
<h2>Communications Committee</h2>

Minutes of the 36th meeting of the Communications Committee held as follows:-

Date: Thursday 28 February 2013

Time: 11:00 am

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

Present: Julia Drown
Morag MacKellar
Joy Tweed
Diane Waller

In attendance:

Claire Gascoigne, Secretary to the Committee
Jacqueline Ladds, Director of Communications
Anna van der Gaag, Council Chair

Item 1.13/01 Nomination of Chair

- 1.1 In accordance with its standing orders, the Committee was asked to nominate a Chair to preside at the meeting.
- 1.2 Diane Waller was nominated as the Chair of the Committee.

Item 2.13/02 Apologies for absence

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Arun Midha and Shelia Drayton.

Item 3.13/03 Approval of agenda

- 3.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

Item 4.13/04 Declarations of members' interests

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

Item 5.13/05 Minutes of the Communications Committee meeting of 6 November 2012 (report ref: COM 01/13)

- 5.1 It was agreed that the minutes of the 35th meeting of the Communications Committee should be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Item 6.13/06 Matters arising (report ref: COM 02/13)

- 6.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 6.2 The Committee noted the actions list as agreed at the last meeting.

Item 7.13/06 Director of Communications report

- 7.1 The Committee received a verbal report from the Director of Communications.
- 7.2 The Committee noted that Mark Potter, Stakeholder Engagement Manager, had returned from paternity leave. It was also noted that recruitment for the replacement post of Communications Officer had been undertaken, with the successful applicant joining the HCPC in April.

Item 8.13/08 Communications department progress report 2012-13 (report ref: COM 03/13)

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8.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion from the Executive, giving a progress report against the activities and objectives in the Communications Department workplan for 2012-13.

8.2 The Committee noted that the progress report should be read in conjunction with appendix one on communications activities in relation to social workers in England.

8.3 In discussion, the following activities were highlighted:

- there had been various communications activities around renewals. The recent cycle for Operating Department Practitioners saw a renewal rate of 97.1%. Initial discussions have been held with the British Psychological Society in advance of renewals for practitioner psychologists;
- Communications had worked with the Policy and Standards department to publish two articles in In Focus: focus on medicines – prescribing, supplying and administering (Issue 44) and focus on annotation to the Register (Issue 45). Communications support was also given to publicise four consultations;
- the Chair’s article on professionalism was published across a range of professional journals and websites including IBMS, BSHAA, RCSLT, The Psychologist, Paramedic Practice, OT News and Synergy News;
- Communications has undertaken daily liaison with journalists on FTP media enquiries. In addition the Chair met with the Social Affairs Editor of The Guardian in December. This meeting led to an article on the negative register proposals;
- parliamentary questions over the period included whether the DH has any contingency arrangement in place to support the operating of the HCPC if insufficient funding is derived from registrant fees (Diana Johnson MP – January) and how many Russell Group universities have ended their social work degree courses since May 2010 (Tim Loughton MP – February);
- employer events have been scheduled in Glasgow (19 March) and York (20 March). Interest in the events has been healthy, with the York event fully booked;
- The HCPC attended the 5th Annual Regulation Event (6 November, Glasgow) with Scottish Government and other

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Health Regulators. Parallel sessions were given on professionalism and social media;

- A new internal communications initiative has been launched with 20 individuals so far volunteering to take part in 'The Chain'; and
- The HCPC android app is currently in testing, and due to be launched in March 2013.

8.4 The Committee asked that the Chair's article be uploaded onto the Council extranet by 27 March 2013.

Action: Jacqueline Ladds (by 27 March 2013)

8.5 The Committee discussed the use of language in the HCPC standards. It was noted at the recent Macmillan workshop, that writing standards in the first person can make them more engaging and accessible.

8.6 The Committee noted that the HCPC Policy and Standards department have commissioned research, as part of the review of the Standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPE). This research will ask professionals and service users for their feedback on a range of issues, including accessibility of the standards. It is planned to disseminate the findings of this research at HCPC events and use it in the review of the SCPE.

8.7 The Committee further noted that the work on redrafting the SCPE is currently in the engagement phase and will move into PLG and consultation phase next year followed by an implementation phase. The Committee felt that the robustness of this process should be shared on the HCPC website. It was requested that the Director of Communications explore this possibility.

Action: Jacqueline Ladds

8.8 The Committee discussed the HCPC's visibility in the media post Francis report. It was noted that journalistic interest in the positive work done by the HCPC was low and that engagement was therefore challenging.

8.9 The Committee noted the report and expressed its appreciation of the work done by the Communications department.

Item 9.13/09 Draft work plan 2013-14 (report ref: COM 04/13)

9.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.

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- 9.2 The Committee noted that the annual workplan for 2013-14 has been informed by previous opinion polling undertaken with key stakeholders, and the proposed activities of other departments as discussed at the EMT planning day in November 2012.
- 9.3 In discussion about the workplan, the following points were noted:
- The Communications department will undertake two major projects this year. The first is the initial phase to review and develop the HCPC's existing web platform. The second is the development of HCPC In Focus which aims to improve format and distribution. In addition the HCPC's e-communication work will be enhanced;
 - communications activities for key operational functions in 2013-14 include registration renewals and online registration, CPD audit requirements, continuing work on professionalism, the start of the review of the SCPEs and the impact of social workers in England joining the Register; and
 - external influences and government policy have been considered in the workplan. This includes new arrangements for professional indemnity, exploring a regulatory approach for adult social care workers in England, HCPC holding a register of 'persons authorised to dispense unlicensed herbal medicines' and opening a register for non-medical public health specialists. It also includes implications for the HCPC arising from the final report by Robert Francis QC into the failings at Mid-Staffordshire Hospital.
- 9.4 The Committee discussed the use of the Register and its accessibility to the public. It was noted that research on how the public chooses a health professional had been undertaken a few years ago and that this issue could be incorporated into the opinion polling exercise due to take place next year.
- 9.5 The Committee discussed the objective of raising the HCPC's profile outside the UK. It was noted that collaboration with other regulators on sharing best practise could benefit the HCPC. At a more operational level, awareness of the HCPC outside the UK will enable regulators abroad to notify the HCPC of high risk international registrants.
- 9.6 The Committee approved the Communications workplan for 2013-14.

Item 10.13/10 Any other business

- 10.1 The Committee discussed the future of the Communications Committee. It was noted that at a recent Council meeting a proposal for the

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Communications Committee to be disbanded as a pilot for a smaller Committee structure was widely supported. However no final decision was made.

- 10.2 The Committee noted that the proposed pilot run until the end of 2013, with an opportunity for Council members to feedback on its effectiveness. The option to then reinstate the Committee was open if the arrangement proved unsuitable. The Committee agreed that the Director of Communications should also provide feedback on the level of support offered by the new arrangement.
- 10.3 The Committee felt that incorporating the Communications Committee into the Council could be an opportunity to raise the profile of this area of work. It was also suggested that communications themed workshops and strategy days could be utilised to ensure that due attention was given to communications activities.
- 10.4 The Committee expressed its thanks to Shelia Drayton, the Committee Chair for her work with the Committee, in the event that the Committee was disbanded.

Item 11.13/11 Date and time of next meeting

- 11.1 The next meeting of the Committee would be held at 11.00 am on
Thursday 13 June 2013
- 11.2 Subsequent meetings would be held at 11.00 am on:
Wednesday 6 November 2013

Chair

Date

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