

Council

Meeting Date	26 March 2026
Title	Update on Council effectiveness review 2025
Author(s)	Patricia Morrissey, Head of Governance
Executive Sponsor	Claire Amor, Executive Director of Corporate Affairs
<p>Executive Summary</p> <p>A Council effectiveness review was undertaken in 2025 facilitated by an external consultant and the Council reflected on the areas identified for development through the review at its seminar on 7 March 2025. A further discussion took place on 8 May 2025 and a set of actions for the Council and Executive to implement over 2025 and beyond were agreed.</p> <p>This paper provides an update on progress against the action plan and links to the effectiveness reviews currently being undertaken at Committee level.</p> <p>Taking stock of Council effectiveness now also supports our Chair succession plans by ensuring the incumbent inherits a well-functioning, cohesive Council with clear expectations and stable governance arrangements. It reduces the likelihood of organisational failings that can arise from poor oversight, unclear decision-making, or weak accountability during leadership transitions.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>The Council is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the progress to date; and • consider if any further actions are required to ensure that the Council continues to operate effectively, providing constructive challenge, scrutinising performance, upholding the organisation's values, and ensuring that statutory and regulatory obligations are met. 	
Action required	The Council is asked to review the information provided and seek clarification on any areas.
Previous consideration	At its seminar session on 7 March 2025, the Council discussed the results of the effectiveness review and noted the very positive result and the need for proportionality of response in high scoring areas. A draft action plan was

	considered at the Council seminar on 8 May 2025 and updated in light of the Council's discussion. A further seminar session was held on 26 June 2025 to allow members time to reflect on the topic of cultural and institutional sexism.
Next steps	The actions remaining will be completed as indicated and will be monitored alongside any additional actions arising from the Council's discussion.
Financial and resource implications	There are unlikely to be any financial or resource implications, however, this will be determined based on the actions or recommendations agreed as a result of the discussion.
Associated strategic priority/priorities	Build a resilient, healthy, capable and sustainable organisation
Associated strategic risk(s)	5.a The resources we require to achieve our strategy are not in place or are not sustainable 5.b Our organisational values are not reflected at all levels of the organisation, leading to staff not feeling supported/trusted/listened to
Risk appetite	People - open
Communication and engagement	This is first update on the action plan provided to the Council.
Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) impact and Welsh language standards	A number of actions related to Council diversity and progress has been set out in Annexe 1.
Other impact assessments	Not applicable
Reason for consideration in the private session of the meeting (if applicable)	Not applicable

Council effectiveness review 2025: update

1.1 As an illustrative reminder, the report from the independent consultant, Yasir Samir, found the following with regards to the Council’s efficacy in a number of areas:



2.2 At the Council seminar on 8 May 2025, the Council considered the action plan at Annex 1.

2.3 Good progress has been made and an update is provided against each action. There were 17 actions across five themes of which nine are complete, three are not yet due, two remain in progress and three will be ongoing.

2.4 Across the wider governance framework, the annual effectiveness reviews for the Education and Training Committee and People and Resources Committee have taken place and there have been no changes suggested to Committee Standing Orders. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will consider its effectiveness at its meeting in June 2026. The Council can be assured from the reviews to date that its committees continue to function effectively and in accordance with the Code of Governance.

2.5 Reviewing Council effectiveness ahead of the Chair change is an essential governance safeguard that strengthens resilience, supports good decision-making, and ensures the Council continues to operate effectively through and beyond the transition. A seminar session has also been planned to support transition planning and will include past Council members to ensure that learning from past challenges is captured and can be used to support the Council at a time of critical change.

Recommendations

The Council is asked to:

- note the progress to date; and
- consider if any further actions are required to ensure that the Council continues to operate effectively, providing constructive challenge, scrutinising performance, upholding the organisation's values, and ensuring that statutory and regulatory obligations are met.

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1. Council Diversity	None	<p>Increasing diversity on the Council in terms of age, skills and experience, which might also contribute to succession planning for Council or its committees.</p> <p>Suggestions included creating a shadow Council or an advisory group or individuals acting in an advisory capacity, increasing employee attendance and participation on the Council or Council committees and creating the equivalent of a Council Apprentice role for future lay member roles.</p>	<p>A. Next Council appointment campaign design to be reviewed for added opportunities to demystify the role and ensure it appeals to wider audiences. Council to have dedicated conversation on this as part of the planning. This was already planned prior to the Council effectiveness review.</p>	<p>A new communications strategy was used for Council apprentice role using video messages from current Council apprentices to demystify the role. The refreshed strategy resulted in highest number of high quality applications. The next Council appointment campaign will be for the Chair of Council role. The communications strategy will be discussed with the external agency supporting the campaign due to go live in June 2026.</p> <p>Not yet due.</p>
		<p>Reflecting the current diversity of the Council through the biographies available on the website, which currently focused on Council members' careers and professional achievements, to break down perceptions about Council membership for those seeking to apply for roles and for HCPC employees.</p>	<p>B. Apprentice alumni network group to be reviewed to seek to provide and/or encourage further development opportunities while maintaining fairness and inclusivity.</p>	<p>A survey on the Council apprentice alumni network was carried out in the summer 2025 and feedback has been shared with the alumni for its consideration. A new WhatsApp group has been established to increase connection between alumni members.</p> <p>In addition, links to key websites advertising non-executive vacancies are now circulated to all alumni network members in advance of the meeting and feedback has been positive.</p> <p>Completed.</p>

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			<p>C. Employee, professional group and other stakeholder attendance at meetings to be further encouraged and incorporated into the agenda planning process.</p>	<p>We have promoted observing Council and Committee meetings to new employees through the quarterly governance induction sessions and through our regular post-Council meeting updates published on the intranet. This year we have had an Employee Forum representative and colleagues from a range of departments providing their reflections on the public meeting. Our Council meeting dates are published on our website, and we have a dedicated page about attending meetings.</p> <p>Completed.</p>
			<p>D. Review Council member online profiles to give more a rounded sense of who members are.</p>	<p>We have updated the biographies of 9 Council members and are awaiting updates 2 Council members.</p> <p>In progress.</p>

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2. Culture	<p>(Coherence) Do something: Explicit cultural goals for the Council. Do a lot: Coaching for the Council. Team-building sessions (formal or informal).</p> <p>(Culture) Do something: Ensure that culture is explicit beyond statements of intent. Check-ins at Council meetings. Facilitate risk appetite conversation across the Council and ELT. Do a lot: Full culture analysis on a regular basis.</p> <p>(Context) Do something: Engaging the stakeholders Do a lot: Invest in the Council members' public profiles to represent the HCPC.</p>	<p>Setting or defining clearer expectations and being more explicit about behavioural norms to support the culture and governance of the Council. This could be through a review and/or refresh of the current behavioural standards framework for the Council either separately or as part of a wider review of the HCPC behavioural standards.</p> <p>Consideration of whether to incorporate trust to a greater extent in the values and behavioural framework for the HCPC.</p> <p>Increasing awareness of unconscious biases and guarding against any behaviours that may arise as a result of these.</p> <p>Whether anything further needed to be done to achieve the right balance between authenticity and professionalism on the Council.</p> <p>Increasing the number of meetings held in person to promote and support psychological safety and</p>	<p>A. Run a series of presentations from employees from around the HCPC to increase Council awareness of day-to-day work of our people, as well as providing a development opportunity for employees. This action is already under way.</p>	<p>Sessions have been arranged linked to focussed learning and development/induction priorities. Sessions with key HCPC departments have been organised for new Council members and other members with a particular interest. These will be opened up to all Council members in future.</p> <p>Council members attended the all staff development day on 6 November 2025.</p> <p>Completed.</p>
			<p>B. Behavioural standards framework to be reviewed as part of new people strategy and corporate strategy development. This was already planned prior to the Council effectiveness review.</p>	<p>Council member competencies, including positive and negative behaviours, were refreshed as part of the review of competencies for the Chair of Council appointment campaign and agreed by Council at its meeting in December 2025.</p> <p>The behavioural standards framework for colleagues and Council members will be reviewed as part of new people strategy which will be developed and considered at the July Council meeting.</p> <p>In progress.</p>

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		purposeful challenge, alongside the work around behaviours. Increasing links between Council members and other organisations in similar sectors, including through non-executive networks Considering what more the Council could do to demonstrate its role and relevance to registrants and employees.	C. Informal opportunities for Council members to get to know each other to be arranged.	Extended lunch breaks, additional in person meetings during spring/summer 2025 and Council team building event and dinner in December 2025. Completed.
			D. Approach to Council discussions on structural sexism to be developed through a Council member discussion group led by the Chair.	A Council discussion took place in 2025 led by the Chair of the Council. Completed.
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3. Strategy/ Horizon Scanning	(Strategy) Do something: Proactively communicative about the strategy. Communications plan. Tie it to the “story”. Joint Council and ELT strategy days. Do a lot: Regular strategy check-ins: “agile” style iterative model.	Enabling the Council to become more proactive and strategic in its role by increasing the time available at Council meetings, seminars or separate sessions for quality and in-depth discussion of more strategic or significant performance issues in order to further develop the Council’s thinking and distil this into an agreed forward-looking strategy and goals, while ensuring all Council members have had the opportunity to contribute their knowledge and experience and share any concerns.	A. Council to take part in a series of dedicated strategy workshops/seminars over 2025 as part of strategy development. This will include a facilitated horizon scanning session.	A series of Council seminar/workshop discussions took place during 2025. Completed.
			B. Post strategy development, future strategic discussion needs planning to be agreed.	Strategy not yet approved. Not yet due.
			C. Council will take part in strategy development workshops with employees and at the all-employee event in November 2025.	Council members attended the all staff development day on 6 November 2025. Completed.
			D. Members to raise with Chair any matters they feel need a more in-	Discussed at the Chairs quarterly meeting and raised with the Chair as required. Examples in 2025 – Council

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		Identifying ways to bring intelligence and introduce meaningful horizon scanning in the activities of the Council, which goes beyond improvement and transformation of day-to-day operations, and recognises the financial and legislative constraints and opportunities.	<p>depth discussion at Council as part of the forward business tracker.</p> <p>E. Specialists invited to speak to the Council (and ELT) as part of Council training and development programme e.g. future technology, EDI, patient safety. Members to suggest topics to the Chair as need arises.</p>	<p>Apprentice mentoring arrangements and challenges to higher education funding.</p> <p>Completed.</p> <p>Specialists invited to speak to Council as required, eg part of the strategy development session in September 2025. March 2026 development session on trauma informed decision-making, external attendee invited to share lived experience.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>
4. Comms/ Engagement	<p>(Perceptions) Do something: What are we missing? Create different mechanisms for our stakeholders to let us know what they think and then act on what arises. How do we publicise our successes?</p> <p>Do a lot: Create regular, formal touch-base sessions with all stakeholders, including the public. A mechanism to act on the feedback, and a budget to realise it.</p>	Supporting the development of the stakeholder engagement strategy and communication plans.	A. Update presentation on communications strategy scheduled for the July Council meeting. This will include an overview of the channels already in place for stakeholder feedback and engagement.	<p>An update was provided to the Council meeting in July as planned.</p> <p>Completed.</p>

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5. Workings of the Council	<p>(Function) Do something: Papers received earlier. More offline and in-person conversations. Decide what topics are best for which forums. Allot time to heftier issues. Expand on what Council offers.</p> <p>Do a lot: Joint strategy days.</p> <p>(Expectations) Do something: Deeper Council inductions. Better stakeholder engagement. Mastery over the narrative.</p> <p>Do a lot: As with perceptions. Create solid feedback/action loops.</p>	Reviewing the information presented to the Council and the reasons for this and whether this could be refined or streamlined through less narrative or more of the detail being delegated to Council committees for consideration and escalation as appropriate.	A. Council feedback on paper style and agenda content to be proactively sought.	Positive feedback received during Council meetings in 2025. Ongoing
			B. Council members to offer feedback on where business appears to be better suited for a committee, not Council consideration.	Ongoing.
			C. Induction process to be reviewed ahead of any future new members joining Council.	Not yet due.