context is taken into account when FTP concerns are raised;
- some HCPC regulated professions were taking, or were expected to take, industrial action over the winter period. HCPC had published a position statement on taking part in industrial action and would continue to closely monitor developments around industrial action that may impact registrants and require further guidance; and
- registration responsiveness had continued to improve as a result of the roll out of online application functionality and a dedicated UK applications team to manage this process. In October 2022, the telephone call answer rate was 96% achieving the KPI target.

3.3 The Council noted the positive reception for the Chief Executive's engaging presentation focused on tackling health inequality as part of the Professional Standards Authority's conference to explore the themes and recommendations of their recently published report 'Safer care for all – solutions from professional regulation and beyond'.

3.4 The Council discussed the pressures on the healthcare workforce and the potential in such a pressurised environment for the blurring of the boundaries of scopes of practice. It was agreed that advanced practice was pertinent to this issue, in ensuring that higher risk and emerging practice was appropriately regulated.

3.5 The Council discussed the HCPC's approach to hybrid working, which had moved from pilot stage to embedding it as business as usual. The Council noted that principles of equality and fairness were key to the formal hybrid working policy the HCPC had adopted. The HCPC's approach would be focused on business need rather than a one size fits all arrangement. The Council noted the need to maintain a focus on organisational culture to ensure

this was not impacted negatively by greater home working. The utilisation of the HCPC's office space was also noted as an area requiring continued focus.

- 3.6 The Council noted the employee wellbeing and development activity undertaken in the period, welcoming in particular the positive impact of the beyond barriers mentoring programme.
- 3.7 The Council noted that work on benefits realisation tracking for major projects had progressed and that work on this area had been presented to the People and Resources Committee in November 2022. The Executive Director of Governance Assurance and Planning outlined how benefits realisation had been central to the Executive's prioritisation of 2023-24 Corporate Plan activity. The Council noted that work on improving change control would continue into 2023.
- 3.8 A member of Council asked that data on the proportion of FTP cases in the upper and lower age quartile be included in future reports. The Interim Director of Regulation agreed to review this. **ACTION.**

#### **Item 4. 22/147 Finance Report**

- 4.1 The Council received a report from the Head of Finance outlining the HCPC's financial position as at the end of October 2022.
- 4.2 The Council noted the following points:-
- the projected underlying position for 2022-23 had improved to a deficit of around £250k, subject to further review as part of the year-end process of future liabilities. Improvement in the year-end operating forecast was due to slippage in operational caseload and one-off and unplanned income, and could not be assumed in future budgeting;
  - international application volumes continued to be above forecast and it was expected that the yearend figure would be close to 13.5k application against an original forecast of 7k. This increase in income had an accompanying increase in operational costs for processing; and
  - a provision had been made for the renovation of the Stannary Street property to ready it for potential sub letting to consolidate the HCPC's estates, though no onward timeline had been determined.
- 4.3 The Council welcomed the report, commending its clarity. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee noted that liabilities needed to be accurately reflected in the underlying financial position and that increases in international income could not prudently be applied to future budgets.
- 4.4 The Council noted that the Executive was working to reduce reliance on overtime for the sustainable operation of the registration service.
- 4.5 The Council noted that appendix two to the report contained the HCPC's Investment Policy, which had been reviewed at the request of the Audit and

Risk Assurance Committee. The review had recommended no change be made, and the Committee had recommended that the Council confirm the policy remained fit for purpose.

- 4.6 The Council agreed that the HCPC's Investment Policy, as presented in the paper, remained suitable and should remain in place.

## **Item 5. 22/148 Digital Transformation Strategy Refresh**

- 5.1 The Council received a paper from the Head of IT and Digital Transformation. The paper presented proposed changes to the HCPC's Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) for the Council's approval.

- 5.2 The Council noted the following points:-

- the DTC was published in April 2021. Since then, understanding of HCPC's digital needs had evolved;
- feedback from those engaging with the strategy had been that it was more theoretical than practical and hadn't provided a clear sense of direction. Therefore, the Executive had undertaken a refresh of the strategy;
- as part of the refresh the vision statement had been restated to be more grounded in the HCPC's purpose and strategic aims, additionally a set of digital principles had been articulated which included being user-centred and cloud first;
- the second part of the document set out the digital transformation work to be prioritised in 2023 and beyond. These sections were in draft pending the conclusion of the corporate planning process for 2023-24.

- 5.3 The Council noted that the DTS was aligned to, and complemented, the Corporate Strategy 2021-26.

- 5.4 The Council noted that the People and Resources Committee had provided feedback on the Executive's DTS review work at its November 2022 meeting. The Head of IT and Digital thanked the Committee for their helpful feedback.

- 5.5 The Council discussed the skills required to implement the refreshed DTS. It was noted that the IT team had gone through a period of upskilling which would continue, but that the Head of IT and Digital was confident the team were well placed to implement the refreshed DTS. The Council asked that the required digital skills of the wider employee body, and how these skills would be developed, be considered in the DTS. **ACTION.**

- 5.6 The Council discussed the milestones for the achievement of the DTS as set out in the paper. The Head of IT and Digital noted that the milestones were draft only and would be refined as the Corporate Plan 2023-24 content was

confirmed. The Council asked that the final milestones include measures of success. **ACTION.**

- 5.7 The Council welcomed the user centred principle of the DTS and assurance on how the HCPC would know if this principle were being achieved. The Head of IT and Digital stated that satisfaction surveys could track improvement, and that for registrants a project would take place to map their user journeys to ensure the HCPC's digital interfaces were optimised for this.
- 5.8 The Council stressed the need for systems to be adaptable to allow for changes to regulatory processes that may result from regulatory reform and legislative change. The Head of IT and Digital agreed, noting that the need to be agile in developing platforms was included in the DTS.
- 5.9 The Council discussed the continuing importance of the use of data within the refreshed DTS. It was noted that the build of a data platform would enable more effective uses of data within digital systems.
- 5.10 The Council approved the refreshed Digital Transformation Strategy, subject to the requested inclusions outlined in paragraphs 5.5 and 5.6.

#### **Item 6. 22/149 Appointment of Registrar**

- 6.1 The Council received a paper from the Executive Director of Governance, Assurance and Planning.
- 6.2 The Council noted that the HCPC's Chief Executive and Registrar, John Barwick, would leave the HCPC on 31 December 2022. There was a need to appoint a registrant from 1 January 2023. The paper proposed that the Council appoint Andrew Smith, Interim Deputy Chief Executive, as Registrar.
- 6.3 The Council agreed to appoint Andrew Smith, Interim Deputy Chief Executive, as the HCPC's Registrar from 1 January 2023. The Council agreed to review this when a successor Chief Executive appointment was made.

#### **Items to note**

The Council noted the following items:

#### **Item 7. 22/150 Unconfirmed minutes of the Education and Training Committee meeting of 9 November 2022**

- 7.1 The Chair noted that Maureen Drake would step down as Chair of the Education and Training Committee at the end of 2022. The Chair thanked Maureen for her excellent leadership of the Committee.

#### **Item 8. 22/151 Unconfirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting of 9 November 2022**

## **Item 9. 22/151 Unconfirmed minutes of the People and Resources Committee meeting of 10 November 2022**

- 9.1 The Council welcomed the Committee's intended future focus on the quality and efficiency of the HCPC's use of Partners.

## **Item 10. 22/151 Any other business**

- 10.1 The Council noted that an awards presentation would take place during the lunch break for the winner and runner up of the HCPC's first student competition. The competition had invited students on HCPC approved programmes to develop a learning session to explore the principles and challenges of being open when things go wrong. Vicky Marriott had won the first prize and Rhiannon Bullen and Nikki Godridge were the joint runners up.
- 10.2 The Chair led the Council's heartfelt thanks to departing Council members Eileen Mullan and Stephen Cohen for their contribution to the work of the HCPC over the previous 8 years. The Council wished them well.
- 10.3 The Chair of Council also thanked the HCPC's Council Apprentices Heeral Davda and Meera Burgess for their contribution to the Council during 2022 as this would be the last meeting of their apprenticeship.
- 10.4 Finally, the Chair thanked John Barwick, the HCPC's outgoing Chief Executive for his leadership of the HCPC in his 4 years as the Chief Executive. John's compassionate leadership through the challenging covid period was particularly notable and the Council thanked John for everything he had done for the HCPC both as Chief Executive and his roles before this and wished him the very best for his next challenge.

## **Item 11. 22/152 Resolution**

The Council adopted the following resolution:

'The Council hereby resolves that the remainder of the meeting shall be held in private, because the matters being discussed relate to the following;

- (a) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or application for registration;
- (b) information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee or applicant for any post or office;
- (c) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
- (d) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;
- (e) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Council;
- (f) action being taken to prevent or detect crime to prosecute offenders;
- (g) the source of information given to the Council in confidence; or

- (h) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Council's functions.

| Item   | Reason for Exclusion |
|--------|----------------------|
| 12 &13 | B, H                 |
| 14     | H                    |
| 15     | G                    |
| 16     | H                    |
| 17     | B                    |
| 18     | C                    |
| 19     | B                    |
| 20     | C                    |
| 21     | C                    |

Chair: .....

Date: .....