
Communications Committee

Minutes of the 27th meeting of the Communications Committee held as follows:-

Date: Thursday 5 November 2009

Time: 11:00 am

Venue: The Council Chamber, Health Professions Council, Park House, 184
Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU

Present: Mrs S Drayton (Chair)
Mrs P Blackburn
Ms J Drown
Ms M MacKellar
Dr A Midha
Professor D Waller

In attendance:

Mr C Bendall, Secretary to the Committee
Ms N Blunck, Public Affairs and Stakeholder Manager
Ms S Carini, Events Manager
Mr T Glazier, Web Manager
Mr M Guthrie, Director of Policy and Standards
Mr J Jones, Publications Manager
Mr D Knight, Communications Officer
Ms J Ladds, Director of Communications
Ms A Morgan, Communications Officer
Mr M Potter, Continuing Professional Development Communications Manager
Dr A van der Gaag, Council Chair

Item 1.09/30 Nomination of Committee chair

- 1.1 The Committee was asked to nominate a Chair. Ms MacKellar proposed Mrs Drayton as Chair and this was seconded by Professor Waller. There were no other nominations. The Committee nominated Mrs Drayton as Chair.

Item 2.09/31 Apologies for absence

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from the Chief Executive and Registrar. The Committee noted that Mr Midha would be unable to attend for the strategy workshop to be held after the Committee meeting.

Item 3.09/32 Approval of agenda

- 3.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

Item 4.09/33 Declarations of members' interests

- 4.1 Members had no interests to declare in connection with the items on the agenda.

Item 5.09/34 Minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 7 May 2009 (report ref: CC 23/09)

- 5.1 It was agreed that the minutes of the 26th meeting of the Communications Committee should be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Item 6.09/35 Matters arising (report ref: CC 24/09)

- 6.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive, summarising actions which had been agreed at the last meeting.
- 6.2 The Committee noted the actions list as agreed at the last meeting.
- 6.3 The Committee noted that a report on the Older People Campaign would be made to the next meeting of the Committee on 18 February 2010. That report would incorporate information from the National Care Forum event which would be held on 9-10 November 2009.

Action: EG (by 18 February 2010)

- 6.4 In connection with paragraph 9.2 of the minutes of the previous meeting, the Committee noted that the number of participants in listening events had substantially increased, with all places being booked quickly.

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Item 7.09/36 Director of Communications report

- 7.1 The Committee received a verbal report from the Director of Communications, outlining activity over recent months. The Director of Communications explained that, because the Committee would receive very full update reports from each of the managers in the Department, she would not give an update of activities as this would be covered comprehensively in each of the reports.
- 7.2 The Director of Communications and the Committee thanked the Communications Department for their hard work in recent months.

Item 8.09/37 Extending professional and occupational regulation (report ref: CC 25/09)

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 8.2 The Committee noted that, on 10 September 2009, the Council had discussed a report on extending professional and occupational regulation and alternative models for the future regulation of professions. The Council had agreed that the relevant committees should consider the specific issues pertinent to their remit detailed in the report, to feed into the Council's further discussion of the report at its strategy meeting on 11 February 2010.
- 8.3 Following discussion, the Committee agreed to feed back the following points to the Council:
 - statutory regulation could be seen by some as giving an equivalent clinical legitimacy or perceived evidence base to that of groups which were already regulated. However, HPC's primary concern should be whether extending statutory regulation would increase public protection. The Committee felt that the impact of statutory regulation on perceptions of a group should be debated by the Council and then discussed at external events;
 - there was potential for tension between the HPC's new professions process and an eventual decision by government on which professions should be regulated. The Committee recommended that the Council should consider the implications of the government's greater emphasis on public protection.

Action: CB (by 11 February 2010)

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Item 9.09/38 Introduction to the Communications strategy and departmental workplan (report ref: CC 26/09)

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive. The paper included the Communications strategy 2007-2011 and the Communications Department annual workplan for 2009-10.
- 9.2 The Committee noted that the Department was subject to a range of monitoring and evaluation processes, such as monitoring by the Committee; audit by PKF (UK) LLP; evaluation forms completed after events; market research; and weekly and monthly updates by the Executive.
- 9.3 The Committee noted that the Communications strategy and annual workplan had been considered and approved by the Committee in January 2009. The Committee noted that it would have an opportunity to discuss the Communications strategy and workplan in its strategy workshop that afternoon. The Committee felt that it could be more effective by reviewing progress against the strategy and workplan at each meeting.
- 9.4 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 10.09/39 Events update (report ref: CC 27/09)

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive. The paper summarised events attended by HPC since May 2009 and forthcoming events.
- 10.2 The Committee noted that an information event for registrants on the Isle of Man had been held on 1 October 2009, with a similar format to listening events.
- 10.3 The Committee noted that HPC would continue to be represented at exhibitions and conferences, in order to promote current messages, new publications and provide the opportunity to meet registrant and lay stakeholders.
- 10.4 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 11.09/40 Media and campaigns update (report ref: CC 28/09)

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive. The paper summarised media and campaigns activity since May 2009.
- 11.2 The Committee noted that HPC had commissioned research to inform the work undertaken with referrers. The first phase of the research would

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identify referrers (for example, GPs and practice nurses) and to what extent patients were referred to NHS or private sector health professionals. The second phase of the research would test awareness of HPC among referrers, identify key messages and optimum ways to reach them. It was anticipated that the research would be used to inform the communications workplan for 2010-11.

11.3 The Committee noted that HPC had a good working relationship with professional journals and magazines and had secured publication of articles on a range of issues, including renewing registration and Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

11.4 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 12.09/41 Public affairs and stakeholder update (report ref: CC 29/09)

12.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive. The paper summarised public affairs and stakeholder activities since May 2009.

12.2 The Committee noted that HPC had been represented at the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat party conferences, which had been held in September and October 2009. As a member of the 'Health Hotel' along with 45 other organisations, HPC had taken part in a number of activities including consultations with parliamentarians from the health teams of the three main parties and fringe meetings.

12.3 The Committee noted that HPC had also been represented at the Scottish National Party annual conference and would be represented at the Democratic Unionist Party annual conference on 21 November 2009. The Committee noted that HPC usually decided whether to attend party conferences based on a number of factors, including available resources, the size of the political party and whether a party was currently in power.

12.4 The Committee noted that the Council had considered its approach to engagement with the home countries in 2006 and 2009 and that, while HPC did not yet have offices in the home countries, there was ongoing engagement.

12.5 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 13.09/42 Web update (report ref: CC 30/09)

13.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive. The paper summarised website activities since May 2009.

13.2 The Committee noted that, in preparation for migration to a new internet service provider, a new web server had been developed to host HPC

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websites. This work had included improving the infrastructure of the main site, giving more resilience and flexibility.

- 13.3 The Committee noted that in October 2009 a new area of the website for students had been launched, including information on applying for registration, guidance on conduct and ethics for students and a new audio-visual presentation along with handouts. The Committee noted that this provided a cost-effective way of communicating with students.
- 13.4 The Committee noted that the home page of the website would be revised to include audience-specific portals, which would ensure that the website was more accessible to all of HPC's audiences. It was anticipated that this would be completed by the end of the 2009-10 financial year.
- 13.5 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 14.09/43 Publications update (report ref: CC 31/09)

- 14.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive. The paper summarised publications activity since May 2009.
- 14.2 The Committee noted that recent and forthcoming publications included the standards of proficiency for practitioner psychologists (published in July 2009) and a review of the first CPD audits (to be published in November 2009).
- 14.3 The Committee noted that a new series of research reports on aspects of healthcare regulation had commenced, with the publication of two reports by professional liaison groups. The reports related to Continuing Fitness to Practise and a scoping report on existing research on complaints mechanisms.
- 14.4 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 15.09/44 New publication in development – Introduction to the HPC (report ref: CC 32/09)

- 15.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 15.2 The Committee noted that the Executive was developing a new publication which would provide an overview of the work of HPC. It was intended that the publication would enhance transparency about HPC and the importance of its work. It was also intended that the publication would provide more information than in the existing public information material.
- 15.3 The Committee noted the paper.

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Item 16.09/45 Communications for organisation-wide activities and projects (report ref: CC 33/09)

- 16.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive. The paper provided an update on communications support for a range of organisational activities and projects since May 2009.
- 16.2 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 17.09/46 Terms of reference and standing orders (report ref: CC 34/09)

- 17.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 17.2 The Committee agreed that the Executive should clarify the following points in its terms of reference:
- ‘review regularly the communications strategy in the light of ongoing developments’ – the Committee requested information on whether it had the power to also ‘update’ the communications strategy as part of the review process; and
 - ‘advise the Council on its priorities in relation to the Committees strategies’ - the Committee requested information on whether this referred to its own strategy, or the strategies of all of HPC’s committees.

Action: CB (by 18 February 2010)

- 17.3 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 18.09/47 Dates of Committee meetings 2010-11 (report ref: CC 35/09)

- 18.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 18.2 The Committee noted the dates of its meetings in 2010-11. The dates are listed at paragraph 20.2

Item 19.09/48 Any other business

- 19.1 There was no other business.

Item 20.09/49 Date and time of next meeting

- 20.1 The next meeting of the Committee would be held at 11.00 am on Thursday 18 February 2010.
- 20.2 Subsequent meetings would be held at 11.00 am on:

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Wednesday 23 June 2010
Thursday 4 November 2010
Thursday 17 February 2011
Wednesday 22 June 2011
Thursday 8 November 2011

Chair

Date

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