

COUNCIL

Report from the Chair of Council

Meeting: 11 February 2015

Status: for noting

Lead responsibility: Gareth Hadley
(Chair)

Contact details: ghadley@optical.org

Introduction

1. This report covers my principal activities since the Council meeting held on **12 November 2014**.

Stakeholders

2. **College of Optometrists:** Together with the Director of Policy and Communications, I met the President (David Parkins) and Director of Policy (Jo Mullin) of the College of Optometrists (**18 December 2014**). Our discussion focused on the Standards Review, particularly the means by which we would engage with the College during the coming stages of the Review. As colleagues will know, effective dialogue between the Council and the College about Standards is particularly important. The College provides professional guidance to their members: considerable weight has been attached to that guidance in Fitness to Practise hearings. In order for there to be clarity for the public and for registrants alike, the Council's Standards and Guidance and the College's guidance need to be kept in lockstep so far as is practicable.
3. **Chairs of UK healthcare regulators:** Following on from the chairs' most recent six monthly meeting (**4 November 2014**) hosted by us at Harley Street, the chairs and chief executives of the UK healthcare regulators met the chair (Baroness Jill Pitkeathley) and Chief Executive (Harry Cayton) of the Professional Standards Authority (**12 January 2015**) to further discuss their review of the process for the annual performance review of healthcare regulators.
4. **Specsavers:** Together with Director of Strategy and the Head of Education and Standards, I visited Specsavers Optical Group Skelmersdale (**14 January 2015**) to meet members of their graduate recruitment and development team in order that I might gain a better understanding of their processes for the assessment and selection of pre-registration optometrists and the issues arising therefrom. I am grateful for the considerable effort taken by Paul Carroll and his

professional services team and for their candour in taking us through the challenges of transitioning our registrants from educational into patient/customer-facing operational environments.

5. **Scottish stakeholders:** Together with the Director of Policy and the Standards Manager and Scott Mackie, I met representatives of Optometry Scotland (**29 January 2015**) to discuss the Standards Review and attended a meeting of Optometry Scotland's board. While in Scotland we also discussed the Standards Review with:
 - 5.1. Janet Pooley (Programme Director Optometry), Donald Cameron (Programme Director Optometry), and Helen Court (Senior Optometry Tutor, South East), NHS Education for Scotland ;
 - 5.2. Kevin Wallace (Chair, AOP Scotland); and
 - 5.3. John Legg (Director, RNIB Scotland).We also met Professor Anita Simmers (Head of Vision Sciences in the Department of Life Sciences at Glasgow Caledonian University) to discuss current developments in the University's approach to the teaching of optometry and dispensing optics.
6. **ABDO:** Together with the Chief Executive and Registrar, I met the President (Peter Black) and General Secretary (Tony Garrett) of ABDO (**4 February 2015**). Our discussion ranged over current issues including supervision, both of dispensing per se and of trainee Dispensing Opticians and trainee Contact Lens Opticians. Supervision of trainees was seen to be critical for the continued delivery of professional standards. Given this, it was considered that the Standards Review might usefully address how supervision should be reflected in registrants' core competencies.
7. **National Eye Research Centre:** I attended the launch (**4 February 2015**) of the National Eye Research Centre's campaign *Insights to a Healthy Future*.
8. **Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers:** In my capacities both as chair of the Council and as a Liveryman of the Company, I will be participating in a panel at a WCSM Moot (**7 February 2015**) being held in the margins of this year's *100% Optical* exhibition at ExCel. The themes for the Moot are:
 - 8.1. Why is a nearly 400 year old City Livery Company relevant to 21st century optics?
 - 8.2. What does the public want from optics - and how might that change in the future?

Council and Committees

9. I chaired two meetings of the Nominations Committee (**21 October 2014**) and (**3 December 2014**).

Management

10. In addition to my regular conversations with the Chief Executive and Registrar, we have had five long bilateral discussions concerning the work and direction of the Council. I have also had discussions with other members of the Executive.
11. I participated in interviews (**13 November 2014** and **4 December 2014**) for the appointment of the Director of Fitness to Practise.
12. I attended the induction training (**25 and 26 November 2014**) for newly appointed chairs of the Fitness to Practise Committee. Those appointed took office as lay hearing panel members with effect from 1 January 2015 and will assume chairing responsibilities from 1 July 2015 immediately following the retirement of current hearing panel members.
13. Together with Scott Mackie, I participated in employee induction training (**3 December 2015**).
14. Together with Fiona Peel and Penny Bennett (independent member of the Nominations Committee), I interviewed (over five days between **21 and 28 January 2015**) candidates shortlisted for appointment as a lay members of the hearing panel. Those appointed will take office with effect from 1 July 2015 immediately following the retirement of the current hearing panel members.