

Council Elections

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

The Health Professions Council (Election Scheme) Rules 2004 have been agreed with the Department of Health and are currently with the Privy Council for consideration. Following this the Rules will be laid in Parliament for 21 days and will come into force during December 2004.

There a number of decisions which, subject to the Rules being brought into force by an Order of Council, the Council must take.

These are as follows;

(i) Returning Officer

Rule 3 (1) states ‘ Not less than six months before the end of the full term of office of any registrant or alternate member.....the Council shall, as regards the election to be held in respect of that vacancy, appoint a Returning Officer and may at the same time appoint a Deputy Returning Officer who shall be entitled to carry out the functions of the Returning Officer if he is absent or unable to act’.

(ii) Return of Expenses

Rule 15 (2) states ‘the Returning Officer shall publish all statements of expenditure received under this rule in such a manner as the Council may determine’

Decision

The Council is asked to agree the following:

- (i) that the Chief Executive/Registrar is appointed as the Returning Officer as of 7 January 2005 until the close of the 2005 election process.
- (ii) that all statements of expenditure are published on the HPC website.

Background information

The Council should note the following decisions which are at the discretion of the Returning Officer;

- (i) the timetable for the election;
- (ii) the format of the election notice and ballot paper;
- (iii) the length and form of the election statement;
- (iv) the electronic format in which a passport-sized photograph of the candidate should be sent;
- (v) the development of a proforma and guidance notes for statements of expenditure.

As the proposed Returning Officer the Chief Executive has drawn up the attached timetable for the elections which is presented to the Council for information.

Advice will be sought from the Electoral Reform Society with regard to the other matters.

The Council should also note the following;

(i) Independent Scrutineer

Rule 4 (1) states 'The Council, shall, not less than five months before the due date, appoint an Independent Scrutineer to supervise the conduct of the election.

As a result of the 2002 consultation the Council took the decision to appoint the Electoral Reform Services (ERS) to run the election on its behalf. The ERS will act in the capacity of Independent Scrutineer.

(ii) Communications Campaign

The HPC Communications Department will be implementing a communications campaign in early 2005 to ensure that registrants, professional bodies and other relevant organizations are aware of the elections.

Resource implications

None

Financial implications

To be incorporated in 2005/6 budget.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1

Copy of Rules which are under consideration by the Privy Council.

Appendix 2

Proposed timetable for the elections.