

Minutes of the Assembly Meeting held on Wednesday 20th March, 66-68 East Smithfield

- Present:** Ash Soni (AS) - President, Martin Astbury (MA), Ewan Black (EB), Sibby Buckle (SB), David Carter (DC), Sandra Gidley (SG), Linda Hakes (LH), Paul Harris (PH), John McAnaw (JMc), Mahendra Patel (MP), Nigel Ratcliffe (NR), Suzanne Scott-Thomas (SST), Hamish Wilson (HW)
- In attendance:** Karen Baxter (KB), Paul Bennett (PB), Mair Davies (MD), Alison Douglas (AD), Gail Fleming (GF), Helen Grey (HG), Jeremy Macdonald (JMCD), Alex MacKinnon (AMK), Gino Martini (GM), Simon Redman (SR), Harvey Sondh (HS), Robbie Turner (RT), Jamie Hayes (JH) WPB member
- Apologies:** None

Item	Related Paper	Minute	Action by
Item 01 Welcome & apologies		No apologies were received. NR, LH and HW were thanked for their work over the last two years as this would be the final meeting they attended before their term of office ended in July. JH, observer from WPB, was welcomed to the meeting.	
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 declaration of interests from members were noted.	

<p>Item 04 Minutes</p>		<p>Minutes of the open business of the meetings held on 14th November were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>	
<p>Item 05 Matters Arising</p>		<p>a) Pharmaceutical Scientist Assembly member AD confirmed that the President would now be included in the interview panel for the appointment of the new member in July.</p> <p>b) AGM RT confirmed the AGM would now be held 5.30pm – 6.30pm on 10th April at 66ES, following the EPB meeting. Although it has been announced to members, as required in the Regulations, this will not be a big member event. SG cautioned that the meeting must be quorate (<i>‘quorum for a general meeting shall be 20 Members or Fellows not including members of the Assembly’</i>).</p> <p>RT noted it was not currently planned to have the Welsh and Scottish offices open for members to attend ‘virtually’. SB however questioned this decision. SST also asked if it would be possible for a webex link to be created for Scot/Wales to join remotely. After discussion it was agreed that arrangements would be made for the two offices to be opened and for members to attend via webex.</p> <p>ACTION – RT/SR</p> <p>c) GB-wide policy RT outlined the current GB-wide policy creation process – ie policy is drafted by the three policy leads in each country, shared with the Chair and the policy lead of each National Board and amended if necessary, with final sign off by the three Board chairs (usually at the NBCF meetings).</p> <p>HW noted that the Governance Working Group had been discussing creation of GB-wide policy at some length when it met in February and had identified a gap (perceived or real) that might need to be addressed in this area. It will therefore be considering options and proposals that might help with this in their update for the Boards ahead of the next Board meetings. He noted that the Group were looking to enhance the existing process and ensure GB-wide work is ‘joined up’ rather than scrap it altogether.</p> <p>SB expressed some concern that Board members are not, at present, able to respond voluntarily to requests to speak and would like this looked at. MD however noted that a panel of expert advisors did already exist across the countries. LH noted that she had never once been asked to comment on any PharmSci issues, even though this</p>	<p>RT/SR</p>

		<p>was part of the formal role remit.</p> <p>PB informed members that if they did feel comms were currently under resourced and wanted him to increase spending in this area, he would do that however it would mean stopping doing something else first to remain within the current overall budget envelope. AS asked PB and RT to therefore review the current resources and see if anything was missing that might help us improve our comms in a cost effective way and create a business case if necessary for Assembly to consider.</p> <p>ACTION – PB/RT</p>	PB/RT
Item 06 National Board Reports		<p>The latest update reports from the three National Boards were noted.</p> <p>SG expressed disappointment that she had not been informed of the change to the format of the Board reports to Assembly which the Exec team had chosen to implement. RT confirmed however that the President has now formally decided the reports should now continue in their current format.</p>	
Item 07 President's Report		<p>The latest report from the President was noted.</p> <p>SB asked whether future reports could contain more narrative for items and provide a 'bird's eye view'. MH also felt outcomes from the meetings might be helpful for members to understand exactly what work the President undertakes.</p>	
Item 08 Treasurer's Report		<p>The latest report from the Treasurer was noted.</p> <p>SG questioned why the Executive had taken the decision to increase the mileage and breakfast/lunch expense allowances for staff without first obtaining Assembly approval. SR noted that the old rate was under HMRC limit, had not changed for the last seven years and the cost implications had only been estimated at c£2-3k so it was not considered material to bring to Assembly. He added that the proposal to increase the breakfast/lunch rates had arisen at the staff forum.</p> <p>HW suggested that the mileage issue might be something that fell under areas that Assembly had already 'designated' to the Exec and that this actually highlighted the need to ensure exactly what is delegated to the Exec team and various committees which he felt needed to be clarified.</p>	

		<p>Members particularly noted the risk that HMRC might consider people to be employees of the Society that are not on the RPS payroll. SR noted that HMRC changed their rules from October and there was now an increased onus on employers to prove that particular individuals were <i>not</i> employees. He noted that if an individual spent more than a relatively small number of days working for the Society per year there was a need to ensure measures were in place to ensure they are not considered employees (in the first instance this was most likely to relate to the two office holders ie President and Treasurer). SR is currently taking legal advice to help with this and will provide information to Assembly and Boards once he has more concrete information. AS asked that he check what other Royal Colleges are doing about this for their own ex-officio roles.</p> <p>ACTION - SR</p> <p>DC did think this would eventually end up being applicable for Assembly and Board members too, not just President & Treasurer, because they are elected to their posts and so cannot be 'substituted' at meetings etc.</p> <p>SB noted that this may, outwith the governance of the Society, have wider implications for locums in the industry and RPS members may therefore be expecting the Society to have a position on this.</p>	<p>SR</p>
<p>Item 09 Education & Professional Development</p>		<p>The latest update paper was noted.</p> <p>NR noted that medics, for example, do not have to go through the whole ACP training and would like to see the Society look at what is in an Advanced Clinical Practitioner qualification, subtract what pharmacists already have with their qualifications and then provide a diploma type qualification to bring them up to the same level.</p> <p>GF noted that at present individuals simply identify the relevant modules and train in these areas which usually takes about 18 months. What's likely to happen future is a mix of apprenticeship and CPD to bring people up to ACP level. NR acknowledge this and asked if GF might need any extra resources from Assembly to be able to do this.</p> <p>NR had grave concerns about what is currently being proposed in the GPhC IEC standards. He noted they had worded the consultation on this in such a way as to make it difficult to disagree with any of the statements made however he believed the changes proposed will remove the basic science/knowledge elements that are fundamental to the day-to-day practice as a pharmacist. The new standards are therefore a threat and should be</p>	

		<p>added to the risk register – AGREED. ACTION – SR</p> <p>NR believed the large number of new medical places and medical schools will effect recruitment to pharmacy as the new standards make this a less attractive choice. NR would also like the Society to look at new science and areas not currently covered in medical/dental/veterinary curricula and ensure they are instead covered by pharmacy education standards and/or pharma degrees.</p> <p>GF asked if the Pharmacy Schools Council might be able to work with the Medical Schools Council on this – NR will therefore raise it at the next PSC meeting in April.</p> <p>ACTION - NR</p> <p>He would like to see RPS prepare an alternative, go to the GPhC and sat the foundation programme can reach their objectives without making pharmacy less attractive.</p> <p>GF has worked extensively to discuss these issues with both F&E and S&R Boards as well as the National Boards, and also created a portal for members to comment, to help inform the Society’s response. She has also met directly with GPhC and is still collating our response but briefly outlined the headline points to date. GF also stressed the importance of individuals also submitting their responses to the consultation directly to GPhC as well as the Society.</p> <p>LH noted that the science based learning outcomes may need breaking down into smaller pieces and will help work with GF to look at this.</p> <p>JMc asked whether the Faculty Review Group have had any volunteers from Scotland yet – GF will investigate.</p> <p>SB asked if the need for Faculty re-accreditation was going to be included the review – GF confirmed it would.</p>	<p>SR</p> <p>NR</p>
Item 10 Science & Research		<p>GM was commended on the successful Science and Research Summit held earlier in the year and was encouraged to run the same event again, although not necessarily on an annual basis, with the possibility of opening it up to even more members.</p> <p>a) Research Ready</p> <p>GM noted that concern had been raised at the Summit by a number of people over the quality of research</p>	

		<p>currently undertaken in pharmacy and this had led him to create the presentation given to Assembly members at the meeting in which he proposed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a task and finish group to advise and support on recommendations • Redevelop the Research Ready Programme to engage pharmacists in research • Review purpose and target audience of the programme • Simplify the application process/participation <p>with final recommendations to be brought back to Assembly in November.</p> <p>He reminded members that currently the Society only has license to run the RR programme in community pharmacies, not in GP surgeries (via the license model from RCGP). He therefore sought permission to establish a task and finish group to decide whether to continue at all and if so to develop proposals for Assembly in November - AGREED. Members were invited to send any recommendations for membership of the group directly to him.</p> <p>ACTION – GM</p>	GM
<p>Item 11 Governance Review</p>		<p>HW updated members on the areas covered at the February meeting of the Governance Review Working Group.</p> <p>A more detailed paper on the outcomes of the discussions at the February Governance meeting will be prepared and submitted for further discussion by the National Boards in April. There will then be at least one further meeting of the Group to consider an interim report to the July Assembly. The Group determined that its work must be concluded, and a final report containing its recommendations submitted to Assembly, in November 2019.</p> <p>HW informed members that in order to maintain continuity, notwithstanding any changes to Board or Assembly membership in July, PB has proposed that the membership and chairing of the Group should remain as it is until completion of the work in November 2019 – AGREED.</p> <p>HW reminded members that the working group had been established to provide specific recommendations but that it was ultimately down to Assembly members to make the final decisions.</p> <p>A number of members raised the issue of term limits, particularly with respect to Board composition and diversity. HW replied that this had been discussed at some length at the Working Group meeting in February and would be discussed again when the group next meets. He also reiterated the importance of the Board reps being the</p>	

		conduit to bring the views of Board members back to the Group.	
<p>Item 13 Any other business</p>		<p>a) Bullying SG noted the current discussion on social media around bullying and asked whether the RPS had a policy on this. PB confirmed that bullying was covered by a number of RPS documents and policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct for members (and additional Code for Members of Governance Bodies) • Dignity & Respect at Work Policy (the agreement letters signed by all Board and Assembly members binds them to observe all the policies of the Society) • specific two page guidance for use of social media from Paul Bennett <p>SG suggested it might be sensible to put all the documents together in one easily accessible place and the comms team might do more to increase the visibility of the social media guide on the website.</p> <p>ACTION – RT</p> <p>PB agreed for the need to be rational and not emotional and focussed on what we can control and deal with each incident separately.</p> <p>AS asked members to refer any contact back to NP and the comms team.</p>	

ACTION SHEET – Assembly Meeting 20th March OPEN BUSINESS

Item	Action	Who by	When
Item 05b AGM	Remote attendance for members at WPB/SPB office to be arranged	RT/SR	AGM meeting
Item 05c GB-wide policy	Review of resourcing for comms	PB/RT	As soon as practical
Item 08 Treasurer's Report	Advice to be provided on Board/Assembly member payments and new HMRC rules	SR	As soon as possible
Item 09 Education	GPhC IEC standards to be added to Risk Register Possibility of RPS/PhSC and MSC working jointly on pharmacy recruitment etc to be investigated	SR GF/NR	Immediately As soon as practical
Item 10 Research Ready	Research Ready Task & Finish Group to be established	GM	Immediately
Item 13 Bullying	Increased visibility given to RPS policies and guidelines on bullying, social media, behaviours and conduct	RT	Immediately

