

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
24 March 2022
Via Videoconference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)
Jimmy Jordan
William Merriman

Apologies:

Aidan O'Brien
Tess O'Donovan
Tomás Barry

Videoconference:

Conor Deasy
David Menzies
Dennis Keeley
Fiona McDaid
Hillery Collins
Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Martin O'Reilly
Niamh Collins
Patrick Fleming

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Con Foley, Council Secretary
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager (VC)
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator
Tom Ward (IPA) Item 6.0. Only

1.0. Closed Session

During a closed session the following matters were addressed.

- 1.1. The Chair updated Council on the progress of the investigation of a complaint against the Director.

The Director joined the closed meeting and updated Council on the following.

- 1.2. The Director provided Council with a progress update on recruitment of the positions of a Secretary to Council and a Chair of the Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee [FRACC].

Con Foley joined the closed meeting.

- 1.3. The Director brought a pending legal case against PHECC to the attention of Council.
1.4. The Director also brought correspondence from the Data Protection Commission to Council regarding notice of an inquiry concerning PHECC compliance with elements of the General Data Protection Regulation.

Conor Deasy, Fiona McDaid, Hillery Collins, and members of the Executive joined the meeting.

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and noting apologies received.

2.0. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of a Conflict of Interest had been received for Agenda items of the meeting.

3.0. Chairs Business

3.1. Correspondence

The Chair noted receipt of correspondence from the National Sepsis Team in relation to PHECC representation at an upcoming meeting of the National GP Sepsis Pilot on 21 March 2022, which has since been attended by PHECC Information and Examinations Manager, Brendan Cawley.

3.2. Legislation Update

The Chair updated Council on recent conversations and correspondence with Department of Health [DoH] officials regarding the requirement for a revision of PHECC's legislation. It has been confirmed that the development of policy proposals to strengthen regulatory functions of PHECC, a deliverable of their Business Plan for 2022, will commence in Quarter 2 of this year. Further information as to the details and estimated dates for delivery of same has been requested.

Council welcomed the positive developments and encouraged the Chair to write to and to secure a meeting with the Minister. The Executive will also include the matter as high importance item on future Governance meetings with the Department. Additionally, a further invitation to attend a Council meeting in the near future should now be extended to Department officials.

4.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

4.1. Draft Minutes 24 February 2022*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were approved, subject to one minor amendment to item 5.1.6.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 24 February 2022.

Proposed: William Merriman **Seconded:** Patrick Fleming

Carried without dissent.

Council took a short recess during which Tom Ward (IPA) joined the meeting. Item 6.0 of the meeting was addressed at this point following which Tom Ward departed the meeting.

Jason van der Velde departed the meeting, during item 6.0, due to a prior commitment.

4.2. Matters Arising

A discussion took place on item 5.1.6. of the February Minutes, clarifying the next steps to be taken following Councils' decision to raise the education level of Paramedic education to degree level, and to develop an extended scope of practise for practitioners.

It was agreed that PHECC will prepare a position paper outlining the rationale for the Council decision, acknowledging the significance of the wider implications for both the PHECC RIs [Recognised Institutions] and PHECC Licensed CPG Providers and providing an outline structure for engagement and consultation with relevant stakeholders.

It was agreed that a specific meeting of Council members would be scheduled to provide a forum for discussion. The Executive have already identified a number of related work streams, and Council members were requested to submit details on areas of potential concern or requiring clarification, to the PHECC Education Programme Manager, in advance of that meeting. It was also agreed that the Director will request that the Chair of the Expert Group provide a progress update at the April Council meeting.

5.0. Directors Report

5.1. Directors Report to Council

Items 5.1.1. and 5.1.2. were covered in the Closed Session.

5.1.3. COVID-19 Arrangements

The Executive continue to modify the return to work, working remotely, office protocols and the deployment of staff in response to the recent easing of restrictions. There have been no reported COVID-19 incidents involving, examiners, students, assessors or in relation to external reviews. The current increase in the level of infections is being monitored carefully.

5.1.4. Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model

The situation remains whereby no requests have been received to move from the current minimum crewing model standard.

5.1.5 Request to Review Rules of Council

The Director has written to the Acting Chair of Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee [FRACC] with a request to review the current Council Standing Orders pertaining to the proposing, drafting, and voting on resolutions or motions put before Council, including obtaining external expert opinion as to best practice. FRACC will respond in due course with their recommendations on the matter.

5.1.6. Recruitment

Interviews are continuing to take place for the permanent Grade III and Grade IV Clerical Officers and the Specified Purpose Grade VI Approved Training Institution [ATI] Officer. The matter of recruiting a HR Manager continues to be challenging due to limited applications.

Interviews are also being arranged for the Chair of FRACC position.

5.1.7. Notice of an Appeal

An appeal against a decision of the Director has been received from an organisation applying for [Approved Training Institution] ATI recognition status and EFR course approval. An Appeal Panel is currently being assembled and a hearing date scheduled to examine the matter.

5.1.8. Response to OCAG Management Letter

The Management response to the OCAG Management Letter was discussed at the recent FRACC meeting and submitted to OCAG thereafter. As a result, the Audit Certificate for 2020, the Audit Completion Memorandum and the agreed Management Letter had been received from OCAG. It has been confirmed that the PHECC 2020 Financial Statements have been laid in the Houses of the Oireachtas. The Executive were congratulated on the speed and efficiency of the process this year.

5.2. Delegated Decisions of the Director

Highlighting the conditional approval of a new PHECC Licensed CPG Provider, the report as included in Council papers was noted.

Council took a short recess.

6.0 Council Member Survey – Tom Ward (IPA)

6.1. Results of 2022 Council Member Survey

6.2. Comparison with 2019 Council Member Survey Results

6.3. Review of The Implementation of 2019 IPA Governance Review Recommendations

Tom Ward presented and facilitated discussion of the outcomes of the recently conducted survey of Council members, a repeat of the 2019 survey conducted as part of the IPA Governance Review. Outcomes in terms of both quantitative and qualitative measures compared with 2019 were discussed, and improvements registered in virtually all areas surveyed were noted.

Mr Ward recognised and complimented PHECC on significant progress made to date in implementing the Recommendations of the 2019 Governance Review given the considerable amount of work involved.

Following discussion, Council agreed that Recommendation 1 of that Report, referencing mediation or facilitation, would now no longer be required given the views of the current Council membership, the new Executive composition and the opinions expressed in the outcomes of the survey. Mr Ward communicated that the IPA supported Council's decision not to implement Recommendation 1.

The remaining recommendations will be addressed further by new processes already in place and additional training for Council, which is planned for the current year.

The Chair thanked Mr Ward for his and his colleague's assistance to PHECC. The Chair also thanked Council Members for participating in the Survey and hoped that the Council might have the opportunity to further reflect on these outcomes, collectively, later in the year. The survey is expected to be repeated every 2 years going forward.

Council took a short recess.

7.0. Quality & Safety

7.1. GVF Evaluation Update – Council Member Survey

The results of the recent Council member survey conducted as part of the evaluation of the GVF process were shared with Council. An expert in the development of health and social care standards has been commissioned to correlate and analyse stakeholder feedback and literature and report recommendations.

A final draft of the revised GVF standard will be presented to the Quality and Safety Committee and, subsequently, to Council.

David Menzies departed the meeting due to a potential Conflict of Interest.

7.2. Motorsport Rescue Services GVF Report for Approval

It was agreed that, as with Quality Review Framework [QRF] Reports, Governance Validation Framework [GVF] Site Assessment Reports would be presented to Council for noting, rather than resolution going forward.

As such the Motorsport Rescue Services GVF Report, as included in Council papers, was noted by Council.

8.0. Governance & Finance

8.1. Management Accounts to 28 February 2022

Management Accounts for the two months to end February were presented to Council together with comparatives for 2021. It was noted that PHECC continue to await the Letter of Determination from the DoH for 2022.

David Menzies re-joined the meeting during the above presentation.

8.2. IPA Webinar – Cyber-security – Some Learnings

A brief summary of two presentations at a recent IPA-sponsored webinar was presented, including an analysis of the HSE cyber-attack in 2021.

Key issues identified for general application were the random opportunism of “hackers”, the corporate response and readiness to repel cyber-attacks beginning at Board level and Board-led leadership and culture were critically important. Slide packs of both presentations are available for Council Members.

9.0. Register

9.1. Register Report

The Register Report, as detailed in Council papers, was noted by Council.

10.0. AOB

The Chair thanked all for attending, whether in-person or virtually and reminded all that the next Council meeting will take place on April 21st next at 10:00.

The meeting terminated at 13:40hrs.

Signed:



Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 21st April 2022