

Chair's Report – December 2019

1. Purpose of Report

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

2. Chair's meetings September 16 – December 3 2019

- **September 26 NMC – Meeting of regulator Chairs and CEO's**

Initiation of a collaboration between the GMC, NMC and HCPC, supporting the discussion theme for the meeting. Objectives to include identifying where common interests lie and improving the functioning of the healthcare system as a whole.

I offered to explore whether HCPC could host the next such gathering and given subsequent enthusiasm from Council about the opportunity to meet counterparts and to explore different regulatory perspectives and practice, this invitation has been confirmed for Q1 2020, with the date yet to be set.

- **September 30 – Lord K. Patel, Social Work England (SWE) Chair**

We agreed the importance of continuing to work together as regulators; how December 2nd, when SWE takes over as social workers' regulator, was a beginning rather than 'the destination'; I explained my concerns over the imbalance in media coverage between 'old' and 'new' social worker regulators and we agreed various ways of improving that.

- **October 1 – Twickenham seminar 'The importance of emotional intelligence in leadership'**

I invited the Chair of HCPC's Employee Forum, Isabel Ayo Ajao, to attend this with me so we could compare perspectives. The presentation by a clinical psychologist drew on experience in the sporting world, which offers various possibilities for team building.

- **October 7 – Professor Stephen Wordsworth; The British Dietetic Association (BDA), Birmingham**

Council Member Stephen and I had a wide-ranging discussion about the importance of education policy and practice in the context of the 'prevention'

agenda; and how the HCPC needed to develop in order to embrace this crucial agenda.

My meeting at the BDA was attended by the Chair, CEO and Head of Public Affairs. It was an opportunity to establish a Chair-to-Chair relationship and also for the BDA to express its concern, as a stakeholder, over some aspects of HCPC's approach to education course validation. I subsequently referred these matters to Stephen Wordsworth, as Education and Training Committee Chair, and he has put in hand a paper to Council which should set out what we do at present and the basis for it.

- **October 10 – SWE, Sheffield**

I spent an inspiring day in Sheffield, experiencing the culture at SWE and learning in particular about their approach to strategy, staff and stakeholder engagement, Fitness to Practice (FTP), investigations; and corporate communications.

- **October 11 – Professor Bernie Choudhury**

Council members have shared their concerns about HCPC's external profile and I met this engaging ex BBC journalist to explore how we might re-think HCPC's strategy in this area.

- **October 14 – Claire Armstrong, Department of Health and Social Care**

My regular teleconference check-in with the Department. We discussed HCPC's progress in respect of the SWE transfer, the change plan and related matters.

- **October 15 – Legal Tender Panel, HCPC**

Together with Council colleagues Gavin Scott and Kathryn Foreman, I joined Executive team members to appraise the contenders for a one year (extendible) legal contract.

- **October 16 – Unison Science Committee**

I had been invited to do a presentation to the Committee, which comprises geographic representatives of the Allied Health Professions (AHP's). My presentation covered the revised rationale and indicative quantum of HCPC's proposed fee increase, our desire to improve engagement with unions and the professions; changes afoot in how we account for and manage FTP; the future mission. This was well received and I organised it so there was plenty of opportunity to hear their robust and evidence-based views and to answer their questions.

I later met Sean Sullivan, who lead the production of HCPC's detailed roadmap for change. We agreed the handover from himself to the new SMT.

- **October 29 – Conference calls with professional bodies' leaders to re-position the proposed fee increase.**

- **October 30 – Jane Beach, Unite**

A union representative meeting to cover the revised proposed fee increase. Further professional body calls.

- **November 3 – Quentin Cole, Partner, PriceWaterhouseCoopers**

I was briefed on the financial baseline work underway.

- **November 4 – Leadership Breakfast on Wellbeing at Work**

I chaired a discussion whose participants included the Heads of Wellbeing (or equivalent) at John Lewis, Hyatt Europe, the Bank of England, Marks & Spencer, the Chartered Insurance Institute and others. The conversation was very relevant to HCPC in several respects and some excellent connections were made.

I later returned to the conference to support Lord Patel, who gave an inspiring account of his personal and career journey in the mental health and social work fields.

- **November 7 – Professional body (proposed fee increase) calls; Briefing Jason Birch and colleagues, Cabinet Secretary's Office, Scotland, on developments at HCPC, which included the proposed fee rise.**

- **November 11 – Gavin Larner, Director of Workforce Transformation, DHSC**

Briefing Gavin Larner and colleagues, on developments at HCPC, which included the proposed fee rise.

- **November 13 – All employee meetings at HCPC**

I contributed to a section of Interim CEO John Barwick's well-structured update for all staff. My topics were the fee rise and key decisions recently taken by Council, including the bringing together of a 'new SMT' and John's appointment.

- **November 12 – The Professional Standards Authority Symposium**

I attended and participated in the programme, whose focus was collaboration.

- **November 19 – Meeting with Unison, Edinburgh**

Supported by David Stirling and Sonya Lam, I met Willie Duffy (Secretary and Head of Bargaining for Health) and Tom Waterson (Chairperson, Health) for Unison Scotland. They were briefed on developments about the proposed fee increase and the rationale for it. The officers said that had not previously had engagement with HCPC; that Scotland operated separately from England in terms of decision-making; and that they would welcome the partnership approach that is common in Scottish decision-making across the health sector.

As a result, David and Sonya will attend a Unison Scotland Health Committee at the beginning of February, which will likely tie in with timing about formally announcing the new proposals. We also spoke more generally about the status and understanding of Allied Health Professionals and the fact that the public had very little awareness of which professionals were treating them.

Forthcoming appointments include:

- November 22 – Professional body calls
- November 25 – NMC event, St. Thomas's, London
- December 3 – Meeting with HCPC Senior Council Member, incoming (Eileen Mullan)

3. Strategy and Policy

A day and a half Council workshop in October started to lay the foundations of how we work even more effectively together and also, with the Executive. There were external presentations on legislation (learning what flexibility we have within the current legal framework and how that might change when 'Reforming Regulation' becomes a reality); and on the journey to a technologically-enabled, agile and digital culture (with a particularly engaging interactive discussion on pinch points and opportunities).

There is more work to do and we will especially, build on the session with an external facilitator; and agree a methodology for arriving at a refreshed strategy (which will include the all-important stakeholder engagement and new information inputs on all key areas, so that we are making well informed and evidenced decisions).

3.1. Change Plan

Alternative proposals for 'badging' the plan have been considered but it seems that both the SMT and the wider organisation are content with having a plan for change. This is now being led by the 'new SMT', with the Chief Executive being advised by Pelham Allen, who led the first, high-level review.

PWC's Financial Baseline has been completed and will be reported on to Council.

3.2. SWE

Other than the meetings described by me earlier, SWE matters are operational and covered by Executive reports.

3.3. Proposed fee increase

It will be no surprise that the General Election produces a further delay in moving forward with any proposed increase. On the positive side, if a general consensus about the basis for the revised proposal emerges, the matter may be able to be expedited by civil servants and correspondence.

3.4. Grant funding

With the financial baseline in place, we will be in a position to formulate such requests as may now be appropriate. The DHSC is looking for HCPC to manage within its means and to be financially sustainable, whilst delivering its regulatory functions.

3.5. IT

As previously discussed, we would ideally like to access the capital investment to move away from the current systems patchwork and develop an enterprise-wide platform that delivers efficiencies, intelligence and benefits to registrants. In order to have an expert, external view on which Council can rely to make decisions, the CEO, supported by smt, has authorised commissioning an IT baseline review, which is currently being procured.

4. Succession Planning

4.1. Senior Council Member

I am delighted to welcome Eileen Mullan as the successor to Robert Templeton, who will be observing the December Council (coming, as it does, two days after SWE takes over social worker regulation).

All of Council, myself very much included, will want to pay tribute to the thoughtful, kind, reliable and principled support given by Robert over all the years he has served HCPC.

4.2. HCPC Leadership

A proposal has been made to Remuneration Committee and Council will have input into the key terms of the CEO contract.

5. Development

5.1. Council Members' Objectives and Input

Time at the Council Development Days did not permit discussion of draft Council Members' Objectives, which will be brought forward for a future occasion.