MINUTES

Public Council Meeting

Tuesday 26 May 2026

1.00 pm, Society House/MS Teams

Present:

Council:

Dr Geraldine O'Hare (President)	Anne Henderson	Gary McMurray
Mark McCrudden (Vice President)	Brendan Garland	Scott Gill
Alison Ragg	Siobhán Caslin	

PSNI:

Canice Ward (Chief Executive Officer)	David McCann (Head of Regulatory Strategy)
Joan Duffy (Director of Business Operations)	Stephen Moohan (Transformation and Governance Lead)

In Attendance:

Steve Wright (PSA)	Alan Clamp (PSA)	Jackie Murray (Minutes)
Niall Bakewell	Una O'Farrell (Item 15)	

Apologies:	Lee Wilson	Philip Knox
Laura Hughes (Registrar/Director of Regulation)	Barry Mimnagh	

Item	Notes	Actions
1. **Welcome and Apologies** (President)	The President welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Alan Clamp, CEO, and Steve Wright, Scrutiny Officer, from the PSA who were joining online. The President referenced the later start time for the meeting which enabled a workshop to be held earlier that day with the Department of Health to discuss the future of pharmacy regulation in Northern Ireland.	
2. **Deputations** (President)	The President was in attendance for the full meeting. BG would be deputising for PK for items in relation to the Audit and Risk Committee.	

3. Conflicts of Interest (President)	There were no Conflicts of Interest declared.	
4. Tabling of Any Other Business (President)	There were no tabled items of business.	
5. Draft Minutes of the Previous Meeting (President) FOR APPROVAL	The draft minutes from the meeting held on 24 February 2026 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. **Proposed by AR / Seconded by BG / Show of Hands**	
6. Action Log (President) APPROVAL	The Action Log was updated and relevant items closed with specific reference made to: Registrant Member Recruitment to Council – recent recruitment exercise completed and GOH will provide a further update when the PAU have confirmed the outcome. Board Effectiveness – JM will organise session for later in 2026 and external facilitator will be organised for 2027 (three-yearly session). Knowledge of English – project has been paused and will be discussed further in the In Committee session. Case Management Lawyer – requirement for post had been approved in principle at the HRC meeting on 16.04.26 but is dependent upon an improved financial situation. Corporate Governance Handbook – work continues to progress and the draft Handbook has been reviewed by the President, Vice President and Committee Chairs. A Roundtable session with Council to confirm changes will be organised for later in the year. Cyber Security – JD confirmed there was no Conflict of Interest with the current IT provider recommending companies to carry out pen testing. There has been no decision made to date as additional comparative quotes are required. **Proposed by MMcC/SC/Show of Hands**	 **PC56: JM to arrange** **PC83: Confidental Agenda** **PC88: JM to confirm date**

7. **Increase in Fees** (CEO) FOR INFORMATION	CW confirmed that the legislation will come into effect on 01.06.26. MMcC stated that the guidance document for the registration process via Direct Debit had been a useful resource. Further to a query from a Member, SM confirmed that to date there are 590 live mandates with 80 in progress. GOH thanked everyone involved for their work with transitioning to this payment option.	
8. **DHSC Consultation on GMC Reform Paper** (CEO) FOR INFORMATION	CW had circulated documentation on the DHSC Consultation on legislative reform and it was noted a similar reform providing greater efficiencies, autonomy and FtP removal powers would benefit the Society.	
9. **Fitness to Practise Monthly Report – April 2026** (CEO) FOR INFORMATION	Further to discussion at the previous Council meeting, CW advised that is not appropriate to provide enhanced detail in the Public Council meeting and more detailed discussions should take place in the In Committee session. GMcM stated that FtP is now a standing item on the FPC agenda and more comprehensive reporting would be provided to that meeting. In addition, an additional focused FPC session on Fitness to Practise to be organised.	**PC96: JM to poll for dates**
10. **Overarching Action Plan** (CEO) FOR INFORMATION	The Overarching Action Plan had been made available on the website in advance of the meeting but was inadvertently omitted from the papers circulated to Members on Decision Time. The document was emailed to Members during the meeting and the President advised, as no decisions were required from Council, that it would be reviewed by Members following the meeting and any queries could be forwarded via JM.	
11. **Business Plan Q4 Update** (DBO) FOR INFORMATION	The Business Plan update for Quarter 4 was discussed. Members referenced the RAG rating and that it would be helpful to have an accompanying summary. CW reported that each Committee had a different interpretation of the status. JD will discuss with MMcC to agree a definitive wording for use across SMT, Committees and Council.	**PC97: JD to discuss with MMcC**
12. **Finance and Performance Update** (FPC Chair) FOR INFORMATION	GMcM presented the approved redacted Minutes from the meeting on 6 February 2026. The main focus of the meeting had been on Director and Officer insurance, Fitness to Practise Report and Funding.	

	It was noted that an additional layer of insurance is now in place for Director and Officer Insurance and this will be renewed with all policies for 01.07.26. SM will update CW who will relay to GOH.	**PC98: SM to update CW for GOH**
13. Audit and Risk Committee Update (ARC Deputy Chair) FOR INFORMATION	BG presented the approved redacted Minutes from the meeting held on 3 February 2026. The main focus of the meeting had been on internal audit.	
14. Human Resources Committee Update (HRC Chair) FOR INFORMATION	SG presented the approved redacted Minutes from the meeting held on 29 January 2026.	
15. PFNI Bi-Annual Update (PFNI Caretaker Manager) FOR INFORMATION	UO'F provided an update on the following items: - PASS – a review piece of work is being undertaken. - CPD – three successful webinars held each booked to maximum capacity - Early Career Pharmacists – new group established - Public Appointments – seminars held to assist with registrant member job applications - Healthcare Awards – significant number of pharmacists received awards. Further to a query from a Member regarding the potential to widen the remit for PASS applications, UO'F advised that the objects are defined under charity legislation. There is, however, the potential to increase its visibility to Members and the enhancement of the PASS facilitator role (currently vacant) would also be of benefit.	**PC99: UO'F to update further on PASS**
16. Standards, Consultation and Guidance Update (Head of Regulatory Strategy) FOR INFORMATION	DMcC presented the Highlight Report and updated on: <u>Collection and Delivery Consultation</u> – the updated draft guidance is currently being considered to refine the approach and confirm the appropriate level of guidance. Upon completion of engagement, a finalised version will be presented for approval.	

	Draft Standards for Pharmacist Prescribers Consultation – the consultation closes on 11 June 2026 and an Outcomes Report will be presented to Council. Standards, Guidance and Review Framework – the next phase will require engagement with operational teams and agree how the framework will be implemented before being presented to Council. External Consultations – there has not been the opportunity to respond to any consultations during the reporting period. The paper was noted.	
17. Communications and Engagement Plan (Communications Officer) FOR INFORMATION	NB reported on activity during the reporting period. The paper was noted.	
18. President's Update FOR INFORMATION	GO'H reported on the following items: A significant number of pharmacists have received awards with the QUB Annual Awards, Pharmacy in Focus Awards and NI Healthcare Awards ceremonies being held over the past months. Of note, the CPO was honoured with a Special Achievement Award presented at the NI Healthcare Awards. AI was the theme of the PSA Roundtable meeting held on 14.05.26 and CPD will be the theme for the next meeting in November. Briefing meetings continue with the DoH/CPO/GPhC.	**PC100: GOH will share the AI presentation with CW**
19. Chief Executive Officer's Update FOR INFORMATION	Further to a recent meeting with the DoH, commitment remains to progress the Premises Fees Consultation. The CRA is scheduled to take place on 16.06.26 and CW passes on best wishes to all the candidates. CPD submissions are due by the end of May and the portal has remained operational.	

	Engagement continues with the PSA and there is also a meeting scheduled to discuss the new Standards which the Society will be assessed on from 2027. The Society's enquiry to the DoH regarding the potential impact of the Somerville Judgement remains with the DSO. Recruitment is underway for vacances across the two FtP Committees and SC is chairing the Interview Panel.	
20. Any Other Business	There were no further items of business.	
21. Date of Next Meeting	Tuesday 28 July 2026 at 6.30 pm via MS Teams with potential to hold the Risk Workshop session.	

The meeting concluded at 2.00 pm.

<u>2026 Schedule</u>

Tuesday 22 September 2026 at 10.00 am
Tuesday 1 December 2026 at 10.00 am – in person (followed by Christmas Meeting with Staff)