

COUNCIL

Report from the Chair of Council

Meeting: 10 July 2019

Status: for decision

Lead responsibility and paper author: Gareth Hadley (Chair)

Introduction

1. This report covers my principal activities since the Council meeting held on **15 May 2019**.

Recommendation

2. Council are asked to:
 - **note** the contents of this report;
 - **agree** to reappoint Helen Tilley as Senior Council Member until 31 March 2021 (paragraph 10 refers); and
 - **agree** that with effect from 27 November 2019, for a period of one year, the Senior Council Member be appointed as a member of the Nominations committee for the purposes of the appointment of a new Council Chair only, the Senior Council member to chair the committee for discussions of such purposes (paragraph 11 refers).

Stakeholders

3. **Association of British Dispensing Opticians:** I had a discussion with Sir Anthony Garrett (General Secretary, ABDO) on **6 June 2019**. Although our discussions covered a wide range of matters of common interest, their primary focus was the Education Strategic Review (ESR).
4. I participated in an ESR stakeholders' workshop on **20 June 2019**. Josie Forte had participated in a previous workshop on **7 June 2019**. Both Josie and I will share our observations on the workshops when Council discusses the ESR at a later item on today's agenda paper.
5. **Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians:** I am meeting Harjit Sandhu (FODO Managing Director) to discuss current issues on **5 July 2019**.
6. Rosie Glazebrook met Alan Clamp (**Chief Executive, PSA**) on **13 June 2019**. Their discussion focused on appointment processes and regulation. She also had discussions with Dr Henrietta Hughes (**National Guardian NHS**). Rosie has put Henrietta in touch with our Chief Executive and Registrar: they have since met.
7. Scott Mackie hosted a visit for our Director of Casework and Resolutions (Dionne Spence) to a number of our key stakeholders in Scotland (**13 June 2019**) including Dr Lesley Rousselet (Programme Director, optometry, NHS Education

for Scotland) and Dr Janet Pooley (Scottish Government).

Council and Committees

8. I chaired a meeting of the Nominations Committee (**12 June 2019**).
9. Along with other Council members, I participated in our collective performance review and development days (**10 and 11 June 2019**). Main outputs included:
 - an opportunity for a long discussion with Alan Clamp who is now some three months into his appointment as Chief Executive of the PSA, which served to inform discussions later in the two days that we had together;
 - a review of progress on key projects and operational delivery and how we might address the challenges arising, both from these activities and also from broader environmental change; and
 - initial work towards our next strategic plan, to come into force following conclusion of the current plan (2017/2020).

Management

10. **Senior Council Member:** Having taken over the role from Fiona Peel on 1 April 2017, Helen Tilley has now come to the end of her first two-year term of appointment as Senior Council Member. Under our rules, Helen is eligible for reappointment for a further (and final) two-year term. **I therefore recommend** that Helen is reappointed until 31 March 2021.
11. The forward plan for Nominations Committee includes, as an item for its next meeting (planned for 27 November 2019), discussion of arrangements to appoint a Chair to take office when I demit on 18 February 2021. Given that it would be inappropriate for me to participate in matters concerning the appointment of my successor, **I recommend** that with effect from 27 November 2019, for a period of one year, the Senior Council Member be appointed as a member of the Nominations committee for the purposes of the appointment of a new Council Chair only, the Senior Council member to chair the committee for discussions of such purposes.
12. In addition to my regular conversations with the Chief Executive and Registrar and with members of the Senior Management Team and the Leadership Team, I have had three long bilateral discussions with the Chief Executive and Registrar concerning the work and direction of the Council.
13. In my report to Council's meeting on 15 May 2019, I reported that an Appointments Panel, which I had chaired, had made a recommendation to the Privy Council for appointment of a lay member to succeed Selina Ullah who demits following completion of her second term as a Council member on 31 August 2019. The Privy Council having now approved our recommendation, I am pleased to report that Professor Deborah Bowman MBE will be joining Council on 1 September 2019. Deborah will be with us as an observer at both the public and the confidential parts of today's meeting.

14. **Hearings Panel:** interviews for registrant members have now concluded and the Panel have determined who they wish to be appointed (a mix of optometrists and dispensing opticians) once we are able. 'Phase two' (to seek circa twenty lay members) went live on Wednesday 26 June 2019 and will close on Wednesday 24 July. Interviews for these roles will take place across eight days in late September / early October 2019. Full details of the lay vacancies can be [found on our website](#).
15. **Fitness to Practise – cap on panelist numbers:** We have made representations to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to remove the cap on the number of members that we are empowered to appoint for our Hearings Panel, from which our Fitness to Practise committee and Registration Appeals committees are drawn. This will enable us to facilitate the effective operation of the Council's fitness to practise functions but does not remove the requirement for a minimum number of hearing panel members. At a strategy session on 11 June 2019, Council noted a further update on the ongoing work with the DHSC to secure this legislative change and noted that the change was anticipated and delegated authority to me as Chair to take all steps necessary to secure the legislative change. Once our representations have borne fruit, I will approve the General Optical Council (Committee Constitution) (Amendment) Rules Order of Council 2019.