

OPEN BUSINESS

Minutes of the Assembly Meeting held on Wednesday 14th November, 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), Alina Lourie (AL), Jeremy Macdonald (JMcD), Alex MacKinnon (AMK), Gino Martini (GM), Simon Redman (SR), Ravi Sharma (RS), Harvey Sondh (HS), Robbie Turner (RT), Christine Bond (CB), Peter Kopelman (PK), Hanna Jenvey (HJ) – Item 13(b) only

Apologies: None

Item	Related Paper	Minute	Action by
Item 01 Welcome & apologies		No apologies were received.	
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.	
Item 04 Minutes		Minutes of the open business of the meetings held on 17 th & 18 th July were agreed as a true and accurate record.	

<p>Item 05 Matters Arising</p>	<p>a) Item 05(a) – 2019 AGM</p> <p>The paper outlining options for the 2019 AGM was discussed. SG noted that the options provided did not resolve the issue of de-coupling the AGM with the June Board meetings and felt that none of them really improved things. SR noted it might be possible to meet deadlines that would enable the meeting to be held during the April round of Board meetings as the accounts would have been approved at the March Assembly meeting.</p> <p>NR asked that consideration be given to holding AGMs at different HEIs throughout the country. As well as achieving the objectives of the AGM, this would give an opportunity for students to understand the basics of an AGM, to meet the RPS staff and for the RPS to have another opportunity of being visible throughout the UK.</p> <p>Although the paper gave the option for revolving the meeting around the three countries, SB felt it should remain at 66ES as it gave an opportunity to showcase the building to members. NR however disagreed and felt too many events were 'London centric'. He noted that many HEIs would be happy to host the event at their campus and this might help the Society increase engagement with students. JMc stressed that the Society was a GB-wide organisation and should be looking to engage with members around the three countries, not just London and would therefore support the meeting being held at, say, a Scottish university.</p> <p>MA cautioned against confusing the purpose of the AGM with wider 'member engagement/showcase' events. He noted that both Wales and Scotland did already host a virtual live streaming of the AGM in their respective offices for members in those countries to attend. SST agreed that the purpose of the AGM needed to be clarified before any final decision could be made. AS informed members that the meeting had a number of statutory/regulatory items it has to cover and these could actually be done in about 20 minutes. This content meant the meeting per se could never be a really inspirational event as it was completely procedural. He therefore felt the meeting should be de-coupled from showcasing the organisation and that inspiring/engaging with members should be done across a whole host of other events.</p> <p>SG cautioned against appearing to look as if the Society was trying to make the AGM more opaque and that any significant change to the format would need to be communicated carefully and in the context of all the other opportunities members would have for participating in.</p> <p>After discussion it was agreed to implement the following changes to the AGM for 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • separate the AGM from any member engagement event • hold in April 	<p>SR/RT</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a clear position before the end of this year on what the comms plan will be around this, including how the Society can increase visits to universities and support engagement with students <p>ACTION – SR/RT</p> <p>b) Item 05(b) - Governance Review HW introduced a paper updating members on the work of the Governance Review Task & Finish Group. He particularly asked members to note the two final points in the paper.</p> <p>He informed members that a day-long meeting was being held on 19th November where it was hoped progress could be made on some of the more complex questions being considered and an update on this would be provided for Assembly and Boards.</p> <p>SG was happy to be re-assured that the Group was working openly but asked for further assurance that there was no barrier to having full information and sight of relevant papers where possible. MA suggested that this be discussed at the meeting on 19th.</p> <p>AD reminded members that, whatever the final recommendations of the Group, it would be Assembly that had the final say on whether any of them should be accepted and implemented.</p>	
<p>Item 06 Effective Dates</p>		<p>a) Effective Dates The 2019 effective dates for the National Pharmacy Boards were noted.</p> <p>SG questioned the section in the paper for the 2019 Assembly effective dates which stated ‘the requirement in Regulation 7 that any sitting President will automatically be appointed as a Board Assembly rep for their respective National Board does not apply in their second year of office as President’.</p> <p>She noted that the initial decision of Assembly that the sitting President be automatically returned as a Board Assembly rep had been taken before the decision to extend the term of office for the post to two years and since that second decision, the question had not been specifically discussed again. She believed however the intent of Assembly had been that the experience and knowledge of the immediate past President should not be lost and consequently the sitting President should be automatically returned in their second year of office as they were in their first year. Members agreed this was what the intention had been and AD will therefore ensure the governance documents/process reflect this where appropriate and the automatic place for the sitting President is</p>	

		<p>actioned in 2019.</p> <p>b) 2019 Election Scheme The 2019 Election Scheme was noted and approved.</p>	
Item 07 Appointed Assembly Members		<p>The paper outlining the procedures for appointing the Lay, Academic and Pharmaceutical Scientist members of Assembly was noted.</p> <p>LH noted that the IPG had now changed its name to the Industrial Pharmacy Forum and the APG may have been disbanded. SG asked that a governance body member be included in the appointment panel for the PharmSci member and it was agreed that the President should therefore be included. AD to amend the governance documentation/process where appropriate</p>	
Item 08 Updates from the National Boards		<p>The latest updates from the National Boards were noted, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England - RS was welcomed in post as the new Director for England • Scotland - increasingly looking to develop digital engagement with RPS Locals and currently engage with ~40% of members locally • Wales - Medicines Safety Conference being held on 22nd November, local engagement suffered slightly due to the large workload of the team but even so, membership has increased by 3% 	
Item 09 President's Report		<p>The report from the President was tabled later in the day for information and members were asked to contact AS directly with any questions.</p>	
Item 10 Treasurer's Report		<p>The latest report from the Treasurer was noted. MP added that he was pleased a much more robust process was now in place for scrutinising the budget and that this had helped him to be able to give Assembly members increased assurance that the outcomes proposed within it can be delivered. He noted that as the Finance & Investment Committee will, in future, be meeting four times a year it will be able to provide each Assembly meeting with an update on progress with business cases and against budget targets etc.</p> <p>He thanked SR and the Executive Team for the work done to get the budget finalised and informed members that he would be happy to meet with any of them at any point throughout the year to go through any questions they might have.</p>	

<p>Item 11 Education & Professional Development</p>		<p>The annual report from the Faculty & Education Board was noted.</p> <p>NR stressed that in all of the education initiatives currently ongoing and fora for debate, there was an opportunity for the RPS to act as a catalyst for greater partnership and collaboration and the HEIs had made a request to be included much earlier. He emphasised that the RPS would need to explore and understand clearly the proposals currently being consulted on by the GPhC for the new Initial Education and Training Standards and that an RPS position would be required. NR stressed that there needed to be an understanding that there can be no assumption that universities will continue to find the offering of an UG programme attractive. It was therefore vital that the UG MPharm continues to be an attractive degree and that the UK maintains a competitive position in Pharmacy education.</p> <p>.</p> <p>NR and LH further requested that the RPS help to assure that UG education continues to be attractive for the many opportunities the profession offers as there is concern that the content is being adjusted purely for perceived “clinical roles”. Both felt the Society must ensure that the skills of the pharmacist continue to be differentiated.</p> <p>SST noted there was an increasing challenge in Wales around who was picking up responsibility for Technician education standards. The feeling was it should be EGOB, but currently this was a big area of risk for the profession as no one had been formally instructed to do so, a concern that was shared by the CPO in Wales.</p> <p>PK however stressed the need to first have the necessary resources to fund the pharmacist related work of EGOB, which still had not been forthcoming. AS felt the Society did need to press harder for resources for the work of EGOB, particularly if it was going to consider doing more for Technicians. He believed the RPS should therefore make it clear it would like to support Pharmacy Technicians but that it was essential the Society were provided with the necessary resources to do so. The Society needed to input into GPhC training standards, either via Faculty & Education/EGOB or National Boards. He therefore asked that future Faculty & Education Board and EGOB reports be sent to the National Boards and Assembly to help increase discussion about this that was initially informed by the work of the F&E Board. It was important that representatives from RPS at EGOB were informed of the Board views to ensure that was the view they reflected.</p>	
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	<p>HW noted the lack of relationship still between the Society and Pharmaceutical Technicians, and asked what was being done to tackle this not least as it caused confusion with members of the public. SST agreed that the Society did need to address the Technicians issue and this should be brought back as a substantial item at Assembly following discussions at the three National Boards.</p> <p>NR believed the Society could not assume that pharmacy would continue to be an attractive profession in the future, and highlighted the increasing issue of grade erosion for admissions onto pharmacy degree courses. LH agreed there was a risk university applicants no longer saw pharmacy as a 'vocational' degree on a par with medicine but instead felt that it was a 'second rate' medical degree. It was therefore important to ensure that the unique skills of pharmacists as experts in medicines continue to be recognised.</p> <p>SG noted this chimed with an item she had been planning to raise under AOB. It seemed that universities were reducing their entry grades or face reduced cohorts if they did not and it appeared, at the same time, that some students were not choosing pharmacy in the face of an increase in the number of medical degrees. She believed all of which fundamentally affect the future of the profession and although Assembly and the National Boards should take advice from the Faculty & Education Board, an organisation-wide position must be maintained on the expectation for entry to pharmacy degrees. NR felt the Society must ensure that even if entry requirements for degree courses are lowered the final degree exam levels are not.</p> <p>PK felt the challenge was for the Society to promote pharmacy and show that it can be an attractive profession and there was a need therefore to create a career framework which shows how they will be rewarded. To do this may well need an increase in resources which should come from all parties who have an interest in sustaining pharmacy as a profession.</p> <p>PB noted that operationally the Society has the necessary mechanism to input into the GPhC consultation already, however much bigger questions had clearly been raised at the meeting today (eg Technicians) on which a decision needed to be made. It was therefore agreed that time would be devoted at the March Assembly meeting to discuss the question of Pharmacy Technicians.</p> <p>ACTION – AD</p>	<p>AD</p>
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Commented [LH1]: Can this be added as an Action point?

		<p>It was further agreed that RPS would respond to the GPhC consultation and that representatives from science would be included.</p> <p>ACTION – GF/GM</p> <p>PB noted that there was currently no provision in the 2019 budget to take on additional work in this area, and the Society has struggled so far to even obtain the funding that was promised for the work done to date, consequently he would be very sceptical of getting any funding for work around Pharmacy Technicians.</p>	GF/GM
Item 12 Science & Research Board		<p>The 2018 Annual Report from the Science & Research Board was noted.</p> <p>GM informed members he will be interviewing the Chair of Novartis tomorrow to help highlight how the Society can talk to key influencers in industry. He went on to inform members that recently there had been an issue around the selection of posters for the Science & Research summit following changes he introduced to the established process which unfortunately led to the Chair of the selection panel standing down. He reassured members this had now been resolved and he has the full support of the new chair and the panel members, as well as a robust process in place for assessing research posters.</p> <p>HW noted that the Assembly didn't tend to look at the future in terms of what the Society might want to do around Science & Research policy, nor did it in terms of Education policy etc, which he felt might be a gap in its remit as these were all GB-wide areas. He informed members that policy making in general was an item on the agenda for consideration at the forthcoming Governance Review meeting. AS agreed an item at the March Assembly might also be included to discuss where/how GB-wide policy was created.</p> <p>ACTION – AD</p>	AD
Item 13 FIP Congress & RPS Annual Conference		<p>a) 2018 FIP Congress report AS noted that as this item contained commercially sensitive information it would now be taken in Confidential information.</p> <p>b) 2019 Annual Conference HJ attended for this item and gave members an update on work done to date. The new Conference Steering Group has now held its first meeting and the overall feeling was that the Society needs to do something completely differently with the Annual Conference in 2019 or not hold one at all. The Group also recognised that it needed</p>	

		<p>representation from pharmacists at an earlier stage in their career so two additional members will now be sought who are in the first 10 years of their careers.</p> <p>A decision would be needed from the Group by the end of November and HJ will ensure Assembly members are provided with an update once this has been made. Any Assembly members who might have suggestions for the Conference were asked to contact RT/HJ as soon as possible.</p> <p>ACTION – HJ/RT</p>	HJ/RT
Item 14 Annual Health & Safety Report		<p>The Annual Health & Safety Report was noted.</p> <p>SB asked where the asbestos referred to in the future plans had been found. SR replied it was in the wallpaper in the basement of the new Scottish Office but reassured members that its safe removal was not expected to be problematic.</p>	
Item 15 Any Other Business		<p>a) Women in Pharmacy</p> <p>SG asked what the Society was doing to ensure that momentum from the Women in Pharmacy conference over the summer was not lost, particularly with Claire Thomson’s departure from the RPS. RT stressed that CT had not been the only member of staff working on developments in the area of diversity and equality and the team will continue to build on the work that was started for the conference.</p> <p>SG would like to ensure the women in leadership aspect of the work doesn’t get lost in the rest of the diversity and equality work but is a distinct project in its own right. She asked for information on what the next women in leadership event would be and when it would take place and asked that a paper be brought to the March Assembly meeting outlining developments/work in this area. ACTION - RT</p>	RT
Item 16 Date of next meeting		Noted that the next meeting would take place on 19 th /20 th March.	

ACTION SHEET – Induction Day 18th July 2017

Item	Action	Who by	When
Item 05(a) AGM	Clearer proposals for 2019 AGM to be produced	SR/RT	March Assembly
Item 11 Pharmacy Technicians	Pharmacy Technicians to be added to March Assembly agenda	AS/AD	March Assembly
item 11 GPhC Consultation	RPS (including Science reps) to input into GPhC Initial Education & Training Standards consultation	GM/GF	As soon as possible
Item 12 GB-Wide Policy	Process for creating GB-wide policy to be added to March Assembly agenda	AS/AD	March Assembly
Item 13 2019 Annual Conference	Paper outlining proposals for 2019 Annual Conference to be brought to March Assembly	RT	March Assembly
Item 15 Women in Leadership	Paper outlining latest developments/events re Women in Leadership to be brought to March Assembly	RT	March Assembly

