

COUNCIL**Draft 2013/14 Business Plan**

Meeting: 22 November 2012**Status:** for information**Lead responsibility:** Alistair Bridge,
Director of Policy and
Communications**Contact details:** 020 7307 3477 /
abridge@optical.org**Purpose**

1. This paper provides Council with an update on progress in developing the business plan for the financial year beginning April 2013 and sets out what further work we will be doing to finalise the plan before publishing at the end of March 2013.

Strategic Objective

2. Our strategic objective is to produce a business plan which enables us to use our resources as efficiently as possible to fulfil the aims set out in our three-year strategic plan.

Background

3. Next year will be the final year governed by our three year strategic plan and in our 2013/14 business plan the focus will be on delivering key strategic projects before moving on to the next three-year cycle.
4. At the Council meeting on 24 October Council discussed and provided helpful feedback on the provisional list of projects for the 2013/14 business plan.
5. In the three weeks between the last Council meeting and submitting papers for the November meeting, we have been working with colleagues across the organisation to:
 - refine our priorities for 2013/14;
 - develop a budget that is aligned with those priorities; and
 - produce a recommendation for Council on the appropriate level of fees that we should charge registrants.
6. In finalising the 2013/14 business plan we want to ensure that we are confident we have the resources (in terms of both colleague input and financial resources) to fulfil the commitments we are making. To this end, since the last Council meeting we have been clarifying the

resources that we will need to deliver our priority areas of work, both 'business as usual' activities, such as addressing complaints about fitness to practice and maintaining the registers, and strategic projects, such as the implementing our new CRM system or reviewing corporate body registration. As a result, we have been able to set a realistic overall budget for 2013/14 and produce a recommendation on fees.

7. However, we are not yet in a position to present a robust, detailed business plan to Council and so propose to spend more time developing the plan before bringing it to Council for approval in February 2013 at the same time as the Council will be discussing the final budget for 2013/14. This will still leave sufficient time to finalise the plan in the light of Council's comments before publishing at the end of March 2013. Also, submitting the business plan and budget to Council in the February before the new financial year starts will be a significant improvement on previous years.
8. By the time of the February 2013 Council meeting, we will have:
 - developed the business plan to include all activities which are of strategic importance, both 'business as usual' activity and strategic projects;
 - examined in more detail the resources required from across the organisation to implement strategic projects, particularly our new CRM system, and consider the impact on other activity;
 - developed a realistic and more precise idea of when during the year (by quarter) we expect to deliver on particular commitments – we believe it is important to provide this extra transparency to both focus our minds on delivery and give stakeholders greater clarity about when they might need to provide input to consultations and when they can expect key decisions to take effect;
 - developed a framework for identifying priorities in the event that we have insufficient resources (in terms of colleague input or financial resources) to deliver all the projects that we have included in the provisional list;
 - updated the section of the business plan which explains the landscape we are operating in: ensuring that it reflects recent developments, particularly in relation to policy developments in the UK and EU;
 - added a section to report on the outcomes achieved during the first two years governed by the strategic plan;
 - ensured that our corporate risk register, which SMT now reviews monthly, is aligned with the 2013/14 business plan; and

- ensured that the business plan is published in a form that is more consistent with our corporate brand.
9. In drafting the business plan we will also act on Council's view that, where appropriate, we should be more precise in using the term 'stakeholders'. This will help us to demonstrate that in carrying out our functions we are taking into account the interests of the full range of our stakeholders, including:
- members of the public, including those who are more vulnerable, such as older and disabled people;
 - registrants, from sole traders to multiples;
 - professional bodies;
 - bodies representing consumers and patients;
 - educational institutions; and
 - UK Government, Devolved Administrations and other public bodies, notably the CHRE and the Law Commission.
10. We also need to show that we are taking into account the interests of people living in all parts of the UK, including Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
11. More broadly, in developing and implementing our stakeholder engagement strategy we will need to identify all relevant stakeholder groups and ensure that our strategy takes them into account.
12. We will also address Council's helpful suggestion that it would be useful to define what we mean by a 'project' as opposed to 'business as usual' activity. Probably the key distinction is that projects tend to last for a finite period and are designed to achieve change in a specific area.
13. We think it is also useful to distinguish between strategic and non-strategic projects. Projects may be of strategic importance for a number of reasons: mission critical' importance; high level of risk; or substantial resource commitment (in terms of colleague input or financial resources). The significant of this distinction is that:
- we only propose to include strategic projects in the business plan;
 - strategic projects will receive a higher level of executive oversight; and
 - strategic projects will be funded from the strategic reserve.

Analysis

List of strategic projects for 2013/14

14. The table below sets out a revised list of the projects that are of strategic importance which we will be including in the 2013/14 business plan. We have refined the list following the discussion at the October Council meeting and further internal discussion. It includes some projects which will continue from 2012/13.

Strategic Aim	Workstream	Provisional 2013/14 Projects
Deliver effective, proportionate and fair public protection	Ensuring competence, performance and conduct of registrants	Improving guidance and policies: develop and clearly communicate improvements in Education, Standards and Fitness to Practice guidance and policies
		Consolidate registration guidance: complete the consolidation of our registration guidance
		Fitness to practise: carry out end-to-end review of our fitness practice processes
		Lifetime registration: implement single lifetime registration number
		Risk-based insurance assessment: implement proportionate and risk-based professional insurance checks
Base policy and regulatory practice on sound evidence	Establishing comprehensive policies and strategies	Corporate body registration: complete our review of corporate body registration and develop a clear position
		Student registration: complete our review of student registration and develop a clear position
		Review standards setting: complete review of standards setting processes
		Illegal practice strategy: implement our revised illegal practice strategy
		Strategic plan: develop new three-year strategic plan
Support our people to deliver our goals	Ensuring appropriate resources available to deliver strategy/plans	Capacity and capability review: implement outcomes from Capacity and Capability Review
		Office accommodation: secure office accommodation that meets the organisation's needs
	Supporting and developing our people to add value	HR policies and handbook: complete the development of our new HR policies and handbook

Ensure our systems and processes are efficient and cost effective	Modernising our information management into a single integrated framework	CRM system: complete implementation of our CRM system
	Reviewing and improving our complaints management as an end to end process	Registrant performance assessment: complete our registrant performance assessment programme
		Fitness to practice rules: complete implementation of Fitness to Practice Rules changes
	Ensuring open, transparent and robust governance	Consumer complaints service: conduct tender for provision of our consumer complaints handling service
Governance framework: complete governance framework review		
Information governance: implement information governance procedures and systems to ensure all data is handled appropriately		
Strongly engage with stakeholders	Develop targeted and purposeful relationships across all stakeholders	Equality and diversity: implement procedures to ensure compliance with the Equality Act
		Stakeholder engagement: implement stakeholder engagement strategy

Devolved Nations

15. As mentioned above, it is important for us to show in our business plan that we are engaging with, and taking into account the interests of, stakeholders in the Devolved Nations.

Communications

16. We will publish the business plan on our website at the end of March.

Recommendation

17. We invite Council to discuss and approve the proposed approach to finalising the business plan for 2013/14 and would welcome any further comments which the Council on the proposed strategic projects.

Screening

This paper does not have any direct financial, legal or other implications, other than the resource requirements associated with implementing the business plan and the various projects and pieces of work within it. Performance against the business plan will need to be monitored and reported on to

Council on an on-going basis. The following table considers the implications of any decisions which Council may make:

Are there any implications for the GOC's reserves	NO
Are there any other financial implications – i.e. a change to budget	NO
Are there any legal implications	NO
Are there any resource implication	YES
Are there any equality and diversity implications	NO
Will the report need to be published in Welsh	NO
Are there any Human Rights Act implications	NO