

Board meeting
Public minutes of the meeting
21 July 2021



Approved Minutes of the Board meeting, 21 July 2021

Present

Caroline Corby (Chair)
Alan Clamp (Chief Executive)
Renata Drinkwater (RD)
Moi Ali (MA)
Frances Done (FD)
Antony Townsend (AT)
Tom Frawley (TF)
Marcus Longley (ML)

In Attendance

Christine Braithwaite
Mark Stobbs
Jane Carey
Graham Mockler
Douglas Bilton
Marija Hume
Daisy Blench
Dinah Godfree
Melanie Venables
Colette Higham
Collette Byrne
Suzanne Dodds
Louise Rigg
Melanie Hueser (Secretariat)

Observers

Silvia Dominici (Nursing and Midwifery Council)
Jonathan Fields (General Medical Council)
Anna Raftery (Health and Care Professions Council)

1. Welcome and Introductions & Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting including members of staff and external observers Silvia Dominici (Nursing and Midwifery Council), Jonathan Fields (General Medical Council) and Anna Raftery (Health and Care Professions Council).
- 1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

2. Apologies

- 2.1 There were no apologies received.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 19 May and matters arising

- 3.1 The minutes of the last Board meeting held on 19 May 2021 (Paper 01) were accepted as a true and correct record and approved.

- 3.2 **25 March 2020, Item 8.3, Paid events to be investigated as revenue stream:**
The Board agreed that a possible fee for the 2022 Academic Conference could be a test case for paid events.

Action: JC to draft a business case for charging a fee for the 2022 Academic Conference (to go to the Finance Committee in August 2021)

- 3.3 All other action points were either in progress or complete.

4. Chair's report (Paper 02)

- 4.1 The Chair summarised the main themes that came out of the Board appraisals:
- Overall there was a strong confidence in the Authority's core function of protecting the public and a high regard for the rigour of the s29 process and performance reviews.
 - The Board were very grateful to staff for their flexibility and adaptability during the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - The Board also felt that a lot of good work was done on the Accredited Registers programme.
 - There was a strong desire to continue to remain flexible as an organisation as the sector adapts.
 - The Board were satisfied with the governance structures and the makeup of the Committees.
 - The larger workload of the Board members in the devolved administrations was reflected in an increase of the remuneration to £10,000.
 - Going forward, an annual report from each Committee will come to the Board meeting in March.
- 4.2 The GDC's new Chair, Lord Toby Harris, will start on 1 October 2021.
- 4.3 The GMC's Chair, Dame Clare Marx, had stepped down due to ill health. Dame Carrie MacEwen will be the interim Chair.
- 4.4 The Chair congratulated the Director of Standards and Policy on the excellent webinar with Deborah Bowman.

5. Executive report (Paper 03)

- 5.1 The Chief Executive introduced the paper.
- 5.2 Whilst legal Covid-19 restrictions had ended in England on 19 July, other restrictions and restrictions in the other countries remained and infection rates were still rising. The Authority will keep Covid-19 adjustments under review.
- 5.3 The Chief Executive had been having meetings with the regulator Chief Executives. He highlighted three areas that were discussed at the meetings:
- The regulators' outline back to the office plans were quite similar to the Authority's – hybrid working patterns with pilot periods
 - The regulators were putting in place a number of plans to tackle their Fitness to Practise (FtP) backlogs.

- The regulators welcomed the Authority's focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and the focus on improving regulation through its activities.

5.4 The Chief Executive had met with the Health Ombudsman in England and the Board requested that meetings should be arranged to meet with the Health Ombudsman in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Action: AC to organise these meetings.

5.5 The Director of Scrutiny and Quality informed the Board that since the creation of the report two more Section 29 cases had been opened. Some of the regulators were increasing their resources to deal with the case backlog caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and an increased caseload was expected for the autumn and early 2022.

5.6 The Board asked about the EDI focus on regulators' council appointments. It was confirmed that regulators were already required to undertake an EDI assessment and submit a report to the Authority. There will be a review of this as part of the EDI action plan.

5.7 The Head of Accreditation updated the Board on the Accredited Registers (AR) programme. Collette Byrne had started her role, to help with new applications.

5.8 The new accreditation process was on track to launch on 28 July.

5.9 There had been further discussion with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), who confirmed that the ARs should be eligible to perform enhanced checks. The Board expressed its thanks for the progress made in this area.

5.10 The Director of Standards and Policy confirmed that the drafting of elevator statements for staff and the Board was part of the stakeholder engagement strategy which was being finalised.

Action: CB to circulate statements in late July.

5.11 The Director of Corporate Services informed the Board that the ICT Cloud project was progressing well and updates will be brought to the August Finance Committee meeting.

5.12 The Board requested to have a workshop on social work and social care.

Action: AC to organise this for September.

5.13 The Board queried whether there had been an increase in complaints to the regulators. The Director of Scrutiny and Quality informed the members that no such increase had been noticed so far.

6. Finance report (Paper 04)

6.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented the paper. There was an error in Table 1 and Table 5: at the bottom of the table, it should read 'Total (surplus)/deficit'.

6.2 As it was very early in the year the figures only included the first two months. Currently, the surplus was £70,000.

6.3 The Chair of the Finance Committee confirmed that the new report format was much clearer.

- 6.4 The Finance Committee will discuss at their next meeting what any surplus could be used for.
- 6.5 The Board noted the report.

7. Committee reports

- 7.1 The Chair of the Finance Committee introduced the **Finance Committee report** (Paper 05), summarising the issues recently dealt with by the Committee.
- 7.2 One upcoming area of work will be the pensions review.
- 7.3 The Chair introduced the **Nominations Committee report** (Paper 06), noting that the Committee was currently meeting more frequently to deal with Board evaluation, training and recruitment.
- 7.4 The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee introduced the **Audit and Risk Committee report** (Paper 07). The annual report was giving assurance to the Accounting Officer and the Board about the Authority's effectiveness of the Authority's system of governance, risk management and internal control.
- 7.5 Additional risks of the previous year were the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the absence of a permanent Director of Corporate Services.
- 7.6 The auditors' overall opinion of the Authority's effectiveness of governance, risk management and internal control was moderate, which was the second category.
- 7.7 Throughout the last year, the Committee carried out a review of all governance frameworks.
- 7.8 The Committee Chair thanked everyone who was involved in the Committee's work.
- 7.9 The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee introduced the **Scrutiny Committee report** (Paper 08), highlighting the work done on the performance review process, which was on the agenda for the private Board meeting.
- 7.10 The Committee also discussed the issue of individuals being members of more than one regulator council, which was felt was a diversity issue. The Authority's Directors Group would discuss whether further guidance should be developed.

8. EDI update (Paper 09)

- 8.1 The Director of Scrutiny and Quality introduced the draft action plan which came out of the consultant's report.
- 8.2 One of the key findings of the report was that the Authority lacked the knowledge to understand some of the EDI issues facing the health and care sector. The consultant strongly recommended that an upskilling exercise be undertaken across the Authority.
- 8.3 The Board agreed to the proposal of hiring a project management resource with EDI expertise to guide the Authority through the first phase of the work. There would also be discussions around how to restructure some of the work undertaken by the teams to allow a stronger focus on how to integrate EDI into all aspects of the Authority's work.

- 8.4 The Board felt that the aim should be to embed EDI in all parts of the Authority and its work and that it did not remain a separate project and become the responsibility of one member of staff.
- 8.5 The Board felt that some of the work on policies and processes should happen as a priority.
- 8.6 The Board emphasised that it was keen to undertake the EDI training as soon as possible.
- 8.7 The Board noted the variance in the EDI issues faced in the four countries.
- 8.8 The Board noted the progress so far and requested that one action plan each would be created for internally and externally focused areas.

Action: MS to bring action plans with timetables to the November Board meeting.

9. Discussion on lay vs registrants for regulator Chair positions (Paper 10)

- 9.1 The Director of Standards and Policy introduced the paper. The Authority's previous position was that Chairs should be appointed on merit, irrespective of their background.
- 9.2 The Board was asked to discuss whether the Authority should monitor whether regulators appoint Chairs from both a registrant and lay background.
- 9.3 There was no strong evidence that other stakeholder groups had strong opinions on the matter, or that there was strong evidence that having a lay Chair would make a difference.
- 9.4 The Board agreed to recommend to the regulators and the DHSC to continue considering the issue and research the impact of lay Chairs in other sectors.

Action: AC to keep the Board up-to-date on the conversations with the DHSC and regulators.

10. Board work programme (Paper 11)

- 10.1 The Board noted the Board work programme, which will be reviewed at every meeting going forward.

11. Questions from Members of the Public

- 11.1 There were no questions from members of the public.
- 11.2 The Chair thanked the observers for their interest in the Authority.

12. Private session of the Board

- 12.1 The Board went into the private session of the meeting.



Signed by Chair

Date 15/09/21

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Action Log

In Progress Overdue Delayed Complete

Mtg. Date	Item No.	Action point	Owner	Date required	Action progress	Status
21 July 2021	3.2	Draft a business case for charging a fee for the 2022 Academic Conference	JC	24 August 2021	Discussed at FC meeting. A paper on the Academic Conference, including costs, will come to the November Board meeting.	Complete
21 July 2021	5.4	Organise meetings with the Health Ombudsmen of the Devolved Administrations	AC		In progress.	In Progress
21 July 2021	5.10	Circulate elevator statements to the Board and staff	CB	6 August 2021	To be completed in early September.	In Progress
21 July 2021	5.12	Organise Board workshop on social work and social care	CB	Late September	In diary for 28 and 29 September	Complete
21 July 2021	8.8	EDI action plans with timetables for the November Board meeting	MS	17 November 2021		In Progress
21 July 2021	9.4	Keep the Board up-to-date regarding DHSC and regulator conversations on the lay vs registrant Chair issue	AC	15 September 2021	A verbal update will be provided at the end of the private session.	Complete