

COUNCIL

Council and Committee scheduling 2016/17

Meeting: 29 July 2015

Status: for decision

Lead responsibility: Nicola Ebdon (Head of Governance)

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Purpose

1. This paper is provided for Council to consider and agree the schedule of Council and Committee meeting dates.

Recommendations

2. Council is asked to **consider** and **agree** the schedule of Council and Committee meeting dates in 2016/17 (annex one) in principle, and **delegate authority** to the Chief Executive and Registrar to finalise the schedule following consideration by members.

Strategic Objective

3. Establishing Council and statutory and non-statutory advisory committee's meeting dates for the year ahead is an important part of our governance and falls under our work programme to manage Council, Senior Management Team (SMT) and Committee meetings, to ensure that decisions are robust, well-informed and transparent and made in line with our legislative and governance framework. This work falls into the strategic objective of better service delivery – delivering high quality services to the public and the profession.

Risks

4. Appropriate and timely forward planning is essential in ensuring Council and its committees can meet their obligations. A failure to do so could result in a failure to govern the organisation in compliance with the legislative framework (including the Charities Act, Opticians Act, Committee Constitution Rules etc). This is captured in the Governance Risk register, risk A1.03 which includes a governance risk of not meeting our legal responsibilities in relation to our governing legislation and an external risk of suffering reputational damage as a result. Ensuring meeting dates are set well in advance significantly increases member attendance and mitigates our risks.

Background

5. In 2015 four quarterly Council meetings (February, May, July and November) have been scheduled approximately six weeks after the quarter end to allow time to prepare management accounts. The July Council meeting is scheduled for four weeks after the quarter end, in order to avoid the August summer holidays. Council also held three teleconferences to deal with issues relating to the property sale and tender decisions which needed to be made outside of the quarterly schedule. In addition Council scheduled two days in June to consider Council evaluation and a corporate performance, and one day at the end September/start October to consider strategic planning.
6. All advisory committee meetings in 2015 were scheduled for twice a year following a review of the committee work plans, with the exception of the Audit and Risk and Education committees which are scheduled quarterly due to the volume of work to be undertaken. An additional Audit and Risk committee (ARC) meeting was scheduled for September 2014 to consider the Annual Report and Accounts and meet with the external auditors, however this meeting has since been cancelled as it was not required in 2014, due to the accounts being considered by ARC in October and approved by Council in November, which meets our statutory timetable for laying accounts.
7. During the year it was necessary for the Nominations Committee to hold a few additional meetings, mainly by teleconference to deal with appointment and reappointment processes. It has also been necessary for the Remuneration Committee to hold some additional meetings in relation to SMT pay progression, in order to make decisions in time for the 2015/16 pay awards.
8. The advisory committee meetings were scheduled to be held in advance of a quarterly Council meeting, to ensure Council is updated on the outcome of these meetings in a timely manner. Feedback has indicated that this system is working and both Council and its committees feel more engaged as a result. In considering their work plans for 2015/16 (annex three) the committees have indicated that the current schedule of meetings will be sufficient to undertake the agreed work plans to ensure timely input into the business plan.
9. There have been two workshops in relation to the Standards review project to which standards committee members have attended, to ensure the committee is able to consider the standards review project. Whilst these are not actual meetings, they need to be considered in order to ensure appropriate budget is allocated.

Analysis

10. It is felt that the current schedule of Council meetings, evaluation, performance and strategy days remains appropriate, therefore a similar schedule for 2016/17 had been proposed (annex one). In order to align the schedule of meetings with the business plan, the schedule includes meetings up until the end of 2016/17. These dates have been considered by the all the members of Council and so can be agreed.
11. In creating a member development plan (see paper C38(15)) it has been suggested that Council also schedules in two days for training which will be the day before or after the Council meetings in November and May. By linking them to a Council meeting, opportunities for members to engage outside of the meetings will be created, which is something Council members have requested. The plan also suggests that an annual member induction day is scheduled for the day before or after the February Council meeting. Whilst only new Council and committee members will attend the induction session itself, it is hoped that by linking the induction to a Council meeting it will provide Council members with an opportunity to meet with new members outside of formal meetings. Proposed dates for these training and induction days have been included in the schedule (annex one) for consideration by members.
12. The Nominations Committee have also requested that the Executive consider holding an "Open Day" for prospective new members to come and meet existing members to find out more about the role. It is hoped that the above arrangements for training and induction will provide time to have a few hours once a year available for such an "Open Day" type event.
13. In general it is felt that the current schedule of Committee meetings remains appropriate, therefore a similar schedule for 2016/17 had been proposed (annex one). However in giving consideration to the timing of key project work, it has been suggested that the meetings of the Standards and Companies committees be swapped from the first and third quarters, to the second and fourth quarters, to enable members to engage in consideration of the business code of conduct. This also would mean that the spread of twice yearly committee meetings is more even and will help the Executive in supporting the committees. In order to align the schedule of meetings with the business plan, the schedule now includes meetings up until the end of 2016/17. These dates have been considered by the Chairs of each of the committees, but not the committee members. Therefore they will need to be communicated to committee members, before they can be finalised.
14. In planning our project work, consideration is being given as to whether any workshop sessions with committee members will be required in 2016/17.

Decisions on the number and timing of such sessions will be agreed before the budget for 2016/17 is drafted.

15. The proposed schedule for 2016/17 does not include an additional ARC meeting in September to consider the Annual Report and Accounts because it had been agreed to remove this meeting in 2015 and therefore it is not expected it will be required in 2016.
16. Now that Case Examiners have been established, the Investigation committee will continue to schedule meetings as and when required. Therefore these are not included in the list at annex one. There are currently no IC dates set for 2016/17.
17. The proposed Hearing dates for 2016/17 are shown at annex two.

Impacts

18. The following implications have been identified:
 - 18.1 Reserves – none;
 - 18.2 Budget – Budget to manage these meetings has been provided for in the 2015/16 budget and will be planned for in the 2016/17 budget;
 - 18.3 Legislation – the Opticians Act specifies that Council must meet in Public and that the Council must have the statutory committees;
 - 18.4 Resources – resources to manage these meetings has been provided for in the 2015/16 business plan and will be planned for in the 2016/17 business plan;
 - 18.5 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) – consideration has been given to avoiding the main religious festivals and school holidays. We have based this on our most up to date diversity data;
 - 18.6 Human Rights Act – none; and
 - 18.7 Sustainability – none.

Devolved Nations

19. There are no implications arising from this paper and the devolved nations.

Communications

20. Once these dates have been approved they will be made available on the GOC website and intranet.

Timeline for future work

21. The proposed dates will be sent to committee members for consideration and will then be published and circulated to Council and Committee members.

Attachments

Annex one – Schedule of proposed Council and statutory and non-statutory advisory committee meeting dates for 2016/17.

Annex two – Schedule of proposed hearing dates for 2016/17.

Annex three – statutory advisory committee work plans

Proposed Council and Committee Meeting dates for 2016/17

Remainder of 2015/16

Date	Time	Meeting	Feeds into:
Thu 10 Sept	11:30-15:00	Registration Committee	Nov Council
14-15 Sept	Rosh Hashanah		
Thu 17 Sept	11:30-15:00	Companies Committee	Nov Council
22-23 Sept	Yom Kippur		
23-26 Sept	Eid-al-Adha		
Wed 30 Sept	10:00-16:00	Council Strategic planning	
Thu 8 Oct	11:30-15:00	Standards Committee	Nov Council
Mon 12 Oct	11:00-13:30	Remuneration Committee	Nov Council
Thu 15 Oct	11:00-14:30	Education Committee	Nov Council
15 Oct	Islamic New Year		
Mon 19 Oct	11:30-15:00	Audit & Risk Committee	Nov Council
26-30 Oct	School holidays (half term)		
Thu 12 Nov	9:30-14:30	<i>Council training (dependent on availability)</i>	
Wed 11 Nov	10:00-16:00	Council (confidential & public meetings)	
11 Nov	Diwali		
Wed 25 Nov	11:30-15:00	Nominations Committee	Feb Council
7-14 Dec	Hannukah		
21-31 Dec	School holidays (Christmas)		
Wed 6 Jan	11:30-15:00	<i>Standards Committee</i>	<i>Feb Council</i>
Wed 13 Jan	11:30-15:00	Companies Committee	Feb Council
Mon 18 Jan	11:30-14:30	Audit & Risk Committee	Feb Council
Tue 19 Jan	11:00-14:30	Education Committee	Feb Council
Tue 9 Feb	12:00-17:00	Member Induction	
Wed 10 Feb	10:00-16:00	Council (confidential & public meetings)	
15-19 Feb	School holidays (half term)		
Wed 9 March	11:30-14:00	Remuneration Committee	May Council
Thu 10 March	11:30-15:00	<i>Registration Committee</i>	<i>May Council</i>

2016/17

25 Mar – 8 Apr	School holidays (Easter)		
23-30 April	Passover		
Mon 25 April	11:30-15:00	Audit & Risk Committee	May Council
Tue 26 April	11:00-14:30	Education Committee	May Council
2 May	Bank Holiday		
Tue 10 May	12:00-17:00	Council training	
Wed 11 May	10:00-16:00	Council (confidential & public meetings)	
Wed 25 May	11:30-15:00	Nominations Committee	July Council
30 May – 3 June	School holidays (half term)		
7 June	Ramadan starts		
Tues 21 June	10:00-16:00	Council Evaluation day	
Wed 22 June	10:00-16:00	Council Performance Review day	
Mon 27 June	11:30-15:00	Companies Committee	July Council
<i>Tue 28 June</i>	<i>11:30-15:00</i>	<i>Standards Committee</i>	<i>July Council</i>
Mon 4 July	11:30-15:00	Audit & Risk Committee	July Council
Wed 6 July	11:00-14:30	Education Committee	July Council
7 July	Ramadan ends		
7-9 July	Eid-al-Fitr		
Wed 27 July	10:00-16:00	Council (confidential & public meetings)	
25 Jul – 31 Aug	School holidays (end of term)		
11-14 Sept	Eid al Adha		
<i>Wed 21 Sept</i>	<i>11:30-15:00</i>	<i>Registration Committee</i>	<i>Nov Council</i>
3 Oct	Islamic New Year		
3-4 Oct	Rosh Hashanah		
Wed 5 Oct	10:00-16:00	Strategic planning	
Mon 10 Oct	11:30-15:00	Audit & Risk Committee	Nov Council
Tue 11 Oct	11:00-14:30	Education Committee	Nov Council
11-12 Oct	Yom Kippur		
Wed 12 Oct	11:30-14:00	Remuneration Committee	Nov Council
24-28 Oct	School holidays (half term)		
Tue 15 Nov	12:00-17:00	Council training	
Wed 16 Nov	10:00-16:00	Council (confidential & public meetings)	
Wed 25 Nov	11:30-15:00	Nominations Committee	Feb Council

22 Dec – 4 Jan	School holidays (Christmas)		
<i>Tue 10 Jan</i>	<i>11:30-15:00</i>	<i>Standards Committee</i>	<i>Feb Council</i>
Mon 16 Jan	11:30-14:30	Audit & Risk Committee	Feb Council
Wed 18 Jan	11:30-15:00	Companies Committee	Feb Council
Mon 23 Jan	11:00-14:30	Education Committee	Feb Council
13-17 Feb	School holidays (half term)		
Tue 21 Feb	12:00-17:00	Member Induction	
Wed 22 Feb	10:00-16:00	Council (confidential & public meetings)	
Wed 15 Mar	11:30-14:00	Remuneration Committee	May Council

Fitness to Practise Committee Hearing Dates 2016/17

<u>Dates</u>	<u>No of Days</u>
11-15, 18-22, 25-29 January	15
8-12, 15-19, 22-26 February	15
7-11, 14-18, 21-24 March	14
11-15, 18-22, 25-29 April	15
9-14, 16-20, 23-27 May	15
13-17, 20-24, 27-30 June, 1 Jul	15
11-15, 18-22, 25-29 July	15
8-12, 15-19 August	10
5-9, 12-16, 29-23 September	15
3-7, 10-14, 17-21 October	15
7-11, 14-18, 21-25 November	15
5-9, 12-16, 19-22 December	14
9-13, 16-20, 23-27 January	15
6-10, 13-17, 20-24 February	15
6-10, 13-17, 20-24 March	5

27 Sep 2016 – Chair meeting

28 Sep 2016 – Panel training day

Education Committee Work Plan

	16/04/15	02/07/15	15/10/15	Jan 2016
Items delegated by Council				
Accreditation and QA visits (except full accreditation and withdrawal decisions) including Professional qualifying examinations	LF/JQ	LF/JQ	LF/JQ	LF/JQ
Items for consideration and provision of advice to Council				
Standards strategic review including review of system of education and training	AB/LF	AB/LF	AB/LF	AB/LF
GOC Public perceptions research			AB	
Review of accreditation handbooks including the issue of the ratio of students to staff		JQ	JQ	
Annual analysis of non UK qualified applications		LF		
The University of the West Indies: Exemption from non-EEA examinations		LF?	LF?	
Review of Continuing Education and Training (CET)			LF/MB	
Items for noting				
CET performance updates			LF	
Dispensing Annual Monitoring submission			LF	
Emerging European matters	LF	LF	LF	LF
2015/16 GOC Business Plan and Committee work plan	NE			
Report on optical sector development and trends			AB/AJ	
Policy update	MB	MB	MB	MB
Revised EC directive on recognition of professional qualifications		LF/MB		

Registration Committee Work Plan

	26/03/15	10/09/15	March 16
Items for consideration and provision of advice to Council			
Review of Standards	AB/LF	AB/LF	AB/LF
Optical sector report (annual)		AB/AJ	
Legislative change and the impact on student and business regulation		AB/MB	
Registration guidance on temporary registration (EEA applicants and students)	PH		
Review of the processes for assessing registration applications from inside and outside Europe	PH	PH	PH
Data sharing and Monthly amendments		PH	
Review of the Register project (to include specialty registration, continuous registration numbering and FTP information on the Register)		PH	PH
Items for noting			
Report on retention activities: fully qualified and student retention period		PH	PH
Policy update	AB/MB	AB/MB	AB/MB
Business plan and Committee work plan (annual)	NE		NE

Standards Committee Work Plan 2015

	12/03/15	08/10/15	Jan 16
Items for consideration and provision of advice to Council			
Routine consideration of learning points from FTP process	If required	If required	If required
Consideration of new standards guidance		LF/MD	LF/MD
Standards strategic review	AB/LF/MD	AB/LF/MD	AB/LF/MD
Standards project review: Method of evaluating the impact of the new standards			LF/MD
Illegal practice strategy	AB/MB		AB/MB
Review of our Accreditation process		LF/JQ	
Review of our CET scheme		LF/MB	
Quality Assurance Framework		tbc	tbc
Optical sector report annual (annual item)		AB/MB	
2015/16 Business Plan and Committee workplan (annual item)	AB/NE		AB/NE
Items for noting			
Policy update (routine item)	MB	MB	MB
Member briefing (routine item)	Members	Members	Members

COMPANIES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

	17/03/15	17/09/15	Jan 16
Items for consideration and provision of advice to Council			
Review of Standards including Public perceptions research	AB/LF	AB/LF	AB/LF
Illegal Practice Strategy	AB/MB	AB/MB	AB/MB
Optical Sector report		AB/AJ	
Analysis of FTP cases involving businesses	LD/KW		LD/KW
Legislative change and the impact on student and business regulation		AB/MB	
Business plan and Committee work plan	AB/NE		AB/NE
CET review		LF/MB	
Items for noting			
Policy update	AB/MB	AB/MB	AB/MB