

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday 12th September 2019
PHECC Offices, Millennium Park, Naas

Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chair)
Hillery Collins (Vice Chair)
Fiona McDaid
Martin Dunne
Jason van der Velde
Pat Hanafin
Tess O'Donovan
Patrick Fleming
Shane Knox
Shane Mooney
Mick Molloy
David Menzies
Jimmy Jordan
Stephen Brady

Teleconference

Conor Deasy

Apologies:

Thomas Keane
Patrick Plunkett

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Con Foley, Chair Compliance and Audit Committee
Brian Power, PHECC PDO
Kathleen Walsh, PHECC PDO
Karen O'Neill, Council Secretariat
Bláthnaid O'Donnell, PHECC Staff Representative
Tom Ward, IPA
Barry O'Sullivan, Deputy Director/Registrar (agenda item 4.1)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies received. The Chair expressed Council's condolences to Ricky Ellis on the sudden death of his brother and to John Lally on the recent death of his father-in-law. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.

1. Chair's Business

1.1 Correspondence

The Chair referenced correspondence from the Joint Voluntary Ambulance Group (JVAG) dated 12 July 2019, as included in Council papers, regarding their request for financial assistance and representation on Council. A meeting with representatives of the JVAG took place at which it was explained that appointments to Council are made by the Minister and it was further stated by the Director that any changes to representation on Council would require changes to PHECC's SI. Both the Chair and Director conveyed their support of any changes that served to make PHECC more representative of both the community it protects and the community it regulates. Regular meetings with the JVAG will be scheduled going forward and this engagement was welcomed.

The Chair reminded all of correspondence circulated inviting Council members to attend a Public & Regulatory Panel Discussion event and recommended that Council members attend.

The Chair informed Council that she will be attending the upcoming IPA 'Leading from the Chair' workshop and highlighted the networking opportunities such events offer.

Hillery Collins & Tom Ward joined the meeting at this point.

1.2 DoH Meeting Update

The Chair provided an update on a recent meeting with the DoH which included the following;

- Requirement for legislative changes
- Council membership succession planning

- Governance review update
- AP Programme funding
- FAR certification fee increases
- Future PHECC funding
- Organisational resource requirements
- Proposed meeting with the Minister

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

2.1 Draft Minutes July 2019*

The draft minutes were presented for consideration.

2.1.1 Regarding item 6.2.2, David Menzies requested that that minutes be amended to clarify that it was the AP Programme Course Director who confirmed that there is no cohort of students that were not taught certain skills and that that specific CPG's are taught but are not utilised/practised.

Resolution: That the Council approve the minutes of the meeting of July 2019 subject to the agreed amendments.

Proposed: Pat Hanafin
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Hillery Collins

2.2 Matters Arising

Regarding item 3.2, Con Foley confirmed that no concerns relating to the proposed Alignment of Council Committees Policy had been received and therefore the policy is adopted.

Regarding item 3.3, Con Foley informed Council that a Draft Annual Report for 2018 will be reviewed by the Compliance & Audit Committee at their meeting on 24 September and subsequently presented to Council for approval at the October Council meeting.

Regarding item 5.2, Con Foley highlighted to Council that consideration will need to be given to the One Person One Salary (OPOS) rule for public sector employees and it was relayed by the Director that the HR review will address this issue. Shane Knox queried as to why the specification for the staff HR review extends beyond staff and requested clarification as to the extent of the scope of the review. The Director informed Council that this item will be addressed under agenda item 3.0 Directors Report.

3. Director's Report

3.1 Report to Council

3.1.1 The Director updated Council on the progress of the current Education & Standards Review confirming that consultation with stakeholders has commenced and that this activity is due to be completed in November. A critical analysis of current standards and a gap analysis of standards versus CPGs will begin this month, with a practitioner survey currently being developed.

3.1.2 The Director confirmed that the Governance Review is progressing as planned. Surveys with Council and Committee members and 1:1 meetings with the Executive have been completed. Individual meetings with Council members are currently being arranged.

The Director affirmed for Shane Knox that any staff who have not been interviewed to date will be invited to input into the Governance review process.

3.1.3 The Director informed Council that following the revision of the HR review specification, to ensure there is no conflict of interest, he has removed himself from the tender process and is instead being managed by Kieran Reid and two external individuals with expertise in this field. Following an assessment of submissions the tender has been awarded and contracts signed. An initial opening meeting with all staff is currently being scheduled with a staff survey and 1:1 interviews to follow.

Following a query from Jason van der Velde regarding the origins of the HR review it was clarified by Tess O'Donovan that a separate HR and Governance review was necessary.

In response to an earlier query from Shane Knox, the Director confirmed that the HR review had always included reference to the management of personnel retained to carry out duties on behalf of PHECC. The issue has now been specifically highlighted to include confirmation of the exact employment status of these individuals and a review of compliance with current best practice in this regard, in light of the recent OPOS clarification.

3.1.4 The Director informed Council that the contract for a review of the current AP Programme has been awarded with contracts having been signed and exchanged. An initial meeting with PHECC Executive staff has taken place and all relevant paperwork was provided for commencement of the desk-top phase. A meeting with the current AP Course Programme Director is currently being finalised and an invitation will be extended to all Council members inviting them to make representation as part of the review.

3.1.5 The Director reported to Council that the Civil Defence have addressed all outstanding governance concerns in relation to the statutory declaration which forms part of their licence renewal application. A completed CPG provider application was submitted to PHECC on 9 August and following review a new 1-year licence was issued on 15 August. It has been agreed with the Civil Defence that during this year they will transition to the GVF scheme and therefore become eligible for GVF site assessment. Press releases were issued in conjunction with the Civil Defence and an update on the matter was provided on the PHECC website.

3.1.6 The Director confirmed that following correspondence to the Chief Ambulance Officer, Education and Competency Assurance of the National Ambulance Service College in relation to the proposed Level 8 Paramedic Honours Degree Programme, he has received assurance that the current PHECC content of the programme remains unchanged and therefore has decided that no new course application is required.

3.1.7 Following receipt of a significant number of identical emails in relation to the proposed FAR certification price increase, the Director confirmed that a reply has been issued referencing a number of inaccuracies and clarifying PHECC's position on the matter. Additional correspondence has also been received from the Chairperson of the newly formed Association of First Aid Trainers Ireland who have been invited to meet with the Director and members of PHECC Executive team. It was agreed at the Education & Standards meeting of 4 September that the Director will extend an invitation to two members of the AFTI to present to the Committee on issues relating to the content of the FAR course and any other educational concerns.

Jimmy Jordan joined the meeting at this point

3.1.8 The Director informed Council that a draft version of the PHECC field guide had unintentionally found its way into general circulation and had been discussed on social media. To limit the level of risk involved all registered practitioners have been written to making them aware of the risk involved in using non-authorised versions of the field guide. Correspondence has also been sent to each member of the field guide review group clarifying their responsibilities in reviewing draft documentation. A copy of the advisory note circulated was included in Council papers.

3.1.9 The Director referred to correspondence from the CEO of the Irish Heart Foundation, as included in Council papers, conveying their disappointment at Council's decision not to approve their grant application. Council expressed their sentiments and hoped that a positive relationship could be developed again in the future.

3.1.10 Following correspondence from a licensed CPG provider regarding the publication of GVF reports, the Director confirmed that a response has been issued and this item will be included on the agenda at the October Council meeting.

3.1.11 The Director provided an update to Council on the positive meeting which took place between himself, the Chair of the Priority Dispatch Committee and the Director of the National Ambulance Service at which it was agreed that, following a review of said committee's terms of reference, there were no barriers to re-engagement identified.

3.2 It was agreed to defer agenda item 3.2 Strategic Plan 2019-2022 to the end of the meeting.

4. Governance and Finance

Con Foley provided a brief outline of policies on the agenda for the upcoming Compliance & Audit Committee on 24 September, which will subsequently be brought to Council in October for approval.

4.1 FTP Matters

Barry O'Sullivan, Deputy Director/Registrar joined the meeting to address this agenda item. Council were informed of the recommendations following a recent Preliminary Proceedings Committee and were requested to nominate a Council member to chair the resulting Fitness to Practice inquiry. Following discussions Conor Deasy was elected to chair said inquiry.

Barry O'Sullivan left the meeting.

Council took a short recess.

Mick Molloy joined the meeting at this point.

5. Strategic Plan 2019-2022

The Director referred to the draft Strategic Plan 2019-2022, as included in Council papers, highlighting that content had been refined and an implementation plan formulated. Council were taken through the implementation plan and a number of suggested minor edits were agreed. As the content of the Strategic Plan had already been adopted, Council further endorsed the recent modifications and

approved the document for publication. Further discussion arose regarding the launch of the strategy and it was agreed that the Ministers availability will determine the official launch date.

Jason van der Velde left the meeting during agenda item 5.

6. AOB

6.1 Shane Knox, referring to February 2019 Council minutes, requested confirmation from the Director that a plan for the implementation of CPC was in place. The Director confirmed that it remained the plan to commence the process this year but that this was reliant on additional resources being made available, which have not materialised. Furthermore, the Director stated that this could also be impacted by the next agenda item. It was proposed by the Director that he provide a situation update at the October Council meeting. Shane Knox relayed Education & Standards Committee's disappointment that further progress had not been made and stated that he will formally write to the Chair on this matter.

6.2 The Director informed Council that regrettably he had received notification from the Programme Development Officer responsible for Education of her resignation from PHECC. Both the Director and Council conveyed their disappointment in losing such an exceptional PDO and wished her well in her future endeavours.

The Director highlighted the level of work involved in the area of Education, noting that in his opinion this area had been under-resourced for the volume of work being undertaken. He further suggested that a more detailed discussion was required to include possible restructuring of this section, stressing the need for additional resources. The Director also stated that, whilst providing immediate assistance to cover the role of Education Programme Development Officer was a priority, the long-term filling of the role would be dependant on future requirements and, in the short-term, this would involve some refocus and possible reprioritisation of initiatives which could impact the future roll-out of CPC.

Council agreed that if no additional funding or resources were made available, PHECC may need to appraise their involvement in the administration of the FAR certification process.


6.3 Council remembered Caitríona Lucas, a volunteer member of Doolin Coast Guard whose 3rd anniversary occurs today.

6.4 Due to the non-availability of the Chair it was agreed that the Vice-Chair, Hillery Collins will chair the October Council meeting.

The meeting concluded at 1.30pm approximately.

The next Council meeting will take place in PHECC offices on Thursday 10th October at 10.00am.

Signed:


Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 14th / 11 / 2019.