

Board meeting
Minutes of the public meeting
19 March 2025



Approved Minutes of the Board meeting, 19 March 2025

Present

Caroline Corby (CC - Chair)
Alan Clamp (AC - Chief Executive)
Marcus Longley (ML)
Candace Imison (CI)
Juliet Oliver (JO)
Nick Simkins (NS)
Ali Jarvis (AJ)
Geraldine Campbell (GC)
Ruth Ajayi (RA)

In Attendance

Melanie Venables (MV)
Jane Carey (JC)
Graham Mockler (GM)
Douglas Bilton (DB)
Dinah Godfree (DG)
Akua Dwomoh-Bonsu
Rachael Culverhouse-Wilson
Suzanne Dodds
Oyinkan Onile-Ere
Melanie Hueser (Secretariat)

Observers

See below

1. Welcome and Introductions & Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Board meeting, which was taking place at the Social Work England offices in Sheffield. Observers included members of staff and external observers: Carole Haynes (NMC) and Anisah Chowdhury (GMC).
- 1.2 This was ML's last meeting, and the Chair confirmed that Board members would say a few words at the end of the private session.

2. Apologies

- 2.1 There were no apologies.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 15 January 2025

- 3.1 The minutes of the last Board meeting held on 15 January 2025 were accepted as a true and correct record and approved.

4. Actions and Matters Arising from the meeting on 15 January 2025

- 4.1 All actions were complete or on track.

5. Chair's report

- 5.1 The Chair introduced the item, highlighting that the new Board member for Cymru/Wales would be announced very soon, and would be invited to the Welsh seminar which was due to take place on 25 March.
- 5.2 The Chair attended the Staff day on 11 March, where staff had discussed strategic planning. It had been a productive and enjoyable day with innovative ideas.

Action: MH to invite all Board members to attend the next Staff day.

Action: MH to schedule a Board and staff lunch after the July Board meeting.

- 5.3 The interim Director of Regulation and Accreditation will be announced soon, the sign-off had been somewhat slower than expected.

6. Executive report and project dashboard

- 6.1 The Chief Executive introduced the item. The Standards review consultation had started and will run for 12 weeks. The Right Touch Regulation consultation will run for eight weeks.
- 6.2 The NMC Independent Oversight Group had met the previous week. There had been some small improvements in Fitness to Practice numbers, but all attendees knew that there was a long way to go. Overall, the meeting had been positive and had welcomed the changes made to the senior management team. The culture plan had now also been published. The Omambala KC review was provisionally expected for the summer.
- 6.3 The meeting with the Legal Services Board had to be postponed as their Chair had stepped down.
- 6.4 **Section 29:** The number of appeals lodged was down over the previous year. The causes were being analysed now. The Board queried what the financial implications of this were and it was highlighted that as costs for cases accrue over time and may go across more than one accounting years, and any cost recovery would follow this, it was still too soon to say.
- 6.5 **Website project:** The project was due to be finalised very soon and remained on track. Work and testing will be ongoing.
- 6.6 A Regulatory data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Group will be set up, with the first meeting planned for April. The Board will be updated at the next meeting. The Board welcomed the establishment of this group. The Board highlighted that adoption of AI was being discussed across multiple groups of stakeholders and engagement with all of them was essential.
- 6.7 The Board queried whether there were still plans to engage with social media influencers for the Accredited Registers Programme. It was confirmed that there were still plans to, but that additional evaluation of the risks was underway.

Action: MV to update the Board on influencer activity and social media plans more generally at the May 2025 Board meeting.

Action: JC to add Communications Strategy to the Board workplan for May 2025. This needs to be considered as part of the Strategic Plan 2026-29.

- 6.8 It was confirmed that there had been recent meetings with NHS England and that the latest announcement from the government to dissolve NHS England will be discussed and the PSA will keep a watching brief on developments.
- 6.9 Next steps for regulatory reform had not yet been announced but work was continuing to be ready when the announcement comes.
- 6.10 **Research conference:** The Board was in favour of a modest increase to the ticket price and was content for the Executive to make the final decision on this. It was emphasised that it would be important to continue funding places for stakeholders unable to attend otherwise.
- 6.11 The Board also agreed that choosing the most appropriate venue was key.
- 6.12 The response from the **General Teaching Council (Scotland)** on their draft report was expected soon.
- 6.13 **Sexual misconduct sessions:** It was confirmed that a report will pull together the discussions from the sessions and further conversations with stakeholders were already happening on how to continue work in this area.
- 6.14 **Corporate Services:** A pilot for the Microsoft's AI function, Copilot, was underway, and the benefits were already being reported by staff.
- 6.15 There had been a number of leavers and new starters. It was confirmed that much of this was due to fixed contracts coming to an end. The Board agreed that where possible employing people on permanent contracts was preferable, and the Executive confirmed that this was policy and that most of the fixed contracts were due to maternity cover or project work.
- 6.16 Work on the Annual Report and Accounts was starting, and audit timetables had been agreed.
- 6.17 The new pension scheme was being launched on 1 April and staff feedback was very positive. Willis Towers Watson will hold an information session for staff joining the scheme.

7. Finance report

- 7.1 The Director of Corporate Services introduced the item. The deficit was now predicted to be £391,000, which was an improvement. The exact numbers will soon be produced for the end of year accounts.
- 7.2 As appeal cases can stretch over two financial years, it was confirmed that S29 costs are unlikely to fully mirror the lower appeal numbers for the end of year accounting.
- 7.3 It was outlined that whether a fee discount was given depended on a number of factors, e.g. whether the money would be used instead for improvement projects that helped the PSA do its job. Discounts were considered at the Business Planning Review Committee which meets twice a year.
Action: AC to invite the new Board members to attend the next Business Planning Review Committee meeting.
- 7.4 The Board **noted** the report.

8. Committee annual reports

- 8.1 Audit and Risk: The Committee Chair highlighted that most of the Committee members were new to the Board. He also thanked JC and MH for the support of the Committee.
- 8.2 Deep dives will be reinstated for the upcoming Committee meetings.
- 8.3 **Scrutiny Committee:** The Committee Chair highlighted the changes to the Committee and that a new Chair was now coming in.
- 8.4 **Nominations Committee:** The Chair thanked JC and MH for the support of the Committee. It was expected that fewer meetings would be held over the next year as the Board recruitment was finished for now.
- 8.5 The Board **noted** the reports.

9. Committee updates

- 9.1 **Audit and Risk Committee:** The internal audit contract had been extended by two years. The Committee will review the whistleblowing policy soon.
- 9.2 **Scrutiny Committee:** The Board **noted** the report.

10. Escalation process

- 10.1 The Director of Regulation and Accreditation introduced the paper, which proposes a change to the escalation process, namely that the decision-making panel decides at the final Performance Review (PR) panel whether the performance of a regulator who had not met one or several standards should be escalated to the UK health departments and Ministers.
- 10.2 The Board **agreed** the new process and agreed that the team would start publishing letters soon and not wait for the next PR cycle.
- 10.3 The Board agreed that the description of the process and escalation criteria should be clarified to be more specific.

11. Reports from Devolved Administration member for Cymru/Wales

- 11.1 The Board member for Cymru/Wales introduced the item, highlighting the Welsh seminar series where the next session will be held on 25 March.
- 11.2 The Board was reminded to consider devolution when discussing social care, nurse associates and other current issues facing healthcare.
- 11.3 ML thanked the Policy team for their support over the last eight years.

12. May Board meeting in Northern Ireland

- 12.1 The Chief Executive introduced the item, which included a more detailed timetable for the May Board and stakeholder meetings in Belfast.
- 12.2 The Board will arrive in Belfast on 21 May, undertake stakeholder visits that day, meet for a feedback session in the evening and then meet for the Board

meetings on 22 May. Precise details on the stakeholder meetings and groups for the Board members will be shared in April.

- 12.3 The Chair and Chief Executive, and the Board member for Northern Ireland will meet the Health Minister.
- 12.4 The Board **noted** the plans.

13. Commissioned work

- 13.1 The Assistant Director of Intelligence and Insight introduced the item, which was an opportunity for the Board to discuss the approach to commissioned work and how best to refresh it in line with best practice for public bodies and to update the calculations for how long a project might last.
- 13.2 Generally, the PSA had always undertaken one of these pieces of work at a time and had not engaged in promoting this option to stakeholders. It was highlighted that they were also seen as opportunities for staff to engage with work they would not otherwise have an opportunity to be involved in.
- 13.3 The Board agreed generally with the approach not to actively seek commissions and agreed that with the publication of the report from the most recent one for the General Teaching Council (Scotland) and a refresh of the website pages on commissioning this work should continue.
- 13.4 The Board discussed whether the PSA should be involved with this work at all, considering it was not one of the core areas of work. Overall it was agreed that it should continue but that it would be useful to tighten acceptance criteria. It was also confirmed that rate cards were employed, that the PSA's rates were competitive and that a process for sign-off by the Executive Leadership Team was in place.
- 13.5 The Board was in favour of the updated approach and agreed that commissions should be continued in a managed way.

Action: DB to bring an item on commissioning to the May Board meeting.

14. Non-surgical cosmetics

- 14.1 DG introduced the item. Non-surgical cosmetics is an area with legislation that differed in the four countries and the approach across the UK was quite fragmented. In Scotland, for example, there were plans underway to strengthen legislation. In England, an update on the Department of Health and Social Care's previous consultation on new legislation is awaited. In Wales, legislation specific to non-surgical cosmetics had not been implemented and we are not aware of current work within Northern Ireland on the issue.
- 14.2 The paper set out the PSA's current position and all mitigating actions taken (e.g. through the Accredited Registers Programme).
- 14.3 The Board suggested that Right Touch Regulation would be the best lens through which to view the issue and posed this as a challenge to the executive.

Action: AC to include non-surgical cosmetics for the May strategy discussion.

15. Board workplan 2024/25

15.1 The Board **noted** the workplan. Communications strategy will be added

16. Any other business

16.1 There was no other business discussed.

17. Questions from Members of the Public

17.1 There were no questions.

17.2 The Chair thanked the observers for their interest in the PSA.

Signed by Chair



Date 22 May 2025

Board meeting

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Action Log

On track (including not started) Delayed (or medium risk of delay for projects) Overdue (or high risk of delay for projects) Complete

Mtg. Date	Item No.	Action point	Owner	Date required	Action progress	Status
19 March 2025	5.2	Invite all Board members to attend the next Staff day.	MH	September 2025		
19 March 2025	5.2	Schedule a Board and staff lunch after the July Board meeting.	MH	July 2025	Complete	
19 March 2025	6.8	MV to update the Board on influencer activity and social media plans more generally at the May 2025 Board meeting	MV	May 2025	Update provided in Executive Report	
19 March 2025	6.8	JC to add Communications Strategy to the Board workplan for May 2025. This needs to be considered as part of the Strategic Plan 2026-29.	JC	May 2025	Comms strategy added to Work Plan.	
19 March 2025	7.3	Invite the new Board members to attend the next Business Planning Review Committee meeting.	AC	July 2025		
19 March 2025	13.5	Bring an item on commissioning to the May Board meeting.	DB	May 2025	On the agenda	
19 March 2025	14.5	Include non-surgical cosmetics for the May strategy discussion.	AC	May 2025		