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## Chair's Report – November 2023

### 1. Purpose of Report

To flag developments at HCPC from the Chair's perspective and to update on activities of note.

### 2. HCPC People

This report is one of farewells and thankyou's.

First, to Council colleagues who have not only done sterling service, but who have been a joy to work with.

**Maureen Drake** initially joined Council in 2016 and straightaway signed up for our Education and Training Committee as a member. In 2021 Maureen took up the Chair of the Education and Training Committee, overseeing the launch and embedding of a new modern model of regulation for education programmes. She also refocused the Committee on its role of monitoring the performance of the Registration function of the HCPC. Maureen passed the baton onto Helen Gough in 2023 and stepped into the role of Senior Council Member providing me with wise counsel and being a trusted sounding board on matters such as appointments, to which she has generously given her time to take part in a number of panels over the past few years.

All this, and Maureen holds a demanding and important role in the health and care ecosystem. For almost fourteen years, Maureen was Assistant director of AHPs, patient experience and engagement at Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust. Recently, she moved to take up an even more prominent role as Director of AHPs in Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust. Maureen spent a year as Clinical Fellow to the Chief Allied Health Professions Officer.

I have especially valued Maureen's reflective mindset, her interest and engagement with the changing nature of the professions we regulate, her sector expertise, her ability to be clear-sighted about reality whilst always acting kindly and with consideration.

**Kathryn Foreman** first joined the Council in 2018. In her 6 years as a Council member, she has been a member several committees, including the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and People and Resources Committee and Remuneration Committee. Indeed, she became the Chair of the Remuneration committee at her first meeting in 2018 and oversaw the project to modernise the HCPC's employee pay policy. Kathryn has also been invaluable as an active Registration Appeals Chair, seeking to improve processes in this area and ensure that Council had visibility of this important area.

A formative external role for Kathryn was as Deputy Chief Fire Officer, serving Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service for six years. She is an Independent Member of the Police Misconduct Panels, and a Non Executive Director of social enterprise Primary Care 24. Kathryn has championed EDI and Registration Appeals.

As a Council Member, her energy, enthusiasm and dedication are hard to match. I will miss her broad smile and positivity.

Both Maureen and Kathryn have been a fundamental part of HCPC's transformation. They have never faltered in their unswerving commitment to improve and drive forward the organisation through its most challenging times. Both have kept focused on HCPC protecting patients and services users by supporting our registrants to be the best possible professionals. My earnest and warm thanks to two, great Council Members, whose work and influence will endure.

HCPC's **Council Apprenticeship Scheme** is open only to HCPC registrants and exists to foster diversity by including talented individuals who do not have boardroom experience, in our Council deliberations and community. Be in no doubt, joining the Council is rewarding and a career-enriching experience, but it is also very hard work. For those who join as apprentices, new ways of thinking and new knowledge must be embraced, as well as responding to the responsibility of working collegiately inside a boardroom.

We recently closed applications on our fourth cohort of potential apprentices, for which we had a humblingly large and strong postbag of aspirants. I hope that all of these impressive registrants will continue in their chosen professions, for which they have the hallmarks of success.

Sadly, that means saying goodbye (for now) to our current Apprentices.

It has been a year of multiple achievements for **Damien Baker**, a registered Paramedic who currently works as a Station Support Manager for the London Ambulance Service. Damien has a keen interest in patient safety and quality improvement and has just completed his MSc at the University of Nottingham. Damien has been a thoughtful and assiduous participant in Council, bringing us intelligence, insights and new perspectives on our policy and practice thinking.

Registered Physiotherapist **Oli Davies** has worked in settings including the NHS, professional Paralympic and Olympic sport and within Higher education, teaching on the advanced clinical practice MSc. A key focus for him has been on sustainability in the emerging workforce who face the challenges within a rapidly changing health care system. Oli is interested in how professionals develop and utilise soft skills and support mechanisms, look after wellbeing, while delivering world class integrated patient care. Oli has gently but vigorously challenged Council thinking, always remained constructive, and we have benefited from his almost inexhaustible energy.

Thanks so much, Damien and Oli.

Finally, an 'au revoir' to **Claire Amor**, Executive Director of Corporate Affairs. Claire is about to go on maternity leave, having been at HCPC so far for almost eleven years, holding increasingly senior roles during that time. I know that I reflect the

views of all of Council – and its predecessor Councils, when I say that Claire has been the absolute rock of HCPC and all through periods of intense change. She is a true governance expert, but that is only the start. It was Claire who introduced and embedded HCPC's corporate planning and brought to life an assurance function that has helped dramatically improve performance. She has a phenomenal work ethic, and her technical governance know-how is applied with great pragmatism. She has been a wise counsellor during the entire time I have served, utterly dedicated to achieving the best for HCPC. We wish her the very best and look forward to future chapters with HCPC.

### **3. PSA Standards**

An important feature of the changes to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) (see: Chief Executive's Report) are new appointments in train as a result. In respect of attaining two remaining Fitness to Practise (FtP) Standards, two critical leadership roles are being recruited to, one to Head up FtP and the other the lead the Tribunal Service. These will report into the newly created role 'Executive Director of FtP and Tribunal Services', Laura Coffey.

It is a privilege to welcome back Professional Standards Authority (PSA) Chief Executive Alan Clamp, to our Council meeting. This gives me an opportunity to thank Alan as well his Chair, Caroline Corby, for allowing HCPC just sufficient space to address our previous performance issues. Alan in particular, who has attended every meeting of the HCPC FtP Performance Improvement Board that I have chaired. He and his colleagues and we have developed working relationships that while challenging in terms of performance, have provided the steer and better understanding essential to make improvements. We are dedicated to having a full set of PSA Standards and to sustaining them.

### **4. Stakeholders**

I have attended a range of meetings with our CEO and key stakeholders. My programmed catch ups with other regulator's Chairs, with system regulators such as the CQC and with politicians and civil servants, continue. Unsurprisingly, a focus on providing information in connection with the proposed fee rise was maintained until it became fact.

### **5. Fee increase for registrants**

The anticipated fee rise came into effect in November 2023, following parliamentary approval processes in Westminster and Scotland. Till regulatory reform comes through, smaller incremental rises will necessitate both consultation and parliamentary processes.

### **6. External engagements**

In November, I gave a wide ranging speech to the Westminster Health Forum. Its departure point was regulatory reform and the challenges caused by HCPC's current legislation. I also considered the revolution going on in healthcare, the professionalism and versatility of our registrants, ways in which health and care regulation earns 'the right to exist', and four pillars of focus for better regulation: a

more accessible system; increasing strategic alignment through collaboration; focusing on prevention; playing a more integral part in workforce planning.

## **7. Council reviews**

I completed the remaining annual reviews, always an opportunity for two-way reflection.

## **8. Reverse mentor**

It has been my privilege to get to know my reverse mentor, Aditya Palai, who works as a 'generalist' in HR for HCPC. 'Generalist' doesn't seem to me quite to cover the array of experience, talent and skills that Aditya has, not least, qualifications in Law. I have found him to be dynamic, knowledgeable, and entrepreneurial. I appreciate having this opportunity to learn from someone who can connect up my understanding of the organisation and enable me to see from a different perspective.

## **9. Committees**

With the year end and movement in Council membership, it is timely to check in on our committees. Head of Governance Karen Flaherty will assist us in seeing if any fine tuning to our documents and functions are needed. Professor Valerie Webster is standing down from the Chair of People and Resources Committee (PRC) for personal reasons, but I am delighted that she has agreed to stay on the committee itself. Her analytical abilities and multi-disciplinary knowledge will continue to be hugely valued. Sue Gallone, longtime Chair of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) will become PRC Chair with immediate effect, and Lianne Patterson, a Chartered Accountant who has worked in leadership roles across both the private and public sector in Northern Ireland for much of her career, will take over as ARAC Chair. Thank you to them all, and to everyone who serves on our committees.

In **closing my final report of the year**, I am acutely aware that we will each have experienced these past twelve months both individually, and as observers, sometimes actors, in the national and global events playing out. Some of my colleagues have suffered personal loss and tragedy due to wars and conflicts. Others have been seriously ill, or their nearest and dearest have. I feel for you, hold you in my thoughts, and hope you find you healing and peace. To all, I wish wellness, safety and a calm, happy end to 2023.