

**COUNCIL**

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PUBLIC**

**Mechanism for the development of a 5-year strategic plan**

For decision

**Issue:**

The Enhancing Confidence in Healthcare Professional Regulators Working Group recommended that the role of a council should be to set the direction of the organisation in line with its mission and purpose. This paper sets out the Executive's recommendation on a mechanism by which the General Optical Council will develop its next 5 year strategic plan.

**Recommendation:**

Council is asked to agree the mechanisms by which it will receive information to enable it to produce a five-year strategic plan.

**Annexes:**

There are no annexes for this paper.

**Further information:**

If you would like further information about this paper please contact:

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**To agree a mechanism for the development of a 5-year strategic plan**

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For decision

**Introduction:**

1. In May 2007 Niall Dickson, Chief Executive of the Kings Fund was asked by the Department of Health to chair the working group, '*Enhancing confidence in healthcare professional regulators*' arising from the White Paper: *Trust, Assurance and Safety*.
2. The Working Group recommended *that the role of a council should be to set the direction of the organisation in line with its mission and purpose. It should ensure systems are in place to enable it to monitor performance and to hold the executive to account. It should also ensure probity and while some regulators already have established schemes of delegation to achieve this, the working group recommended that this should apply to all regulators.*
3. This paper is the Executive's recommendation on a mechanism by which the General Optical Council will develop its next 5 year strategic plan. In developing its strategic plan the Council will need to consider whether its current mission requires amendment.
4. The first meeting of Council on the 2 April 2009, will include this as one of the first items for discussion. Other agenda items for the first meeting of the reconstituted Council deal with the system for monitoring performance and holding the executive to account. Since 2005, the GOC has had a scheme for delegation, which has been updated and is currently before the Council for approval.

**Discussion:**

*Producing a five-year strategic plan*

5. The Council cannot hope to single-handedly determine every aspect of a definitive programme for optical services in the UK for the future. However, it should be the Council's role to work with others to produce a blue print for the delivery of high quality optical services and to identify those matters which are within its gift to influence.
6. To inform its thinking in the development of the plan the Council needs to be informed of the current and future issues impinging on the optical sector in the UK and to seek the views of its major stakeholders on their expectations of and aspirations for the sector in the future.
7. It is suggested that the role of the Council in this exercise is to lead, encourage and produce an analysed summary of comments and data received and to draw conclusions therefrom. Council should not set themselves up as experts with

knowledge of technical issues and Council members should look for help from other areas of expertise when dealing with such issues.

8. In constructing its strategic plan the Council should put the patient and the public at the heart of its work; should take account of the principles of Better Regulation (proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent, targeted and gives organisational excellence) and should take account of the political, environmental, social and technological influences on the optical sector over the next five years.
9. The question which needs to be addressed now is:  
***'by what mechanism(s) should the Council receive the information to enable it to decide on what issues it should concentrate over the next five years?'***

The intention would be to:

- i. give each of the Council's stakeholders an opportunity to voice where it sees itself being in the next five years, including key opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses;
- ii. from this to identify those issues which the Council itself can influence which would be of benefit to the public and patients; and
- iii. subsequently to develop the GOC's strategic plan to achieve those changes.

#### **Recommendation:**

The Executive recommend that

- i. the most efficient and cost effective mechanism for seeking the views of key stakeholders would be to adopt a select committee approach;
- ii. the Council should receive evidence, information and presentations from its key stakeholders on their expectations of and aspirations for the short, medium and long-term delivery of high quality optical services in the UK to the year 2020;
- iii. Council receive evidence, information and presentations in May, June and July 2009;
- iv. Council review in September 2009 the presentations given, with a view to agreeing a draft strategic plan at its November 2009 meeting;
- v. thereafter, Council consult on its draft strategic plan from November 2009 to February 2010 so as to agreeing the final plan at its February 2010 meeting for implementation from April 2010 onwards.

#### **Resource implications:**

The most significant resource impact will be on staff capacity. The Executive is limited in its staff hours resource and has to operate within the constraints of a fixed registration fee for the next financial year.

#### **Council resource**

Council strategic planning event (2 day) together with SMT and one executive assistant support  
Plus monthly meetings of Council in the first year

**Estimated Staff Time**

Estimate that Registrar and an Executive Assistant will need to commit 5 working days each for each day Council meets

SMT members to commit 2 days each to each day Council meetings

12 days of Council meetings = 12 x 5 Registrar days (60 days) (30% Registrar)

Plus 60 days of executive assistant days (30% Council officer)

12 days x 2 = 24 days of each SMT member (12% other SMT check duplication)

**Equality and diversity implications:**

*No Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment has yet been carried out.*

**Stakeholder engagement:**

*No Consultation been completed to date*