

GOC's Strategic Plan 2020-25

Meeting: 26 February 2020

Status: For decision

Lead responsibility: Marcus Dye (Director of Strategy)

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Council Lead(s): David Parkins

Purpose

1. To present Council with a draft Strategic Plan 2020-25.

Recommendations

2. Council is asked to agree:
 - the publication of the GOC's Consultation Report (**annex one**) and the GOC's response to the consultation feedback including proposed actions (**annex two**);
 - the publication of the revised Strategic Plan (**annex three**) subject to drafting changes arising at the meeting; and
 - delegation of sign-off for any further drafting changes arising in the meeting to the Chief Executive and Chair of the Council.
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Strategic objective

3. This work contributes towards the achievement of the following strategic objective: organisational transformation and is included in our 2019/20 Business Plan.

Background

4. We consulted on our draft Strategic Plan 2020-2026 from 17 December 2019 to 17 January 2020 on our consultation platform, Citizen Space. In developing our draft plan, we had already engaged with internal stakeholders, including GOC staff, Council and advisory committee members. The next phase, and the aim of the consultation, was to seek external stakeholder views via a public consultation to help finalise the plan.

Analysis

5. Our analysis of the consultation feedback is presented at **annex one**.
6. Overall, there was support for our draft mission, vision and values and the majority of respondents felt that they were clear. However, there were a number of themes that emerged as highlighted below.

7. In relation to our mission to protect the public by continuously raising standards in the optical professions, this was challenged by some stakeholders who thought that our plans to introduce an apprenticeship scheme via the Education Strategic Review would not raise standards and could even lower standards.
8. In terms of our vision, efficient, effective and timely were seen as important factors in the GOC delivering excellent customer focus, including faster resolution of fitness to practise (FTP) complaints. Some respondents were unclear about which customers we were referring to, for example, registrants and/or patients and the public. Some also raised concerns about the GOC using the word 'customer' in relation to patients and the public.
9. In relation to our values, respondents thought that we should demonstrate efficient processes, for example, in FTP.
10. In terms of external influences, individual respondents thought that we should address the issue of commercial pressures and the effect this has on the ability of registrants to give high quality care to patients. Some expressed the view that the retail/profit driven side of the sector is dominating the clinical side which is compromising patient care. This was presented as being largely down to the current NHS General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) fee, whereby optical businesses have to focus on the retail side to subsidise the low fee. Some thought that we should do more to help protect registrants from the pressures they face at work.
11. Another concern highlighted by many individual respondents was the influence of corporates/multiples and the perceived conflict of interest by representatives sitting on GOC Council/boards/committees and potentially influencing GOC policy and decision making.
12. Some organisational responses suggested we could better highlight the role the optical professions can play in helping to reduce the burden on ophthalmologists and secondary care, for example, by providing more care in community optical practices. Furthermore, we should help raise awareness of the role of the professions to help improve the public perceptions of their role in eye health.
13. The majority of respondents agreed with our three strategic objectives and our aims under each:
 - delivering world-class regulatory practice;
 - transforming customer service; and
 - building a process of continuous improvement.
14. In relation to improving patient and public engagement, there was overall support for this with many suggesting regular patient surveys. However, many respondents also thought that we could strengthen engagement, for example, by ensuring that we better include seldom heard groups in our work, such as those who might not have access to a computer, the elderly, the visually impaired, those with disabilities and

those whose first language is not English. There were also suggestions that we should do more to promote the important role our professions play in eye health and the range of services they provide to the public.

15. Overall, there was support for our equality, diversity and inclusion strategy. We received some valuable feedback on how we can successfully implement this, for example:
 - ensuring we more actively listen and engage with a diverse range of stakeholders including seldom heard groups;
 - ensuring we have diverse representation at all levels within the GOC and our EDI policies are clearly accessible; and
 - ensuring all our work considers EDI implications, for example, via equality impact assessments.
16. We have considered all the comments we have received in the table at **annex two** which outlines how we have responded to each.
17. Three major structural changes to the report following review are as follows:
 - The length of the strategic plan has been reduced to five years in line with feedback from Council previously, and to bring it in line with our next CET cycle ending in 2025.
 - The EDI strategy has been merged into the main strategy for clarity and cohesion.
 - Indicative work programmes and timescales have been included under each of the objectives to provide clarity on how the objectives will be achieved over the five years.
18. Finally, we present a revised version of the Strategic Plan at **annex three** incorporating all these changes.

Finance

19. The costs of publishing the plan in plain PDF format can be absorbed within the Communications budget.

Risks

20. If we do not have a strategic plan in place for 1 April 2020, we risk being criticised by our stakeholders for not being clear about what we are trying to achieve over the next five-year period.
21. The risk of prioritising the wrong things is mitigated by the proposed review of the strategy at the end of year 3 and before then if it becomes necessary.

Equality Impacts

22. An equality impact assessment has been completed and identifies

Devolved nations

23. The Strategic Plan applies to the whole of the UK, and reflects awareness of differences within the nations, which may affect the delivery of the strategic objectives.

Communications

External communications

24. We will aim to publish the final version of our Strategic Plan in March 2020, ahead of its launch on 1 April 2020. A communications plan will be developed and implemented to include press, website content, social media, stakeholder emails and internal communications.

Internal communications

25. We will share a final copy of the strategic plan with staff through our intranet and we will cascade through Directorate and team meetings to ensure all staff are aware of our objectives. The publication will also create a platform for launching our new values and work around the culture of the organisation.

Next steps

26. Once Council have signed off the strategic plan, we intend to publish it in March 2020 and put it into effect through our business planning work.

Attachments

Annex one: GOC's draft Strategic Plan 2020-25: consultation report

Annex two: GOC's response to the consultation feedback including recommended actions

Annex three: Revised version of the strategic plan incorporating recommendations