



## OPEN BUSINESS

**Minutes of the Assembly Meeting held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018, 66-68 East Smithfield**

- Present:** Ash Soni (AS) - President, Martin Astbury (MA), Sibby Buckle (SB), David Carter (DCar), Sid Dajani (SD), Sandra Gidley (SG), Linda Hakes (LH), John McAnaw (JMc), Mahendra Patel (MP), Nigel Ratcliffe (NR), Suzanne Scott-Thomas (SST), David Thomson (DT)
- In attendance:** Paul Bennett (PB), Mair Davies (MD), Alison Douglas (AD), Catherine Duggan (CD), Peter Kopelman (PK) – Item 10 only, Alex MacKinnon (AMK), Simon Redman (SR), Kimberly Shields (KS) – Item 12 only, Brian Walters (BW)
- Apologies:** Hamish Wilson (HW), Paul Harris (PH)

Item	Related Paper	Minute	Action by
Item 01 Welcome & apologies		Apologies were received from Hamish Wilson and Paul Harris.	
Item 02 Code of Conduct & Remit of Assembly		The current Code of Conduct for governance members of the Society, and the remit of Assembly, were noted.	
Item 03 Declaration of Interests		The current declarations of interests for members were noted. SG added that her entry needed to be updated following submission of her annual declaration form.  ACTION - AD	AD
Item 04 Minutes		Minutes of the open business of the meeting held on 8 <sup>th</sup> November were agreed as a true and accurate record.	

<b>Item 05 Matters Arising</b>		<p><b>a) Item 05(c) – 2019 AGM date</b></p> <p>SR reported that, should Assembly wish to bring forward the date of the AGM next year, it would be possible to have both the accounts and audit report prepared to a timeline that would permit a meeting in April. It was therefore agreed that the 2019 AGM would be held in April.</p> <p>ACTION – SR/BW</p>	<b>SR/BW</b>
<b>Item 06 Updates from the National Boards</b>		<p>The latest updates from the National Boards were noted. A video compilation of highlights from the recent Welsh Medicines Safety Conference was shown and MD and SST were commended for hosting such a successful event. JMc hoped this would be added to the main RPS site and would like to see more examples of media from across all three countries being shared not only on the website but at FIP 2018 too.</p> <p>AMK noted that in Scotland the Primary Care Professions Collaborative, an amalgamation of 17 different professions, has increasingly grown in power and political influence and will be delivering a joint parliamentary event later in the year to increase pressure on the Scottish government.</p>	
<b>Item 07 President’s Report</b>		<p>The latest report from the President was noted.</p>	
<b>Item 08 Treasurer’s Report</b>		<p>Members noted the Treasurer’s March Report. SD questioned the high staff turnover level referred to in the report and the efforts being made to bring this down to a more acceptable level. He felt the current rate raised questions over staff happiness and wellbeing, and asked whether they felt they were being listened to and looked after adequately. He expressed doubt that the current high level was ‘indicative of a London based organisation’ as stated in the report and noted that t/o rates he had come across for comparable organisations in London tended to show a 10-15% turnover rate. He expressed concern that, even after a number of restructures over the last few years, the Society still didn’t appear to have got this ‘right’ and called for an independent external review/audit to be undertaken.</p> <p>AS reminded members that at the last Assembly meeting a decision had been taken to increase investment in staff training and development and he is aware that PB is already making changes in this area which will need to be seen through to completion before really having an impact on retention rates. PB informed members he has introduced a Senior Leadership Group development programme in addition to the Executive development programme but stressed that the initiatives in place in this are not a quick fix. AS therefore proposed the area be</p>	

	<p>considered again in July to see if improvement had begun. ACTION – SR/PB</p> <p>DT noted that staff turnover/retention is an item on the Risk Register and features in Executive team work plans for the coming year as it is recognised that it is not effective or efficient to have to recruit to posts so often.</p> <p>SR stated that he disagreed with most of the points SD had raised and noted that the Society had a fairly young, London based workforce. Benchmarking with comparable London organisations tended to be running with a baseline t/o of 15%, against RPS currently at 21.5% and the Exec team have set a target to get this down to 18% by the end of the year.</p> <p>SR assured members the Society is listening to its staff across a number of different forums such as the Employee Forum, exit interviews and an annual employee survey. He stressed that an HR section is included in every Business Information Pack which is considered every month by the Executive team and noted that both Audit &amp; Risk Committee and Finance &amp; Investment Committees are also monitoring the situation. He noted that p7-9 of the summary report contained in the BIP outline the reasons employees left the Society and the actions being undertaken bring the t/o levels down.</p> <p>SD then stated he was not happy that both the HR and Legal teams currently sit under the Finance &amp; Resources Director and believed this was likely to deter staff from whistleblowing and/or speaking out about the ‘real’ reasons they were leaving such as bullying and other practices they might be unhappy about but felt unable to speak up about. SR felt it was inappropriate for SD to comment in this way and disagreed with what he was suggesting.</p> <p>PB stressed that ‘people’ was one of the two highest priorities for him as CEO (alongside Membership) and the high turnover rate is taken extremely seriously by him personally as well as the Executive team as a whole. He disagreed that staff would leave the organisation because of where HR or Legal may sit within the Executive structure, and pointed out this was not reflected by the exit surveys which tended to site salary levels or career development as the main reasons for leaving. He believed there were many complex reasons behind why individuals left including that the Society was operating within a very competitive market place and would never be in a position to offer the highest salaries other sectors might be able to.</p> <p>SD asked that a whistleblowing policy be created and brought to Assembly in July for consideration but was informed by SR that this policy already exists, is up to date and is available to all staff but that an update report on. AS noted that he would first like to discuss with PB if this was appropriate as internal policies such as this are</p>	<p>SR/PB</p>
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		Executive rather than Assembly business.	
<b>Item 10 Faculty &amp; Education</b>		<p>Peter Kopelman attended for this item and gave a presentation on ‘Changing the Face of Pharmacy: Assuring Safe &amp; Effective Practice’.</p> <p>SD felt the presentation was very good but asked how the Society could move from having this as a ‘wish list’ into making it a reality. He believed increased investment was needed and that the Society needed to be careful not to over-reach ourselves within the existing resources.</p> <p>PK acknowledged this but felt it was important to make a start and believed this was best done with those who were at the very start of their pharmacy careers. He noted that the recent letter to him from the CPOs (copy circulated to Assembly members for information) did appear to acknowledge that some form of financial commitment would also be necessary.</p> <p>NR believed this was of the utmost importance for Assembly to support, and now was the key time to grasp this opportunity. He felt the Society should be setting the standards for post-graduate education (as would a Royal College) and taking the lead in this area which represents the future for the organisation and must therefore be prioritised. A suitably robust response to the CPOs letter was therefore necessary.</p> <p>MD believed this represented a ‘last chance’ for the RPS and the Society therefore needed to ensure that all necessary skills and resources are available to deliver the proposals, particularly in the light of CD and Ruth Wakeman leaving the organisation.</p> <p>CD stressed that the Society already has all it needs for implementation in place now, albeit a few tweaks might be necessary. The Society therefore needs to ensure it uses the existing resources accordingly, express its intentions and take swift action.</p> <p>PK feels that once a response has been sent to the CPOs letter the Society needs to increasingly publicise what it is doing in this area and what its plans for the future are. NR asked if Assembly members might have the opportunity to input into the response to the letter, albeit he appreciated the time frame for a response was very tight. Agreed PK will therefore send a holding response to CPOs latter today, with a full response to follow as a matter of urgency</p> <p>ACTION - PK</p>	PK

<p><b>Item 11 Science &amp; Research</b></p>		<p>Members noted the update on the work of the Faculty and Education Board given by Gino Martini and Christine Bond at the Working Day.</p>	
<p><b>Item 12 Governance Review</b></p>		<p>AD introduced a paper outlining proposals for a fundamental revision of the Society’s Regulations and other governance documentation following the conclusion of Phase One of the Corporate/Legal Governance Review. AS reminded members they had been asked to submit any substantive comments/queries on the proposals in advance of the meeting to allow the team to provide a detailed response. As he had received only one response from Paul Harris, giving his full support to all the proposed changes, he therefore proposed that the paper now be approved in its entirety.</p> <p>MA stated he was happy to approve the paper. LH noted a small number of minor typographical amendments which she would email to AD after the meeting. MP stated this was a very good piece of work and was happy to approve. Members then unanimously approved the changes in full.</p> <p>AD noted that, following approval by Assembly, the changes would need to be formally gazetted for 60 days to allow members to comment. If any substantive comments were received during the consultation, it was agreed these could be considered by COG in order to ensure the new Regulations could be in place by mid-June.</p> <p><b>ACTION - AD</b></p> <p>SG noted that one new item was the prohibition of use of mobile devices in Board/Assembly meetings during the voting process for the election of the Officers, Assembly Members, Board Chairs and Vice Chairs and asked why this had been added. AD explained that the use of mobile phones during the process was potentially disruptive and could leave the outcome of the vote open to question.</p> <p>AD noted that Phase Two of the review would get under way as soon as practical once the notice of the Phase One changes had been posted. She pointed out that the second phase work would be likely to take at least 12 - 18 months to complete, but that update reports would be brought back to Assembly meetings as appropriate.</p> <p>SG asked how the National Boards would be able to input into Phase Two of the review as it would be considering a number of areas that might potentially affect them. AD replied that all three Boards had not only an Assembly representative on the Phase Two Task and Finish group, but a Board representative as well and it would therefore be for these reps to report back on the work of the group to their individual Boards as appropriate.</p>	<p><b>AD</b></p>

		<p>Members were reminded that the list of governance points for consideration under Phase Two of the review was not exhaustive and could be added to at any point should members think of an issue that should be included. Any additions should be sent to AD for inclusion during the second phase. SB asked if the role of Vice Chair could be included – AD will therefore add to the list. ACTION - AD</p>	<p><b>AD</b></p>
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**ACTION SHEET – Induction Day 18<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who by</b>	<b>When</b>
Item 03 Declarations of Interest	DoI entry for SG to be updated	AD	Immediately
Item 05(a) AGM	Arrangements for 2019 AGM to be held in April to be made	SR/PB	2019
Item 08 Staff turnover	Report on staff retention to be produced	PB/SR	July meeting
Item 10 Faculty & Education	Response to CPOs letter to be sent	PK	As soon as possible
Item 12 Governance Review	Any member comments received to be sent to COG for consideration	AD	Start of June
	Role of Vice-Chair to be added to list of Phase 2 questions	AD	Immediately

