
The Health Professions Council

Chief Executive and Registrar: Mr Marc Seale

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Minutes of the 45th meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on **Thursday 31 July 2008** at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU.

Present: Mr R Clegg (Chairman)
Mrs P Blackburn
Mr P Douglas (items 9 – 15)
Mrs S Drayton
Professor J Harper
Mr W Munro
Mr D Ross
Mrs J Sheridan
Mrs B Stuart
Mr N Willis

In attendance:

Mr C Bendall, Secretary to the Committee
Mr R Dunn, Head of Business Improvement
Ms L Foster, Director of Human Resources
Mr G Gaskins, Director of Information Technology
Mr S Hall, Facilities Manager
Mr R Kennett, Accountant member, Audit Committee (observer)
Mr S Leicester, Director of Finance
Ms C Milner, Financial Controller
Ms K Neuschafer, Partner Manager
Mr G Ross-Sampson, Director of Operations
Mr M J Seale, Chief Executive and Registrar
Dr A van der Gaag, President

Item 1.08/108 Apologies for absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mrs M Clark-Glass and Mr K Ross.

Item 2.08/109 Approval of agenda

2.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

Item 3.08/110 Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 19 June 2008

3.1 It was agreed that the minutes of the 44th meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee should be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Item 4.08/111 Matters arising

4.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.

4.2 The Committee noted the actions list as agreed at the last meeting.

Item 5.08/112 Finance and Facilities Management report

5.1 The Committee received a report on the work of the Finance and Facilities Management Department.

5.2 The Committee noted that the Valuation Office had visited the HPC's offices on 8 July 2007 to update the valuation for rating purposes. The HPC had received notice that the rateable value would increase from £85,750 to £171,000 effective from 28 May 2008. The Committee noted that the valuation had been on the basis of the current valuation of the offices and the Executive did not intend to appeal against the increase.

5.3 The Committee noted that the Department was involved in the following projects:

- testing of the online renewals system;
- testing for the proposed changes to registration fees, subject to the outcome of the consultation process;
- preparing for compliance with International Finance Reporting Standards;
- updating financial procedures;
- updating the five year plan;
- planning the budget for 2009-10;
- preparing for phase 2 of work to 22-26 Stannary Street (an additional storey); and
- preparing for internal audit of the Department by PKF (UK) LLP.

- 5.4 The Committee noted that the trial period for Co-operative Travel (supplier of travel agent services) was due to end on 6 August 2008. The Executive Management Team had agreed to extend the trial period for another three months, in order to test performance over a longer period and to include Partners' travel arrangements.
- 5.5 The Committee noted that a meeting would be held in the near future with Davis Langdon LLP, the main building contractor for phase 1 of renovation to 22-26 Stannary Street. The meeting would agree the final price of the work.
- 5.6 The Committee noted that the Executive received monthly reports from Rensburg Sheppards (the HPC's professional investment managers) on the performance of HPC's investments. The Committee noted the investments were diversified by sector and geographical region and that the investment policy was slightly risk-adverse.
- 5.7 The Committee noted that income for the financial year to date was below budget and that the Executive was monitoring financial trends on a monthly basis. The Committee noted that, if necessary, planned expenditure could be reduced if income was below budget.

Item 6.08/113 Human Resources report

- 6.1 The Committee received a report on the work of the Human Resources Department.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that 31% of employees had voted in favour of a pre-existing agreement under the Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004. 12% of employees had voted against the agreement and 57% of employees had not voted. The Committee noted that, at its meeting on 19 June 2008, it had agreed to adopt a pre-existing agreement if at least 25% of employees voted in favour. The Human Resources Department would begin drafting the agreement and appointing employee representatives.
- 6.3 The Committee noted that 81% of employees had responded to a recent employee attitude survey. The results were being compiled and would be presented to employees and to the Committee.

Item 7.08/114 Partner Manager report

- 7.1 The Committee received a report on the work of the Partner Manager.
- 7.2 The Committee noted that interviews had been held for practitioner psychologist Visitors and Registration Assessors. It was anticipated that a second round of interviews would be needed to recruit the required numbers of panel members and Visitors.
- 7.3 The Committee noted that additional operating department practitioners had been recruited as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) assessors.
- 7.4 The Committee noted that refresher training had been held for panel chairs and that seven operating department practitioners had been trained as CPD assessors.

Item 8.08/115 Information Technology report

- 8.1 The Committee received a report on the work of the Information Technology (IT) Department.
- 8.2 The Committee noted that, following a disaster recovery exercise on 28 May 2008, the Department had ensured that the e-mail system and the new financial system could be restored at the disaster recovery site in the event of a disaster. Further discussion about the exercise took place at item 11.
- 8.3 The Committee noted that Blackberry devices had been issued to 21 employees and training would be held in August.
- 8.4 The Committee noted that the Department was involved in several projects: online renewals, equality and diversity, fitness to practise status, and regulation of hearing aid audiologists.

Item 9.08/116 Operations report

- 9.1 The Committee received a report on Operations, covering the Registration department, Business Improvement (including Quality Management), Project Management and Education - Approvals and Monitoring. The Committee

congratulated Mr Ross-Sampson on his appointment on a permanent contract as Director of Operations.

- 9.2 The Committee noted that the HPC had recently received a number of complaints from registrants on issues around collection of direct debits from registrants who had lapsed from the register; registration certificates not being received by registrants; and errors over registrants' addresses.
- 9.3 The Committee noted that chiropodists and podiatrists had until 31 July 2008 to submit their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) profiles. 650 individuals had been asked to submit a profile and there had been a 75% response rate. 35 individuals had been granted a deferral, 10 deferrals had been declined and 10 individuals had decided to de-register. The Committee noted the HPC would give registrants who failed to submit a profile a further opportunity to respond. The Committee noted that CPD assessors had found that the assessment process was straightforward.
- 9.4 The Committee noted that any individual who indicated that they wished to de-register had to first confirm in writing that they were not aware of any fitness to practise issue affecting them. Individuals who made a false statement would still be subject to fitness to practise procedures.
- 9.5 The Committee noted that the online renewals system was being developed and that the detailed project documentation would be presented to the next meeting.
- 9.6 The Committee noted that work was under way to prepare for regulation of hearing aid audiologists and practitioner psychologists. It was expected that both professions would be regulated from July 2009.
- 9.7 The Committee noted that the total number of registrants had remained roughly the same for the last few years and that this was in line with projections of registrant numbers. The Committee noted that it was expected that the number of graduates from approved programmes would not increase substantially. The Committee noted that large increases in the number of registrants would only take place if the HPC regulated additional professions.

Item 10.08/117 Information Technology strategy

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 10.2 The Committee received a presentation on the background to the strategy, its vision and objectives and key services and principles.
- 10.3 The Committee noted that the Information Technology workplan included the risks which were managed by the Department. The Committee noted that, where practicable, external suppliers would be used to provide telephone support for core technologies in the circumstance that a key IT employee was absent.
- 10.4 The Committee agreed that the strategy was very comprehensive and thanked the Director of Information Technology for preparing it.
- 10.5 The Committee agreed the Information Technology strategy.

Action: GG (ongoing)

Item 11.08/118 Business Continuity Management: Lessons learned from exercise on 28 May 2008

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 11.2 The Committee noted that a disaster recovery exercise had been held on 28 May 2008. The exercise had included restoration of IT systems from the disaster recovery site in west London. The exercise had involved a small group of employees and two Council members.
- 11.3 The Committee noted that the information held at the disaster recovery site was regularly updated.
- 11.4 The Committee noted that the exercise had focussed on the recovery of IT systems. The Committee noted that the disaster recovery plan covered all aspects of responding to an incident, including human resources and communication issues. The Committee noted that, in the event of an incident, the disaster recovery site would be used in the immediate short-term. HPC would relocate to temporary

accommodation in the medium term and employees would be asked to report for work as services were restored.

- 11.5 The Committee noted that the response to actual incidents would be affected by practical issues which could not always be foreseen in disaster recovery planning.

Item 12.08/119 May and June 2008 management accounts

- 12.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive. Management accounts for June 2008 were tabled.
- 12.2 The Committee noted that, as of 30 June 2008, there had been a smaller operating deficit than budgeted. HPC continued to be in a stable financial position.

Item 13.08/120 Standing orders

- 13.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 13.2 The Committee noted its standing orders.

Item 14.08/121 Any other business

- 14.1 There was no other business.

Item 15.08/122 Date and time of next meeting

- 15.1 The next meeting of the Committee would be held at 10.30 am on Thursday 18 September 2008.
- 15.2 Subsequent meetings would be held at 10.30 am on
- Monday 17 November 2008
Wednesday 4 February 2009
Thursday 5 March 2009 (Remuneration Committee)
Monday 16 March 2009
Thursday 23 April 2009 (discretionary meeting)
Tuesday 23 June 2009

Chairman

Date