

The Health Professions Council

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MINUTES of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Communications Committee held at **11.00 am on Thursday 7 May 2009** in the old Council chamber at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London, SE11 4BU

Present:

Mr O Altay
Mrs M Clark-Glass
Ms C Farrell

Mrs D Haggerty
Miss M MacKellar (Chair)

In attendance:

Dr A van der Gaag, President
Ms N Blunck, Stakeholder and Public Affairs Manager
Ms S Carini, Events Manager
Ms E Gayle, Press and Public Relations Manager
Mr D Knight, Communications Team Administrator
Ms J Ladds, Director of Communications
Mr S Rayner Secretary to the Committee

Item 1.09/15 Election of Chair

- 1.1 In the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair the Committee was invited to nominate a Chair for the duration of the meeting, in accordance with the process for the election of Chairs agreed by the Council on 12 July 2005.
- 1.2 Miss MacKellar was nominated and seconded, and was duly elected to serve as Chair for the duration of the meeting.

Item 2.09/16 Apologies for absence

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Mr P Acres, Professor A Turner, Mr M Woolcock and Mr S Wordsworth.
- 2.2 The Committee noted that this was the first appearance at the Committee of Ms S Carini, Events Manager. The Committee welcomed Ms Carini.

Item 3.09/17 Approval of agenda

- 3.1 The Committee received a paper from the President updating them on a meeting she had attended on patient and public involvement. The paper would be discussed under any other business.
- 3.2 The Committee approved the agenda.

Item 4.09/18 Declarations of interest

- 4.1 The Committee did not have any interests to declare.

Item 5.09/19 Minutes of the Committee of 16 October 2008

- 5.1 The minutes were agreed as a true record of the twenty-fifth meeting of the Committee and were signed by the Chairman.

Item 6.09/20 Annual review of action points 2008-9

- 6.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive summarising action points and matters arising from the Committee in the preceding year.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that the action points had either been completed, or were to be dealt with as part of the current agenda.

Item 7.09/21 Chair's report

- 7.1 The Committee wanted to record its best regards to the absent Chair, and wished her improved health.

Item 8.09/22 Director of Communications Report

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive outlining the main activities of the Communications Department over the last quarter.

- 8.2 The Committee noted that the main focus for the year for the Communications Department would be on newly regulated Professions, registrations and renewals and the continuing CPD process.
- 8.3 The Committee noted as an update to the report that 150 CPD talks had now been given to approximately 9500 registrants.
- 8.4 The Committee noted that Ms Gayle had been permanently appointed of the post of Stakeholder and Public Affairs Manager following several months in that role as a temporary position. Ms Gayle had been appointed following an open, public competition. The Committee congratulated Ms Gayle.
- 8.5 The Committee noted the work being done to develop relationships with stakeholders in Europe. HPC was seen as a model for other jurisdictions and was sharing information with a wide range of organisations. Benefits of this work included that HPC was now being kept in the loop on developments in cross border health regulation policy.
- 8.6 The Committee noted that the Older People Campaign had received strong positive feedback at exhibitions and other public events. There would be a full evaluation and report on the Campaign to the next meeting.

ACTION: **Director of Communications** to submit report to next meeting.

Item 9.09/23 Events update

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive providing an update on HPC events in the last quarter, and including a schedule of events for the financial year 2009-2010.
- 9.2 The Committee noted that the focus for the coming year in events would be on increasing the number of participants at HPC events. The Committee suggested that an incentive would be to remind registrants that appearances at listening events would count towards CPD assessments. Attendees could be issued with certificates of attendance.
- 9.3 The Committee noted that feedback to the updated programme had been very positive. The Committee commended the Events Manager for the work that had been done over the last year.

Item 10.09/24 Employer events 2008-2009

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive including feedback and comments provided by attendees at HPC employer events in 2008-

2009 (series two) and recommendations for the development and delivery of the events in 2009-2010 (series three).

- 10.2 The Committee noted that the sessions had been changed to include workshops on subjects such as Continuing Professional Development and the Fitness to Practise process. Feedback had been positive, but delegates had requested more time to discuss issues. Series three events would be day long seminars.
- 10.3 The Committee noted that in addition to the mix of HR officers and managers, other regulators had also attended. HPC was recognised in the sector both for visiting locations around the Country to deliver its message, and for delivering interactive, high quality events. Other regulators were not so active in these areas.

Item 11.09/25 Communications plan for practitioner psychologists

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive providing an overview of planned communications activities to be undertaken in preparation for the anticipated opening of the register to practitioner psychologists on Wednesday 1 July 2009.
- 11.2 The Committee noted that Parliamentary briefings had finished, and that the focus was on the media campaign. The Communications team would undertake regular reviews of the plan.
- 11.3 The Committee noted the Communications plan.

Item 12.09/26 Communications plan for registration renewals

- 12.1 The Committee received a [paper from the Executive providing an overview of planned communications activities to be undertaken in preparation for the registration renewals process in 2009.
- 12.2 The Committee noted that this was an important piece of work for the organisation. The Communications team would undertake regular reviews of the plan.
- 12.3 The Committee noted that the way each profession would be approached was different. The structured approach allowed the team to evaluate each approach in relation to each other, providing opportunities to identify trends or similarities between the professions.

Item 13.09/27 PKF audit on external communications (September 2007)

- 13.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive introducing the findings of the PKF audit into external communications which was commissioned and reviewed by the Audit Committee in 2007. The paper was requested at the last meeting of the Communications Committee, and included the management responses to the actions suggested by the audit.
- 13.2 The Committee noted that
1. Review of objectives and HPC appearances at conferences.

This had been addressed as part of the 2007-2008 workplan. Reviews on objectives and processes had continued in 2008-2009.
 2. Reassessment of HPC aims and outcomes for Listening events

Continuous evaluation of listening events was now built into the yearly programme.
 3. Review of budget to meet additional workload associated with managing the impact of the white paper.

The Communications budget had been realigned to take this into account.
- 13.3 The Committee noted that the report was from 2007, and that the Communications Department had developed considerably in the intervening period. The Department also provided significantly increased value for money over that period.
- 13.4 The Committee noted that there was a very clear benefit to Listening events, but that this was not necessarily one that could be measured easily by Auditors.
- 13.5 The Committee noted that the report had been valuable to the Department in that it had provided a fresh perspective on external communications, and an endorsement on the work it was doing at the time. It also provided useful recommendations and feedback.

Item 14.09/28 Any other business

14.1 Joint Regulators group on patient and public involvement

The Committee received a paper to note from the President the joint regulators group on patient and public involvement (PPI). The President had attended the Group at the request of the Committee.

14.2 The Education and Training Committee had held a discussion on PPI at Item 14.09/14 of its meeting of 25 March 2009.

14.3 The Committee noted that the Joint Regulators Group was following up on outcomes with the Department of Health.

Item 15.09/29 Next meeting of the Committee

15.1 The next meeting of the Communications committee would take place on Thursday 5 November 2009.

15.2 The Committee noted that the next meeting would be after the appointment of the new Council, and therefore would consist of a new membership.

15.3 The President thanked the Committee on behalf of the Council for its contribution to the work of the HPC.

Chair:

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Date:

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