



***Minutes for Public Council Meeting No. 89
Thursday 21st June 2018
PSI House, Fenian Street, Dublin 2***

The public session of the 89th meeting of the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland, established under the Pharmacy Act 2007 commenced at 08:45am on Thursday, 21 June 2018 at PSI House, Fenian Street, Dublin 2.

Present: Mr. Rory O'Donnell, President, Ms. Nicola Cantwell, Vice-president, Mr. Hugo Bonar, Mr. Graham Knowles, Mr. Sean Reilly, Ms. Louisa Power, Ms. Veronica Treacy, Mr. Shane McCarthy, Mr. Michael Lyons, Mr. Paul Turpin, Ms. Ann Sheehan, Assoc. Prof. Sheila Ryder, Mr. Fintan Foy, Ms. Fiona Walsh, Ms. Mary Rose Burke, Ms. Joanne Kissane, Ms. Muireann Ní Shuilleabháin and Mr. Pat O'Dowd.

PSI Staff: Mr. Niall Byrne, Ms. Louise Canavan, Mr. John Bryan, Dr. Lorraine Horgan, Ms. Damhnait Gaughan, Ms. Aoife Mellett and Mr. Conor O'Leary, Mr. Éanna O Lochlainn. Other PSI staff members also attended for part of the meeting.

Election of President and Vice-President of the PSI Council

Ms. Sinead O'Keeffe, Presiding Officer for the election, reminded Council that there was one candidate for each of the positions of President and Vice-President for the purpose of the election, and she invited the candidates, Rory O'Donnell and Nicola Cantwell respectively, to address the Council and answer any questions their Council colleagues might have. Ms. O'Keeffe advised that the majority of ballot papers had been received by postal vote in advance and remaining Council members were invited to cast their votes.

The Presiding Officer and Deputy Presiding Officer, Ms. Louise Canavan, left the room to count the votes. Following the count, the Presiding Officer informed Council that Mr. Rory O'Donnell, was deemed to have been duly elected PSI Council President. Ms. Nicola Cantwell was duly elected PSI Council Vice President.

Mr. O'Donnell thanked Council, and took the chair.

Public Gallery: The President, Mr. Rory O'Donnell, welcomed the attendees in the public gallery.

A. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Ms. Dorothy Donovan, Dr. Ailis Quinlan, Dr. Paul Gorecki.

B. Declaration of Interests

Under item B of the Council Agenda, the President drew Council members' attention to their obligations under paragraph 9 of Schedule 1 to the Pharmacy Act 2007, which deals with the necessary disclosure of certain interests by members of the Council. Those requirements are also reflected in the Code of Conduct adopted for Council members which requires that Council members *"be honest and open with regard to conflicts of interest (either real or perceived). Members must not use their position for personal gain in either business, political or social relationships. Therefore, a member who has, or may be perceived to have, such a personal interest in a particular matter under consideration should declare that interest, withdraw from all discussions relating to it and take no part in any vote on such matter."*

No conflicts of interest were declared.

C. Draft Minutes of Public Council Meeting No. 88

The President noted that the draft minutes of public Council meeting, number 88 had previously been circulated to Council members, and one amendment had been received.

Decision: The Council approved the minutes of the public session of Council meeting number 88, held on the 17th of May 2018, on the proposal of Ms. Ann Sheehan, and seconded by Mr. Pat O'Dowd.

D. Office of the Registrar

D1. Report of the Register

The Registrar addressed Council and gave an overview, by means of a presentation, of recent developments, including the following key updates:

The Registrar noted the PSI's Head of Education and Registration, and the Education Manager met with Mr. Damian Day, Head of Education at the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), at PSI House in May 2018. Constructive engagement and discussion

followed, building on the previous meeting held between the GPhC and Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (PSNI), where the challenges of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union were discussed.

The Registrar informed Council that a new query submission form had been introduced for pharmacists with pharmacy practice-related queries. The form highlighted the numerous resources available on the PSI website to assist pharmacists in resolving their queries, including pharmacy and medicines legislation, pharmacy practice guidance, inspectors' advice on improving compliance, pharmacy practice updates and frequently asked questions (FAQs).

The Registrar informed Council that the Irish Institute of Pharmacy (IIOF) had furnished its report on the April 2018 Practice Review Events. Sixty-four (64) pharmacists attended the events, held over two days. Sixty-three (63) pharmacists demonstrated competence in all competencies with 1 pharmacist requiring further review in the Clinical Knowledge competency. No pharmacists required further review in the Standardised Pharmacy Interactions competency. One pharmacist did not participate in the event. Mr. Michael Lyons sought clarification on the numbers quoted, noting that 84 invitations had been issued. Ms Damhnait Gaughan clarified for the Council the processes involved in managing attendance numbers and undertook to review the reporting of same to ensure absolute clarity. A query arose in respect of the nature of feedback from participants and Ms. Gaughan committed to looking at this.

The Registrar noted the Working Group on the strategic future of the IIOF has been set up, supported by the Head of Registration and Education, and an initial meeting was held on 19 June to discuss how best to approach this work.

The Registrar informed Council that, as part of the PSI's ongoing work to promote the recommendations of the Future Pharmacy Practice Report to key stakeholders, the Registrar and the Head of Policy met the National Director of the HSE's Quality Improvement Division on 11 June.

Commenting on the Preliminary Proceedings Committee Annual Report for 2017, the Registrar noted the Committee had highlighted issues which the profession should be mindful of, and which might be of assistance in avoiding complaints being made against members of the profession.

The Registrar informed Council that greater use of the callover system was now being made in relation to the management of complaints, whereby early applications for undertakings, in appropriate cases, were being presented to the Health and the Professional Conduct Committees for their consideration at an early stage in the complaint/disciplinary process. He noted that this was part of PSI's ongoing work to make the regulatory processes as streamlined and as effective as possible in keeping with the objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy. Mr Shane McCarthy noted the benefits which had arisen from

the use of the callover system, including the cost benefits, and which had been substantial in his view.

The Registrar informed Council that, as part of a recent Records Management Week, the PSI had securely destroyed 2,000 kilos of paper records. This work was undertaken in accordance with the PSI's record management policy, and in keeping with requirements under the General Data Protection Regulation. He thanked colleagues for their commitment to this project.

The Registrar informed Council of a recent ESRI seminar at which research findings from the Hippocrates projection model of healthcare demand were presented as well as other research in relation to planning for the future Irish healthcare system.

The Registrar informed Council that to mark the end of Green Ribbon month in May, (a national initiative to encourage people to end mental health stigma), staff had been circulated with useful tips, articles and videos which focused on specific themes and topics associated with mental health wellbeing. Mr. Sean Reilly noted the importance of such initiatives and reminded the Registrar that it would also be useful for Council members to receive training regarding mental health issues, mindful of the issues Council dealt with as part of the disciplinary process. The Registrar informed Mr. Reilly that this was being looked into, and a provider was being sought with a view to a presentation to Council at its October meeting.

D2. Q2 Implementation of the Service Plan 2018

An implementation report showing performance against the 2018 Service Plan had been provided to the Council in advance of the meeting. The Registrar informed Council that of the 20 objectives listed on the Service Plan Implementation Report, 6 were amber (behind schedule), but he was confident that they would be back on track by the end of the year. He noted that delivery of some of the objectives in the Service Plan are dependent on sanction being received from the Department of Health in order to make and/or substantiate new staff appointments. In response to a request from Mr. Graham Knowles for more information on the Service Plan items per quarter, the Registrar informed Council work was ongoing on developing a Service Plan reporting template for Council and that a more detailed review of progress against the 2018 Service Plan objectives would be provided for discussion at the September Council meeting.

D3. Report on the Regional Seminars for Superintendent Pharmacists

The Registrar informed Council that the report on the regional seminars held in March and April for superintendent pharmacists would be published on the PSI's website and e-mailed to all registrants.

D4. Proposal to Develop Standards for Governance and Accountability in Community Pharmacies

The Registrar informed Council of the proposal to develop a standards-based approach to governance and accountability for retail pharmacy businesses. Discussion on the potential use of standards as part of PSI's approach to pharmacy regulation had been explored during the 11 regional seminars with superintendent pharmacists earlier in 2018 and had been positively received.

He noted that regulatory standards were already in use by HIQA and the Mental Health Commission, and that Standards had the potential to be a very effective addition to PSI's regulatory mechanisms. The Registrar stated that standards had significant potential to empower the service provider and provide accountability to the service user. Mr. Conor O'Leary, Head of Pharmacy Practice Development, outlined to Council the proposed approach to be taken with this project and stated that standards would be more outcomes focused, less prescriptive, and would emphasise both relevance and practicality.

The Registrar proposed that a Standards Advisory Group comprising of key stakeholders, including those from the pharmacy sector and patient groups, together with independent experts, should be convened. The Standards Advisory Group would use their expertise to guide and inform the work of PSI staff in the development of standards to ensure that they were useful, practical, and would meet their objectives.

Ms. Mary Rose Burke welcomed the proposals, noting that the profession as a whole has become overly dependent on Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) as a quality assurance tool. The Registrar expressed the hope that the new standards would be creative, innovative, and risk-based, and hoped that the profession would engage with the PSI in their co-design. Ms. Veronica Treacy asked if it was the intention for hospital pharmacists to be represented on the Advisory Committee, and the Registrar agreed this would be the case.

Mr. Sean Reilly stated that a standards-based approach was the way to go, but cautioned against what he termed a 'scores on the doors' system, as had been applied in the UK. The Registrar stated that it was not his intention to introduce a ratings-based system, which he believed was not necessary and which could create more problems than it would solve.

Ms. Marie Louisa Power stated that having previously worked in a sector which used a standards-based approach, she strongly endorsed its proposed implementation, although it would be a marked change for the pharmacy sector. Mr. Michael Lyons also welcomed it. Mr. Hugo Bonar requested that a review period be specified in the final draft, as standards were constantly evolving.

With regard to discussion on regulatory terminology, the Vice-president reiterated a previous request that clarification be provided to registrants in the PSI Newsletter on the difference between Guidelines and standards etc, as a matter of clarity for registrants. The Registrar responded that this would be addressed.

Decision: Council approved the Terms of Reference for the Standards Advisory Group, as well as the proposed process and timeline for the project, on the proposal of Mr. Hugo Bonar, and seconded by Ms. Joanne Kissane.

D5. Update from the IOP Strategic Review Working Group

Ms. Mary Rose Burke informed Council that the Group had its first meeting at which direction of travel was discussed. She expressed the hope that the outcome of the Group's work would be that the profession would be provided with a road map which would allow it to take ownership of its own future development.

D6. Update from the Legislative Review Working Group

The Vice-president informed Council that the Group had its first meeting and had scoped out a project which would involve two phases; one to identify where pharmacy was now, and the other, to identify where pharmacy was going, with a view to approaching the Department of Health this time next year, with concrete proposals in relation to legislative changes required. Mr. Paul Turpin expressed the view that a political desire for change would need to be created. Mr. Graham Knowles queried if the project would require external resources, as had been mentioned. The Vice-president advised that Dr. Cora Nestor, was providing executive support to the Group, and was assessing the project needs, but that external expertise could add weight to any proposal. Mr. Shane McCarthy advised the Council that availability of legislative drafters could prove challenging and the PSI may have to do the ground work on this initially. Mr. Hugo Bonar suggested that an agreed strategy should be decided on first, and only then, should drafting be countenanced. The Registrar noted that the subject of legislative reform would be discussed with the Department of Health at a meeting on 12 July and that he and Dr. Nestor would report back to the Working Group on the outcome of the meeting.

E1. Report from the Audit and Risk Committee

Mr. Paul Turpin, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, informed Council that the most recent meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee had been chaired, in his absence, by Mr. Graham Knowles. Mr. Knowles stated that a copy of the Report from the Audit and Risk Committee had been circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. He invited questions from members of Council. Council was content with the Report and Council had no questions.

E2. Approval for Appointment of Internal Auditors

Mr. Paul Turpin outlined the role of the PSI's internal auditors to Council, and informed Council that the PSI had invited tenders for this role, under the terms of an Office of Government Procurement (OGP) framework. Following this, three companies had tendered for the contract. Following careful bid assessment by an evaluation team comprising of two senior PSI staff and a member of the Audit & Risk Committee, with advice from an OGP advisor, he was recommending to Council that the contract be awarded to Crowleys DFK. The proposed new contract would run for three years with an option to extend for a further one year.

Decision: The Council appointed Crowleys DFK as the PSI's internal auditors with the contract to run for an initial term of 3 years and with an option to extend for one further year at the PSI's discretion, on the proposal of Ms. Mary Rose Burke, and seconded by Ms. Joanne Kissane.

E3. Approval of Report on Review of Council Sub-structures, and Next Steps

The President presented the Report on the Review of Council Sub-Structures to Council, noting that good work had been done by all concerned. The Registrar expressed the view that the recommendations represented a further advance in the good governance of PSI and that the PSI Executive would work with the Council on implementing the recommendations, including ensuring that external members of the current committees were kept informed of developments. He said that his hope was that the new sub-structure template could be presented to Council for approval at its meeting in September, with the possibility of the new structure being formally adopted in October.

Ms. Mary Rose Burke stated that in general she supported the changes being proposed, but raised concern as to the proposed Special Purposes Committee – that there was a risk of it

becoming a standing committee where decisions might be taken outside of the appropriate Council setting. Associate Professor Sheila Ryder welcomed the recommendations, but she was concerned that under the new proposals, the workload of three existing committees, was now being delegated to a single committee. Mr. Pat O'Dowd asked whether it was the case that internal staff /structural changes would also need to be considered in view of the proposed committee changes, and the Registrar advised that such a review was included in the 2018 Service Plan and would commence in Q3. Mr. Fintan Foy welcomed the Report's recommendations but cautioned against rushing to implement them as the changes envisaged in the Report were substantial.

Points for clarification were raised by different members, and it was asked that these be reflected in a final copy of the report, including that the procedure of the Nominations Sub-Group, including liaison with Committee Chairs be accurately reflected, and that there be clarity as to the intentions of the proposed 'phase 2 (2-3 year) recommendations'.

Decision: Council agreed to adopt the recommendations of Report on Review of Council Sub-structures, with caveats, on the proposal of Ms. Muireann Ní Shuilleabháin, and seconded by Mr. Fintan Foy

E3. Proposal on Management of Council Business

The Registrar addressed Council regarding a paper which had been circulated to Council in advance of the meeting and in which he had outlined a number of proposals regarding the better management of Council meetings.

He noted the lengthy and demanding nature of the meetings as currently structured which require Council to manage a substantial workload in the course of a single, often quite long, day. He pointed out that there was an onus on the PSI to make best use of its resources, to maintain high standards of performance across all of its functions, and for Council to be seen to organise its business in an efficient and effective manner which best serves the public interest.

The Registrar suggested the following:

1. Council meetings should be scheduled over a Wednesday afternoon and a Thursday morning,
2. All private business (including governance and risk matters of a confidential nature, etc.) should be scheduled for the Wednesday session, commencing at 12:30pm, and ideally, concluding no later than 5.30pm.

3. All public business should be scheduled for 9am on the Thursday morning and, ideally, conclude no later than 1.30pm.
4. Within this scheme, there would be scope for the important matter of periodic policy discussions and/or briefing/training sessions for Council to be scheduled for 11am on the Wednesday, where necessary.

Mr. Hugo Bonar, welcomed the Registrar's proposals, but suggested two whole days, rather than one and half days might be a better option Mr. Graham Knowles stated that he agreed with the principle, but not the methodology, and that the two-day approach would prove difficult, and might deter attracting and retaining Council members. A number of Council members stated they would be unable to commit to the two-day model, due to their work commitments, and expressed doubt about whether they would be able to continue in their role as Council members were the model to be adopted. Several members suggested that additional standalone fitness to practise meetings might be the solution. Mr. Pat O'Dowd suggested that Council increase overall the number of its meetings to eight a year, and have meetings with special purpose, such as for fitness to practise matters. This was supported by Ms. Mary Rose Burke, and Mr. Fintan Foy, who suggested this format should be piloted, and feedback sought from Council members. Mr. Sean Reilly cautioned against an unintended consequence of meetings of specific purpose on one day, which could lead to Council members only attending certain types of Council meetings, the net effect being that Council meetings would become less representative.

It was agreed that the Registrar would circulate a new proposal to Council, by e-mail, incorporating the model suggested by Mr. Pat O'Dowd.

E. Professional Development and Learning

F1. Report from the Professional Development and Learning Committee

Mr. Fintan Foy, Chair of the Professional Development and Learning Committee, informed Council that a copy of the Report from the Professional Development and Learning Committee, had been circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. He invited questions from members of Council. Council was content with the Report and had no questions.

F2. Quarterly update on CPD implementation model, and Irish Institute of Pharmacy (IIOP) services delivery

Mr. Fintan Foy informed Council that a copy of the Quarterly Update on CPD Implementation Model, and Irish Institute of Pharmacy (IIOP) services delivery, had been

circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. He invited questions from members of Council. Council was content with the update and had no questions.

F3. Approval of Accreditation Standards for CPD Programme in Pharmacy

Mr. Fintan Foy informed Council that draft Accreditation Standards for CPD Programmes and Courses for Pharmacists were presented to the PD&L Committee at its meeting in June 2018, and considered in tandem with the Public Consultation Report on the Draft Accreditation Standards for CPD Programmes and Courses for Pharmacists. These were approved by the Committee for recommendation to Council.

He was now seeking approval from Council of the proposed draft Accreditation Standards for CPD Programmes and Courses for Pharmacists, as updated on foot of the comments received and considered through the public consultation process.

Decision: Council approved the updated Accreditation Standards for CPD Programme and Courses for Pharmacists on the proposal of Ms. Mary Rose Burke, and seconded by Mr. Shane McCarthy.

F4. Interprofessional Learning (IPL) Collaborative Workshop

Mr. Fintan Foy informed Council that an interprofessional learning workshop had been hosted by PSI on 29 May 2018. This was building on work previously undertaken on this topic. The meeting was attended by representatives of other health and social care regulators in Ireland and attendees agreed to form a working group to progress this initiative. This was noted by Council.

F5. Approval of APPEL Business Case re: Tutor Training

Mr. Fintan Foy reminded Council that on 16th December 2014 it approved, in principle, to seed-fund two elements of the shared service facility for placement provision across the three Higher Education Institutions, namely;

- a) the costs the development/completion of a placement IT management system and database: and;
- b) a tutor training and development programme for the first five years of the integrated degree programme.

It was stated that all costs should be agreed in advance by the PSI, following a rigorous value-for-money assessment and public procurement process, as relevant. On 8 May 2018 APPEL submitted a business case requesting Council to approve (b) the drawdown of seed-funding to support tutor training and development programme, to the value of €90,000. A Business Case Review Team, comprising of representatives from PSI's Operations Department and the Education and Registration Department was established to review the business case and carry out a value for money assessment. This value for money assessment had been considered by the Administration and Finance Committee and the Professional Development and Learning Committee from a quantitative and qualitative perspective. Following the recommendation from both committees, Mr. Foy requested that Council approve the APPEL Business Case to allow for drawdown of seed-funding in respect of tutor training.

Decision: Council approved the APPEL Business Case to allow for drawdown of seed-funding in respect of tutor training on the proposal of Ms. Joanne Kissane, and seconded by Ms. Veronica Treacy.

F6. Approval of e-Portfolio Review Policy

Mr. Fintan Foy reminded the Council of the obligations on pharmacists in respect of their undertaking and recording of CPD as specified in the PSI's (Continuing Professional Development) Rules 2015 (SI 553/2015). Rule 11(5) of the Rules requires that the IOP shall review and evaluate submitted CPD reports in compliance with any guidelines established by the IOP and approved by the Council of the PSI. The guidelines referred to in Rule 11(5) were developed by the IOP and these guidelines, in the form of the ePortfolio Review Policy, were approved by the PSI Council in May 2016 and June 2017. The policy has been reviewed for the upcoming review process, which commences in July 2018. Council approval of the updated IOP ePortfolio Review Policy as provided for under Rule 11(5) of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (Continuing Professional Development) Rules 2015 (SI553/2015) was now being sought.

Decision: Council approved the updated IOP ePortfolio Review Policy as provided for under Rule 11(5) of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (Continuing Professional Development) Rules 2015 (SI553/2015) on the proposal of Ms. Joanne Kissane, and seconded by Ms. Muireann Ní Shuilleabháin.

G. Administration and Finance

G1. Report to Council from the Administration and Finance Committee

Mr. Shane McCarthy, Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee, informed Council that a copy of the Report from the Administration and Finance Committee, had been

circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. He invited questions from members of Council. Council was content with the Report and had no questions

G2. Approval of Management Accounts for the period 31 March 2018

Following their review by the Administration and Finance Committee, Mr. Shane McCarthy, recommended the Managements Accounts for the period to 31st March 2018 for approval by Council.

Decision: Council approved the Managements Accounts for the period to 31st March 2018 for approval, on the proposal of Mr. Graham Knowles, and seconded by Mr. Hugo Bonar.

H. Pharmacy Practice Development

H1. Report to Council from the Pharmacy Practice Development Committee

Ms. Ann Sheehan, Chair of the Pharmacy Practice Development Committee informed Council that a copy of the Report of the Pharmacy Practice Development Committee, had been circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. She invited questions from members of Council. Council was content with the Report and had no questions.

H2. Presentation on the Process of Engagement Around the Review of the Code of Conduct for Pharmacists

Mr. Conor O’Leary, Head of the Pharmacy Practice Development Department provided Council with a short presentation on the engagement processes around the review of the Code of Conduct. This was noted by Council.

H3. Approval of the draft Code of Conduct for Pharmacists for Public Consultation

Mr. Conor O’ Leary informed Council that a revised draft Code of Conduct for Pharmacists had been circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. Mr O’Leary thanked his colleagues Ms. Róisín Cunniffe and Ms. Mary Mockler for their work to date on the Code and advised Council that he was now seeking Council’s approval for the draft Code to issue for public consultation. The President and a number of Council members congratulated Mr. O’Leary on the work he and his team had done to date on the revised draft Code.

Mr. Michael Lyons noted that the word ‘consent’ appeared to be mentioned only once in the text of the revised draft, a matter he thought important. Mr O’Leary stated that he was mindful of this, and that it had been discussed at length, and he advised of the legal nuances

with regard to consent. He said he would be seeking further advice on the matter. Mr. Sean Reilly stated there was an issue in relation to pharmacists' duty of candour and open disclosure, where the matter of insurance was involved. Ms. Mary Rose Burke stated that she found the revised draft Code to be prescriptive in places, particularly when pharmacists have additional resource material at their disposal, in order to assist them in their decision making. Ms Mary Rose Burke suggested that the use of 'should' and 'must' in the re-drafted Code could be examined further.

Decision: Council approved the revised draft Code of Conduct for Pharmacists to go for public consultation, on the proposal of the Vice-president, and seconded by Mr. Paul Turpin

I. Registration and Qualification Recognition

I1. Report from the Registration and Qualification Recognition Committee

Mr. Graham Knowles, Chair of the Registration and Qualification Recognition Committee, informed Council that a copy of the Report of the Registration and Qualification Recognition Committee, had been circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. He invited questions from members of Council. Council was content with the Report and had no questions

I2. Approval of draft Amending Registration Rules for Public Consultation

Mr Graham Knowles informed Council that he was seeking Council's approval to issue draft rules to amend the PSI (Registration) Rules, 2008 as amended, for public consultation. The policy objective of the proposed amending draft rules was to provide that failure to comply with continuing professional development requirements could lead to a refusal to continue the registration of a pharmacist in the Register of Pharmacists. In addition, the draft Rules proposed wording changes to the particulars in relation to language competence required to accompany applications for registration.

Decision: Council approved the draft Amending Registration Rules to go for public consultation, on the proposal of Ms. Marie Louisa Power, and seconded by Ms. Muireann Ní Shuilleabháin.

I3. Approval for Waiving of Recognition Fees

Mr. Graham Knowles informed Council that a query had recently been received by the PSI Executive from the Department of Justice and Equality in respect of a person who has been relocated to Ireland under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme. The query related to a

potential applicant for recognition holding a pharmacy degree from a university in a non-EU/EEA country who wished to utilise the provisions of the Third Country Qualification Recognition Process but was potentially precluded from doing so because of the fee associated with such process. The PSI position in respect of waiving fees in such circumstances was queried.

The matter had been considered by the RQR Committee. It requested that Council consider adopting a policy position whereby the fee for recognition of third country qualification application, as specified in the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (Fees) Rules 2014-2017, Schedule 1, be waived under the provisions of Rule 5 of these rules in the case of applicants availing of the benefits of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme.

Mr. Knowles asked Council to look favourably on this application, as he was of the view that this matter came within the PSI's corporate social responsibility remit, the numbers involved were small, and by their nature, time constrained. Council agreed to waive the fee in these circumstances and also indicated that it would be willing to extend this position to incorporate all humanitarian considerations, and delegate the authority to waive such fee, on a case by case assessment of any application, to the Registrar. Council requested that a motion to this effect be tabled at its next meeting.

Decision: Council approved the request to waive recognition fees in the circumstances proposed, on the proposal of Ms. Muireann Ní Shuilleabháin, and seconded by Mr. Sean Reilly.

14. Update on the implications of Brexit for registration

Ms. Damhnait Gaughan informed Council that engagement between the PSI, PSNI, and the GPhC on the matter of registration and qualification post-Brexit, remained positive, with all espousing a commitment to patient and public protection through the assurance of access to appropriately trained and competent health professionals holding qualifications recognised for that purpose, and registered in accordance with the applicable current regulatory controls. Following the meeting in April a draft working principles document had been circulated and further engagement would be scheduled.

J. Inspection and Enforcement

Mr. Hugo Bonar, Chair of the Inspection and Enforcement Committee, informed Council that a copy of the Report of the Inspection and Enforcement Committee, had been circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. He invited questions from members of Council. Council had no questions.

K. Council Members' Time

K1. Travel and Subsistence

The Registrar provided Council with a summary of the civil service regulations and PSI policy governing travel and subsistence expenses as incurred by Council members.

K2. Prescribing by Online Doctors

Mr. Sean Reilly sought the opinion of Council members and of the Registrar regarding the issuing of prescriptions from online doctors, particularly for antibiotics, which, anecdotally, were proving increasingly popular with patients. The Registrar stated that this was one example of the types of new service options which were likely to become more common in the future and which might pose challenges for regulators. He went on to say that, without pre-judging anything, he would encourage relevant stakeholders to come and talk to the PSI regarding their intentions as regards new types of services so long as any such proposals were in line with existing legislation and patient safety principles. Mr. Fintan Foy stated the Irish College of General Practitioners had concerns regarding online doctors, and had written to the Medical Council previously, specifically regarding their quality, and level, of prescribing. There followed a discussion by members of Council regarding the issuing of such prescriptions from online doctors and whether or not these prescriptions could be viewed as valid. The Vice-president noted that pharmacists were being asked to measure a patient's blood pressure and BMI prior to supplying oral contraceptives on foot of these prescriptions. The Vice-president also suggested that the PSI should consider issuing guidance to the profession regarding prescriptions from online doctors. The Registrar noted the discussions and concerns of Council members regarding these prescriptions but also noted that the regulation of doctors was a matter for the Medical Council, and that pharmacists already had clear responsibilities under various legislative provisions on which guidance was already available.

The meeting concluded at 12:55pm.

President

Date