

ROYAL PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Transcript of the Public session of the Council meeting held on Tuesday 29 June 2010
at 1 Lambeth High Street, London, SE1 7JN

[NB: Decisions in square brackets and narrow type are taken from the unconfirmed minutes of Council and therefore are subject to amendment]

The transcript of the public meeting of the Council is not the formal record of the meeting. The formal record comprises the papers presented to the meeting and the minutes as subsequently approved. The policy of the RPSGB is actively debated at the meeting. The views expressed in the transcript do not necessarily represent the Society's agreed policy.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

COUNCIL MEETING

Present

President	Mr S Churton
Vice-President	Prof N Barber
Treasurer	Mr J Gentle
Mr S Acres	Ms S Agha
Mr G Alexander	Mrs M Allan
Mr M Astbury	Mr D Carter
Mrs D Drury	Dr P Entwistle
Mr G Hall	Ms S Hikins
Mrs L Jacobs	Mr A Kershaw
Miss Y Liddell	Dr T Learoyd
Mrs S Kilby	Mrs A Moore
Ms M Saunders	Mr D Thomson
Mrs V Turner	

In attendance

Mrs Lindsey Gilpin, Chair English Pharmacy Board, Ms Nuala Brennan, Chair Welsh Pharmacy Board, Mrs Sandra Melville, Chair Scottish Pharmacy Board and Mr Jeremy Holmes, Chief Executive & Registrar

Chief Executive & Registrar in the Chair

Mr Jeremy Holmes, The Chief Executive & Registrar: Good morning Council. Good morning. There were some disruptions on public transport this morning but I think almost everybody is here who has not given apologies. In line with the usual procedure are Council happy that I should chair the first three agenda items until we have a President elected? (Agreed) Thank you.

1. Standing Orders of the Council

The Chief Executive & Registrar: So the first agenda item is standing orders which, because we do not have any new Council members this time around, everyone will be familiar with, which is paper 39. I would like to ask Council to adopt those standing orders as provided for in section 15 of the regulations. (Agreed) Thank you very much.

2. Council Governance Handbook

The Chief Executive & Registrar: The second agenda item is the Council governance handbook which we have not reprinted but everybody, I am sure, is familiar with the governance handbook for 2009/2010, and I would like Council to agree that going forward for the balance of Council's period until demerger. (Agreed) Thank you very much.

3. Election of Officers and Council members working with the Officers for 2010

The Chief Executive & Registrar: So item 3 is to elect the officers and Council members working with the officers for the remainder of 2010. You have election statements from the two members of Council nominated for the office of President and they are Steve Churton, nominated by David Carter and seconded by David Thomson, and Tristan Learoyd, nominated by Dorothy Drury and seconded by Gerald Alexander.

Could I ask each of those candidates to make a declaration of interests, please? Steve?

Mr Steve Churton, The President: Thank you, Jeremy. Yes, a declaration of interests from me, I am an employee of Boots UK, I am a trustee of PEPCO and PPRT. My wife is a pharmacist although on the non-practising register and I am a governor of the College of the RNIB.

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Thank you, Steve. Tristan?

Dr Tristan Learoyd: I am an employee of the University of Sunderland.

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Thank you very much. Martyn, could you distribute the ballot papers, please?

(Ballot papers were distributed)

(After a pause)

The Chief Executive & Registrar: The result of the election for President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society is Steve Churton received 15 votes, Tristan Learoyd received six votes, so Steve Churton is elected the President for the coming year.

[The Council

elected

Mr Steve Churton to the office of President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society for the Council year 2010.]

(Applause)

The Chief Executive & Registrar: I now hand over to Steve.

The President: Thank you, Jeremy. Colleagues and friends, in thanking you sincerely for the trust and confidence you have once again shown in me in electing me President for a third and final term I would like to say just a few words by way of thanks and acceptance and also for the record.

We are now within sight of a landmark moment we have all worked so hard to realise over the past few years. In a few months from now the Royal Pharmaceutical Society will have been successfully established, the General Pharmaceutical Council operational, and we will have achieved what we set out to accomplish two years ago.

When I was first elected President in 2008 I laid out in my election statement what I felt was needed and what I considered I could offer. In 2009 on my re-election I looked back at what had been achieved and re-affirmed my vision for the establishment of a professional body in which members could take pride and for the safe transfer of our regulatory responsibilities to the General Pharmaceutical Council.

We all know a great deal has happened since then against a backdrop of harsh economic and social challenge and the time scale for our separation fraught with unavoidable slippage and uncertainty.

I continue to take great pride in our people and the work they are doing to ensure that we arrive in good shape and I am confident that both organisations will be launched in September and with the best possible start in life.

I would like to pay tribute to all of those who have helped to make this happen. Thank you to those who have worked together to provide the strategic direction and expertise to enable us to take the necessary steps towards the inception of our new body. Thank you to Jeremy and the dedicated executive team who have turned this strategy into a coordinated and focused business plan. Thank you to all of our talented people who have worked so hard to achieve the challenges and milestones we have set for them.

Above all, it is the commitment of a passionate membership who have given us their time, their support and their opinions that will contribute so much to building a leadership organisation that listens, an organisation that reacts, and an organisation that absolutely delivers on its promises.

It is entirely due to the dedication, commitment and passion of everyone involved that the result of all our work will in a few months' time see the launch of a revitalised, reinvigorated, more relevant, more representative and more respected professional body and a regulator which will protect the interests of patients through proportionate and appropriate regulation.

During my time as President I have felt both honoured and proud that individual members of this profession, the Council that I have been privileged to lead and the fantastic people who work so hard on our behalf have seen fit to place their trust in me. I have invested the last two years of my life in fulfilling the commitments that I made at the time of my election and my obligation to lead to the best interests of the profession.

I have worked hard to support those who have had the vision and the energy to work alongside me to conceive, plan and establish the leadership body that I passionately believe will have the capability and resolve to bring about a new dawn for pharmacy. In fact, throughout my tenure I have been greatly heartened and encouraged by the will amongst pharmacists for a new, vibrant and, above all, truly effective professional body.

I am very proud of what I have achieved during my time as President. I hope that my passion for the profession, the same passion that I have been privileged to see reflected in the faces and in the words and actions of many thousands of pharmacists I have had the good fortune to meet during my term of office, will be seen and felt in every aspect of the work that will be carried out under the auspices of our new professional body. I am as proud to be a member of this profession now as I was on the first day that I registered over 30 years ago. I can only hope that I have been able to make a difference and played my part in securing its sustainable and influential future for our profession.

I hope that time will show that I was right to champion what I have, to take the tough decisions that I thought were necessary, and to listen to those who matter most to me, our members, and to surround myself frankly with people and friends whose expertise and charisma more than compensated for my shortcomings.

There is always a right time to move on but it will not be before I have delivered what I always promised that I would, a professional leadership body that has far more than just a prospect of achievement, a leadership body which, given the right conditions, sufficient nourishment, the care and attention it needs and deserves and the dedication of those who have faith in it and who will support it, will flourish to become an accomplished, respected and fine professional body.

This surely is the dream of so many who share my aspirations for our profession, individual members, local practice forums, the national pharmacy boards, members of this Council and the shadow assembly, in fact, all of those who are working so tirelessly to build our future. As we move towards separation, may I thank you again for your support in allowing me to lead this historic change on behalf of the many thousands of colleagues throughout this great profession of ours. Quite genuinely, it has been an absolute pleasure and a privilege to work with you and many across the profession who have come together to make this change happen. I remain very grateful to those colleagues here today who continue to demonstrate their loyalty and support for me and for what I am trying to achieve by electing me once again. It means a great deal personally and I will not let you or the profession down. Thank you.

(Applause)

The President: Thank you very much. Can I now call for a 15-minute break? I think it is traditional to have a break at this point, after which we will return and elect the Vice President, Treasurer and other officers. The time is coming up to 11.00 am, if we can reconvene at 11.15 am, please. Thank you.

(A short adjournment)

The President: We are now going to move on to the election of the remaining officers so could I please call for nominations for Vice President?

Mr John Gentle: I would like to nominate Martin Astbury.

Mr Graeme Hall: I would like to nominate Nick Barber.

The President: Who is seconding Martin, sorry? Lorna. Graham, you are nominating Nick. A seconder for Nick? Margaret. Thank you. Any more names? Okay. Jeremy?

The Chief Executive & Registrar: So we have two candidates for the position of Vice President, Martin Astbury, nominated by John Gentle, seconded by Lorna Jacobs, Nick Barber, nominated by Graeme Hall and seconded by Margaret Allan.

The President: Thank you, Martyn.

(Ballot papers were distributed)

(After a pause)

The President: Thank you, colleagues. The result of the vote for Vice President, Martin Astbury, nine votes, Nick Barber, 13 votes. Congratulations, Nick.

(Applause)

[The Council

elects

Professor Nick Barber to the office of Vice-President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society for the Council year 2010].

The President: We will now move on to the election of the lay member of the officers' group. Could I have nominations please?

Mrs Sylvia Hikins: I would like to nominate Alan Kershaw.

The President: Thank you, Sylvia. A seconder for Alan? Any more candidates? I beg your pardon, the Treasurer first. Nominations for Treasurer?

Mr David Carter: Can I propose John Gentle, please?

The President: A seconder?

Mrs Dorothy Drury: Is it possible to have a five-minute break after that or not? It is not possible, is it?

The President: Why would you want that, Dorothy? Were you seconding, Dorothy, or not?

Mrs Dorothy Drury: No.

The President: Who is seconding?

Mr David Thomson: I will second.

The President: Any more nominations for Treasurer? Thank you. Could I ask Council to affirm John Gentle as Treasurer, please? (Agreed) Congratulations, John.

(Applause)

The President: Now a lay member to work with the officers, thank you.

Mrs Sylvia Hikins: I would like to nominate Alan Kershaw.

The President: A seconder from Martin, thank you. Any more nominations? Congratulations, Alan. Could I ask Council to affirm Alan as the lay member?

[The Council

affirmed

Mr John Gentle to the office of Treasurer of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society for the Council year 2010.]

(Applause)

The President: Finally, the additional member of Council to work with the officers. This was a post that was held by Nick. So nominations, please?

Mr Martin Astbury, The Vice-President: David Carter.

The President: Thank you. A seconder? David Thomson seconding. Any more candidates?

Mrs Alison Moore: I nominate Sue Kilby.

The President: Sue Kilby. A seconder for Sue? Valerie. Any more candidates? Thank you. Jeremy?

The Chief Executive & Registrar: So we have two candidates for the position of fourth officer to work with the officers' group, David Carter, nominated by Nick Barber, seconded by David Thomson, and Sue Kilby, nominated by Alison Moore, seconded by Valerie Turner.

(The ballot papers were distributed)

(After a pause)

The President: Thank you very much, members. In the vote for the additional member of Council to work with officers' David Carter, 13 votes, Sue Kilby, nine votes. I hereby declare that David Carter is appointed.

[The Council

elected

Mr David Carter as the additional member of Council to work with the Officers for the Council year 2010.]

[The Council

affirmed

Mr Alan Kershaw as the lay member of Council to work with the Officers for the Council year 2010.

Thanks were paid to Mr Martin Astbury, former Vice-President from 2007 – 2010.]

(Applause)

The President: Thank you very much. We will now move into the main part of the meeting, the public business, item 4.

4. Welcome to guests

The President: I do not think we have formally any guests with us today. I beg your pardon, Marcia.

Ms Marcia Saunders: Just on a point of order I think we would all like to thank Martin for his years of service as Vice-Chair.

The President: Quite right. Thank you, Marcia.

(Applause)

5. Apologies for absence

The President: Let us start off with some apologies, please? Kay Blair, Bob Michell and John Jolley, apologies.

6. Declaration of interests

The President: Declaration of interests, could I just remind Council members to make declarations of interest, please, at the appropriate time before each agenda item.

7. Minutes of the public business part of the meeting of Council held on 31 March 2010 and 19 May 2010

The President: Moving to item 7, which are the minutes of two meetings of Council, the public business minutes of the meeting held on 31 March and 19 May, do Council approve those minutes as accurate? (Agreed) Thank you.

[Council

resolved

that the minutes of the public business part of the meeting held on 31 March 2010 and 19 May 2010 be received and agreed as a correct record.]

8. Matters arising from the public business part of the minutes not specifically included in the agenda

The President: Thank you. Item 8, matters arising, does anyone wish to rise any matters arising out of those two sets of minutes? Thank you.

Organisational matters

9. Chief Executive & Registrar's report

a) Minutes of committees circulated since the March 2010 meeting of Council

The President: Item 9 then, organisational matters. Jeremy?

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Thank you, Steve, there is an (a) under item 9 but no (b) so item 9 is for Council to receive the minutes of eight Committee and Board meetings held between March and May, all of which are on the microsite. Can I take it that Council has received those? (Agreed) Thank you.

*[Council
received
i. the minutes as stated.]*

The President: Staying with Jeremy for item 10.

10. Report on the one hundred and sixty ninth Annual General Meeting of the Society held on Wednesday 19 May 2010 (AGM)

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Item 10 is the report of the 169th AGM of the Society held on 19 May, paper 42. This is a 'for the record' paper. Can I ask Council to receive that report on the AGM, please? (Agreed) Thank you.

*[Council
received
i. the report.]*

The President: Thank you.

11. Members designated as Fellows of the Society by the Panel of Fellows under Regulations Section 12

The President: Item 11, members designated as fellows, this is paper 42A.

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Thank you, Steve. Council is asked to note the decision of the Panel of Fellows to designate members for fellowship of the Society and to agree the application of a common seal to these fellows' certificates. The members designated as fellows are given in section 2. Can I ask Council to note that and agree the application of the seal?

The Vice-President: Can I just declare a conflict of interest before that?

The President: Any other conflicts? Sue?

Mrs Sue Kilby: Yes.

The President: Is that a conflict of interest?

Mrs Sue Kilby: A conflict of interest with the people that are being put forward.

The President: Any more conflicts of interest? David, thank you. Anybody else? Okay, thank you. So Council have noted the recommendation of the Fellows Panel and the only question which remains, therefore, is whether we agree to affix a seal. Are we all agreed? (Agreed) Thank you very much.

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Could I just make a point? I was hoping that there would be two of those people in the room. Actually there is only one at the moment. Congratulations. David Thomson and Catherine Duggan are on the list. Catherine was here a moment ago but I am sure Council would like to congratulate her too.

(Applause)

[Council

- i. **noted** the decision of the Panel of Fellows to designate members for Fellowship of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain; and
- ii. **agreed** that the Common Seal of the Society be affixed to the certificates of those Fellows designated in 2010.]

The President: Thank you, Jeremy.

12. Pension Fund

The President: Moving on to item 12, which is a verbal report on the pension fund, Graham?

Mr Graham Duncan, Director of Finance: Thank you. Good morning, Council. Just to give you an update on the work we are doing on the pension funds with the transfer of those staff that are going to the General Pharmaceutical Council, we held a meeting here on 21 June to talk through with the trustees, with the Department of Health, with the General Pharmaceutical Council, and the Society to talk through the transfer of the pensions between the Society's pension scheme and going over to the NHS pension scheme. It is affecting 20 of the current employees who are designated to transfer to the General Pharmaceutical Council and we are looking at ways to make sure that those employees are not harmed in any way with the transfer. So the actuaries are working together to make sure that any shortfall between the transfer of the assets and liabilities designated to those 20 employees are not going to be harmed in any way. So the actuaries are currently looking at how much the shortfall will be and will be coming forward with a letter to both the employer and the trustees to make sure that we understand what that shortfall will be and how they propose to cover it. That does depend on obviously those employees transferring completely into the scheme and transferring their pension contributions to date as part of that. It looks like there is probably just based on estimates around about £1 million shortfall for those 20 employees but it is waiting on some actuarial evaluations coming back on that.

The other thing we have been looking at is about the employers' covenant. As you know, the pension fund trustees are looking very closely at this to make sure that moving forward after the demerger the Society can meet its obligations with the pension fund but we alongside the trustees are heavily working and lobbying with the Department of Health to make sure that they support any employers' covenant. They in effect have proposed this demerger, they pushed it forward, so we are working very hard to make sure that they understand that obligation. To date, we have not had any positive response but we are currently -- the trustees have already put a letter in. We are doing the same to make sure they understand the way forward.

The valuation, the final part of the work that we did on that day was around the valuation. As you know, in the public domain, the previous finance director put in £12.2 million, which was the deficit based on an update valuation as at 31 December 2008. That is currently being updated at the moment as at 31 December 2009 so, again, we are waiting to see what that is and we are working very closely with the trustees on an ongoing basis to make sure that we get that as quickly as possible and understand the effects of the pension fund as a proper triennial valuation.

That is an update of the meeting. It was all very positive. Both sides are looking to make sure that no employee is harmed in any way and we are waiting on further information from the actuaries on both sides to make sure that that is kept up to date and the transfer happens as smoothly as possible at the point of demerger.

The President: Thank you, Graham. I think it is true to say you have another meeting this week, Thursday of this week.

Mr Graham Duncan: Yes.

The President: Questions for Graham? Sylvia?

Mrs Sylvia Hikins: Thank you, President. Can I just ask, are our employees not transferring on a TUPI arrangement with the Department of Health and if they are does that not include the transfer of pension rights *per se*?

The Chief Executive & Registrar: I can clarify that. TUPE does not include transfer of pension rights but the GPhC has said that they will be eligible to transfer into the NHS scheme if they so choose and it is an individual choice. So we are making provision on the assumption that they will all choose to transfer into the NHS scheme. It is about 20 staff, as Graham indicated, and the actuaries are looking at the benefits that they would be able to access through that scheme rather than the Society's scheme to make sure they are not disadvantaged and the shortfall in order to ensure they are not disadvantaged is what is being calculated and the Department will make that shortfall good.

The President: Any more questions for Graham on this item? Okay. Thank you, Graham.

FOR NOTING

13. Pharmacist Support

*[Council
noted*

i. the report that had been circulated at 10.06/C/43.]

14. Council update

The President: Items 13 and 14 are for noting. Item 13 is a paper on pharmacist support. Thanks to Catherine for drafting that paper. Item 14 is a Council update. Thank you, Martyn, for that paper.

*[Council
noted*

i. the report that had been circulated at 10.06/C/44.]

Regulatory matters

15 GPhC Fees consultation

The President: Regulatory matters now, item 15, which is paper 44A. This is the response to the General Pharmaceutical Council fees consultation, if I could ask Alan, as Chair of the working group, to take us through this.

Mr Alan Kershaw: Thank you, President. I am reasonably confident in saying this is the last time this group will report to Council but I have said that three times before. I do not think there is anything else to come now between now and the demerger which will give us a position in this but as you know our task has been to pre-digest some of these consultation papers for you and to bring some proposals for a considered response to you.

The question of fees is obviously very sensitive and possibly on this occasion the subject matter and the response are more politically driven than purely technical. That is to say, there are bigger policy issues than purely technical ones and rules we have had before. Maybe there is more to talk about or maybe not.

I am not going to take you right through the paper. I simply want to explain our approach.

The first thing to say is that as before the questions we are directly asked to answer in this consultation are not particularly helpful ones, they are not necessarily the questions we think need asking and answering, so we have taken the liberty of answering the questions we think are necessary as well. So you may find in looking at the draft response that some of the comments we have made appear to be shoe-horned into particular questions which are the nearest we can find. We have also made some general comments as well.

So we have two main themes in this and in each case picking up things stated in the consultation paper which we then are not sure are borne out by the detail. One is over the principle, the general principle, that fees should as far as possible reflect the actual costs that those fees are meant to cover rather than being a general contribution to a general fund

which is then distributed later. We are very happy with that as a principle, indeed, we thought that was the right one for a long time on this Council, but we do not think it is borne out in the actual proposals in a number of ways which we have highlighted. Two specifics on that: one, in the general application fees and retention fees, we are not at all convinced that a flat rate application fee for example of £100 is a sophisticated enough instrument to tackle the different costs of handling different types of application so we are not sure there has been enough thinking on that; secondly, the vexed and old question of the premises fee, the fee for regulating premises, which this Council and the Society has long believed has been under-costed in the past so that the fees for regulating premises have not come near reflecting the actual cost of regulating them. Therefore, by definition, the regulation of premises has for years been subsidised by individuals, both pharmacists and technicians, who have paid the general fees and we have argued for years that is wrong and although, in this paper, an increase in the premises fee is proposed, on the basis of what the paper says, that purely covers a grant which was to cover the costs of additional monitoring of controlled drugs which is being tapered away by the Department and therefore it needs to be made good. So all it is, as far as we can see, is bringing the fee back to the same starting gate without that grant. It is not increasing the fee. Therefore, it is not addressing the question of the shortfall between the fee and the costs of doing the work and therefore we wanted to highlight that as a contradiction of the general principle stated in the paper and approved by us that fees should reflect the actual costs of the activities they are meant to cover.

The other main point is a number of issues where we are not sure of the basis of the costings of what GPhC will actually cost, how that has been calculated. We think the analysis seems to us quite blunt and limited. No doubt a lot of detailed work lies behind it so the questions should be answerable and we hope they will be answered but it is not quite clear. So some specifics and then the most obvious point there, the fee will be an increase of something like 7% or 8% over the current fee for regulation, and that is obviously substantially above inflation. We do not see the justification for that given all the assurances we were given before that regulation could continue at much the same cost as in the past.

The other point, a very specific one, is that the paper makes the case quite properly for GPhC which starts with nothing to build a proper financial reserve which would be required of any charity and obviously any responsible organisation., While we agree with that there is then no discussion of what that policy is, what level of reserves they are looking for, the rate at which they intend to build up that reserve, and we think those should be answered in the interests of the transparency which the paper proclaims.

So those are the main themes. I am happy, President, for you to take the Council through the paper page by page and we will pick up what we can. Thank you.

The President: Thank you, Alan, I think that is a good idea. I take it people have read this paper. Maybe we can go fairly swiftly if there are no comments. We will start on page 3 of 9 with question 1. Are there any comments on this one question in terms of the response which is proposed? Could I just make one point for myself just for clarity here?

I understand what it means but in the first paragraph there, the paragraph started "The increase in premises fees", the second sentence says "It would appear that the proposed increase will cover only the loss of funds which are currently available." I understand what that means but in isolation to the reader it perhaps is not as clear as it could be in the way you have just articulated it.

Mr Alan Kershaw: Yes.

The President: Could I just ask for some clarity around that point?

Mr Alan Kershaw: Yes, if we can make the same point, we will spell out the lost grant that --

The President: It is just an amplification in there.

Mr Alan Kershaw: It is in their papers so it would be easy for us to lift that.

Mr David Carter: Can I just declare an interest because I actually pay that fee.

The President: Okay. So no more on page 3. Page 4 then of 9, question 2, any comments on question 2? Page 5 of 9, question 3? Page 6 of 9, question 4? Alison?

Mrs Alison Moore: I am struggling a little with this one for two reasons. One, it says "We fully agree with the plan not to offer reduced fees." Is the word "fully" really needed? The reason I am asking that is is this not slightly at odds with what we agreed here last year and when we finally decided we were going to offer a low income fee? Also I am curious as to whether any other regulators currently -- just pure regulators -- have a low income fee.

The President: Alan?

Mr Alan Kershaw: Thank you. I am quite happy to take out the word "fully". It is a good English teacher's maxim that when you have finished at text you should go through and take out most of the adjectives and adverbs so that is fine. It will not alter what we are saying.

The point is that we were making the distinction between a membership fee and a registration fee. I think a membership organisation offering a level of services to someone who is not functioning at full time, perhaps, is more justified in that. From the regulatory point of view the actual business of regulating an individual is the same whether they work one minute a year or 365 days a year and therefore we thought in pursuit of the principle that the fee should accurately reflect the costs it was appropriate.

As to other regulators, we had some information about their actual fees. I do not recall whether we had any information on lower fees. If there is a regulator which offers a lower fee, I do not know of it.

Mrs Olivia Timbs, Editor of Pharmaceutical Journal: The GMC does.

The President: Olivia is shouting out that the GMC offer a lower fee apparently. Does anybody else have the same point to raise as Alison? Do we feel strongly about this point? I understand the point that Alan is making in terms of the professional body fee versus the regulatory fee and the cost of regulation.

Arguably, I have heard the argument put forward that somebody working part-time is more expensive to regulate because they may be working for two months and then not for six months and then for three months and bringing back to be on the Register. Does anybody feel strongly that this is not what we should be saying? Okay. Could we just check up on the GMC issue, Alan?

Mr Alan Kershaw: Yes, if someone in the office could check that during the day we will settle it before I leave today but I am happy with that and indeed the point about the potential higher risk of someone working part-time was made in our discussions and it does not come through so we will bring that in.

The President: Sue?

Mrs Sue Kilby: We have pharmacists working in many different roles and I am not sure it is necessarily the greatest risk if you do work part-time because it depends what you are actually doing quite honestly in that part-time role.

I think if the GMC actually is accepted as having a reduced fee for certain categories, then we also should actually consider that as well, quite honestly.

The President: We will look at what exemptions they make and we will consider that. Any more on this one? John.

Mr John Gentle, The Treasurer: I accept the point that the President has made about how sometimes it could be argued that working intermittently or working part-time you might prove a higher risk but surely, if you take a community pharmacist for instance it is a rough figure accepted that a community pharmacist will make a mistake every 3,000 items dispensed. If that is the case, then surely the more you dispense the more likely you are to make a mistake so somebody working full-time is more likely to come across the regulator because they are more likely to make a mistake than somebody working part-time. So surely there must be a reduced cost in regulating part-time employees.

The President: An interesting point to which there is probably no answer. Okay. We move on to the next question. Thank you. Question 5, we are on now, still on page 6. I am sorry, Alison?

Mrs Alison Moore: I am sorry, it is me again. Do we currently charge an additional fee for people to pay by direct debit? If we do, then fine. If we do not, and I did not think we did, why are we suddenly agreeing with the GPharmC's position?

The Chief Executive & Registrar: We do not currently charge an additional fee for paying by direct debit.

The President: Alan?

Mr Alan Kershaw: It is true that we do not. We were informed by the office that there are quite significant costs in administering a direct debit scheme, particularly quarter by quarter, chasing up the ones which fail, and so we did not think it was unreasonable for that to carry a small extra charge or, as we put it, that you would get a discount for paying up front in one go.

The Treasurer: I think tactically a discount for paying up front is the way to phrase it, isn't it? It seems to me that most organisations, the utilities, water, gas, electricity, et cetera, will encourage people to pay by direct debit. Surely, there is more chance that somebody is more likely to fail or miss a payment if they are posting a cheque in one off annually, particularly the first time, than if they are paying by direct debit. That is the point, it is almost an automatic process.

So I would have thought that chasing up failed payments or missed payments is less likely to happen if people are on the direct debit system. It seems to me that surely the cost of administering a direct debit system must be less than people sending cheques in once a year.

The President: Jeremy and then Marcia and then Dorothy.

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Can I just point out the key word here is quarterly. I think that is where the cost impact occurs and Alan is right that there is a resource impact in having to chase quarterly payments. If it is annual, then cheques versus direct debit is clearly in favour of direct debit but if you multiply that by four, and you have got to keep tabs on four quarterly direct debit payments, then that does put a resource impact on it.

The President: And I guess the issue of people changing bank accounts. Marcia?

Ms Marcia Saunders: That was actually my point. I think it has conflated two things. One is quarterly and the other is direct debit and we might just suggest delete the word direct debit.

The President: Delete the word direct debit?

Ms Marcia Saunders: Delete direct debit because the issue is about quarterly payments.

The President: Dorothy?

Mrs Dorothy Drury: I think we were told that sometimes members did not have enough money in their bank account and then that meant chasing up, did it not, Alan?

Mr Alan Kershaw: Yes, that was the kind of thing. I think Marcia makes exactly the right point here that it is the quarterly nature of it. I think we could even put in a line to the effect that we support every encouragement to paying by direct debit in itself. It is the quarterly element of it which significantly or multiplies by four the opportunities for it going wrong --

The President: Okay, we can do that.

Mr Alan Kershaw: -- added to the cash flow.

The President: Thank you. Are we comfortable with that amendment? Thank you. Page 7 then, these are further comments. So section 1, any comments on what is written in section 1? Section 2? Over the page, page 8 of 9, section 3.1? Finally, page 9 of 9, section 8? Okay. Thank you very much. Could I thank Alan and the working group for your time yet again and hopefully you will not be called upon again to do any further submissions.

Jeremy?

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Could I just let Council know what the Boards are doing, just so that you are informed on that? There is a working group of the three Boards that Lyndon is providing support for which has met virtually once and I think there is another virtual meeting imminent so the Boards are going to be submitting their own response and they are well on the case.

The President: Thank you, Jeremy. Alan?

Mr Alan Kersaw: Thank you, President. I enjoyed doing this work and I just wanted to say thank you to the other members of the working group, Steve, John, who is not here now, and Dorothy, who have worked very closely together getting our sleeves rolled up and doing a job of work each time and it has been a pleasure to do it.

The President: And thank you, working group, for moving so quickly as well. Although it does not have to be until August, is that right, this one particular, I think it was important that we got it to this meeting so that Council could debate it. So thank you very much for that.

*[Council
approved*

i. the report, subject to the above two points concerning low income fee and direct debit being investigated further and the response being amended as appropriate.]

16. Notification of the Society's updated Registration Examination Syllabus

The President: Moving on to item 16, which is paper 45, notification of the Society's updated registration examination syllabus, thank you, Nicola.

Mrs Nicola Tyers: Hello. This paper is updating the Society's registration exam syllabus. The exam syllabus has not been updated for many years, the last time being back in 2002. As you can appreciate, an awful lot has changed since then. It was not even updated for when the current Code of Ethics came into play so it is long overdue.

So when we started looking at this we thought, okay, we will just update the little bits that we need to but then we thought it was more of a substantial thing that we needed to do so under exam regulations we were required to come to Council with it.

The Board of examiners worked on updating it and you will note, in the new Code, it states the Code of Conduct, Ethics and Performance, which is the new Code. This may seem peculiar to you, why you are approving this now. It is all due to the different time scales that

are coming into play here and when the demerger is happening. So what we have to do, with any change in the exam syllabus, is advise trainees at least six months before they sit the exam. Obviously, we then have to post this all to them so it all takes time. So we really need to post it or start posting it September, October time. So working backwards we now have to approve it about this time. You may feel a bit confused why you are approving something that could be to do with the new regulator but that is why we are needing to look at it and do it now.

Yesterday we were in communication with Sue about this paper and I do believe she has spoken to other Council Education Committee members about it.

The President: Thank you, Nicola. Sue, do you want to ---

Mrs Sue Kilby: Yes, very briefly. First of all, I would like to apologise formally to all the Education Committee members that we did not actually discuss this at formal Education Committee. You probably realise that obviously we had our last one I think back in March and this paper did not come through until afterwards. I would also like welcome Nicola back from maternity leave as well and having to pick this piece of work up.

Very interestingly, I looked at the first syllabus and I actually went through with a red pen and listed a whole load of things. I was really pleased because when I looked at the second one they were all included. So I think a lot of the things have been picked up, such as equity and diversity, which has always been very close to our hearts, the Responsible Pharmacist, I am not sure whether I am pleased to see that in there or not but it is, and things like specials and the trials as well have all been picked up.

Now, I would ask that if anybody has any specific details, and I am sure some of the wording may not be quite right, could we perhaps feed this back through to Nicola if we use a bit of common sense as to how we actually manage this? I would like to thank Nicola and her team for formally putting this together because we do need it. Absolutely right. Thank you.

The President: Thank you, Sue. Sylvia?

Mrs Sylvia Hikins: Just a question actually. The learning outcomes look very good and, you are right, they did need revising. While you were reviewing, did you take the opportunity to maybe look at the methods by which the learning outcomes are tested or did you just leave that one alone?

Mrs Nicola Tyers: We have been doing that. We have looked at it on several occasions and the difficulty is about how we administer the whole process so it is something that we are still keeping a review on. At the moment we are sticking with the MCQs but we are minded of the other things available to us and the other ways of testing might be a way for going in the future.

The President: Thank you Nicola. Alison?

Mrs Alison Moore: Have the GPharmC Shadow Council seen it and are they happy with it? I would not like us to approve something that we have got any kind of whisper come September/October they are going to say "Actually we do not want to go that route?"

Mrs Nicola Tyers: We were advised to send it to you in accordance with the exam regulations at this stage and then we will go to them for noting.

Mrs Alison Moore: I appreciate that. That was not what I was asking. I can understand why we have got it. The question is are they happy with it because if they are happy with it I am happy with it.

Mrs Nicola Tyers: They cannot approve it so therefore it has not gone to the Council.

Duncan is aware of it and this is what we were instructed to do. So it has not gone for approval at the Council but --

The President: The process is they have not seen this yet?

Mrs Nicola Tyers: No.

The President: The process that we were advised is that this Council should approve it and then if they wished to make any changes in due course when they are the regulator, I guess they can do.

Mrs Nicola Tyers: Yes.

The President: Any more comments for Nicola? Dorothy?

Mrs Dorothy Drury: Just for consistency, on page 5 of 26, when a candidate wishes to request special arrangements for an examination for permanent or temporary disability, for consistency should they not when they sign for fitness to practise say that they have a disability? I am wondering whether they have a disability to do the exam and once they have done the exam the disability disappears.

Mrs Nicola Tyers: This is a separate issue to the paper but it is something that we are aware of and we do want to tie up because we have found that people are doing that.

Mrs Dorothy Drury: I have another question. I have just noted the term licensed product but doesn't the syllabus cover the use of unlicensed products as well? Then the other term I was not sure about, we talk about pharmacy professionals and I would rather use the term pharmacist and pharmacy technician because we are then using the term support staff and it is not really clear, you know, who we are talking about in particular groups. I would rather use restricted titles.

Mrs Nicola Tyers: I can certainly go back to the Board with that. I think their idea was that it was all inclusive and therefore it did not specify any one particular group but I am certainly happy to take that back and the licence, yes, it is licensed and unlicensed, and I do believe it is there.

Mrs Sue Kilby: It is on page 22 of 26.

Mrs Nicola Tyers: It is. Thank you.

The President: Any more for Nicola? Thank you. So can I ask Council to note and endorse this paper? (Agreed) Thank you very much. Thank you, Nicola, for your hard work.

[Council
endorsed
i. *the amended Registration Examination Syllabus*]

FOR NOTING

17. Statutory Committees statistical report

[Council
noted
i. *the report*]

18. Equality & Diversity Scheme

The President: Two papers for noting in public business. One is the Statutory Committee statistics report and one is the equality and diversity scheme.

The transcript of the public meeting of the Council is not the formal record of the meeting. The formal record comprises the papers presented to the meeting and the minutes as subsequently approved. The policy of the RPSGB is actively debated at the meeting. The views expressed in the transcript do not necessarily represent the Society's agreed policy.

My thanks to our colleagues in the regulatory department for those and Priya.

[Council
noted
i. *the report.*]

19. Any other business

The President: I have not been notified of any other business under public business. We seem to be getting real ahead of ourselves today, which is quite worrying in itself really. I do not think we have ever been this far ahead. So we are going to move into confidential business at this point and we will probably break for lunch at quarter past twelve.

(The confidential business part of the meeting then followed)

IN PUBLIC BUSINESS:

The President: I am going to move back now into public business for a moment and ask Jeremy to say a few words.

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Thank you, Steve. I wanted to just say a few words about two people in the room who will be leaving us. One is Michelle Savage who all of you will know has been guiding the development of the governance procedures for the professional body in her latest guise as governance adviser to the professional body, having actually been helping and advising the Society for many years going back to the devolution review and various other exercises, all of which she has conducted extremely skilfully and with great understanding. She is going to the British Institute of Technology and E-commerce as their head of enterprise development and I wanted to put on record my thanks to Michelle and I am sure she will be greatly missed by Council colleagues as well. Thank you very much, Michelle.

(Applause)

The President: Do you wish to say anything, Michele?

Mrs Michele Savage, PLB Governance Advisor: Just to say I have enjoyed working for the Society over the last six years and I feel that when I started with the devolution review, it has come to an end with this latest governance at work and I hope I leave you in a good position from a devolution point of view and governance point of view and I will always have pharmacy in my heart, you know. I think some people forgot that I was not a pharmacist and occasionally had to say I am not a pharmacist because I am not very good at detail, you know. You are all good at that which is why I would not be very good. Thank you for your support. It has been tedious, some of the governance stuff, over the last three years, but you have gone with me, you have helped me and you have supported me, and I would just like to say thank you for supporting me over the last two years for the current Council and for the previous members of Council over the last six years. Thank you very much.

The President: Thank you.

The Chief Executive & Registrar: The other farewell is Lyndon, who has been our director for Scotland since 2004. I think of Lyndon as the personification of wise counsel and it is not just me who says that. Many of our Scottish Board colleagues have used that phrase as well. He has guided us since the time of the Scottish Executive along the path towards the current Board and has been the driving force since then in enabling the three Boards to work effectively together and I mentioned earlier on his bringing together of the response on the GPhC fee proposals, so there you have it in practice.

He has been an unwaveringly calm and professional voice on the executive group and the professional leadership group. A senior staff colleague referred to his beautiful knack of summing up a discussion. He often will not say very much as the discussion continues. He will wait until everyone has exhausted themselves and then encapsulate it in his characteristic laconic but pithy style. That is very Lyndon.

One of the most significant achievements during his term of office has been the move to our new premises in Edinburgh, an area where wise counsel and high level support was imperative, and Lyndon provided them both in very good measure. He has been at the forefront of our development as the new professional body and his timing now as ever is impeccable as his retirement coincides with the new start for the Society but we will undoubtedly miss him. What I am sure he will not miss is the innumerable 5.00 am starts to get to meetings in London, including Council, and the sense that the Novotel his second home. He has done that while keeping the needs of our Scottish members right at the front of his mind as well as leading on key strategic issues with a GB wide impact. Lyndon has certainly had an impact and I hope he is now looking forward to a few well deserved lie-ins. Lyndon, thank you very much.

(Applause)

The President: Lyndon?

Mr Lyndon Braddick, Director for Scotland: I am struck down by embarrassment now. Thank you very much for those very kind words, Jeremy, and thank you Council for all the support you have given over the last six years. It is a strange parallel actually because the two of us started pretty much together with the devolution review and we are leaving pretty much at the same time.

A huge amount has happened over the last six years. It is quite astonishing when you look back to where we were six years ago and the devolution review did set a path which has been carried on up to this point and will be carried on to the future to a much more devolved structure for the Society which I think is good for the Society, is good for the membership, because it will be more relevant in future, I think, to the healthcare policies in each of the three countries.

Some of it has been quite difficult. It has all been rewarding and I think the outcome, as I say, has been excellent. I think the future of the Society is assured because I think we now have the right framework to carry on as an effective professional body across Great Britain as well as within each of the three countries and to make sure our members are engaged in that process.

So thank you.

The President: Thank you very much. We have one final farewell, it is all farewells at the end of Council meetings recently, but we have a final farewell today. I would just like to say a few words about our favourite Chief Executive, in fact our only Chief Executive and Registrar, Jeremy, who leaves us at the end of this week.

Jeremy made a number of impressions when he was first appointed. As well as being the first non-pharmacist, he was also the tallest and one with the most facial hair in living memory, although both of these excellent attributes, speaking personally, would not be at all difficult to achieve following on from his immediate predecessor, if you remember who that was.

Amongst his first words to the Council, as I recall, was a very passionate and heartfelt discourse, extolling the virtues of not wearing a tie and I well remember thinking at the time "So just how strategic is this guy?"

Seriously, we have been extraordinarily fortunate to have Jeremy lead the Society through a period of major reorganisation. It has required a re-engagement with the membership combined with significant cultural change internally really in order to ensure a smooth handover to the new Chief Executive of the General Pharmaceutical Council and also to Helen, our new Chief Executive, who starts on Thursday.

Things have not always gone smoothly for Jeremy during his time at the Society. Some of you may know that his first meeting with the membership did not exactly go to plan when an uploaded video was not exactly what he expected. Perhaps Jeremy would like to explain off line but luckily the video was stopped very quickly. Was that a pornographic video, I seem to remember?

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Something like that.

The President: Then there was the time when Jeremy asked for somewhere unusual and interesting for an executive away day and the office suggested HMS Belfast just down the river. The majority of the team lasted until lunchtime. One of his team was in fact so prone to being seasick that she did not survive more than an hour even though the ship was moored in concrete to the side of the Thames. So the entire executive team had to regroup at the Society for the rest of the day.

Having said that most things have been very successful. During the Rx Factor when the Society recruited pharmacists to be the media face of pharmacy Jeremy was asked to act as a judge and he took the role of Simon Cowell with much relish. Jeremy regularly goes on walkabouts around the building which means he gets to know people who otherwise he might not encounter but short of a GPS tracking device the office occasionally has to ring up a string of people to track down exactly where Jeremy is in the building. Bottles of wine and cakes and occasionally champagne have been known to appear on desks with a little note from Jeremy when people have behaved particularly heroically and Jeremy certainly learnt at an early stage that, whatever the management books say, a combination of alcohol and goodies is absolutely the best motivator of great performance.

Jeremy often sets challenges for people as well like the time he asked the PR team to obtain photos to illustrate his monthly column in Your Society. He wanted a Lucozade bottle. Heaven knows why he wanted a Lucozade bottle. After about an hour of Googling to no avail, wrong size, wrong perspective, wrong colour, wrong flavour, wrong angle, too full, too empty, wrong lighting -- very precious these CEOs, you know -- they ended up buying a selection, taking their own pictures especially for Jeremy.

I suppose really it is traditional at leaving speeches to share a couple of facts about your victim -- colleague, I am sorry, that you may not be aware of so here is just a few about Jeremy. Hopefully, he will be embarrassed.

Jeremy has attended every Christmas party in his time at the Society which included joining in with the 1940s dancing. I hear that he does a very mean Jitterbug, I am told. Jeremy is also a very accomplished bassoonist, regularly performing in many concerts each year with Wycombe symphonia. In fact, Jeremy's favourite passwords on his computers are all historic composers, I am told. I know this has caused the office quite some difficulty in remembering some spellings but they have asked me to thank you, Jeremy, as several of them have used this information to their advantage in various pub quizzes of the years.

Jeremy also tends to operate with military precision, so much so that when he moved house recently he had organised to be on the e-mail list of his local pub within the first week. Good man. I have also noticed that he likes to use military metaphors quite often as well so much so that I have often heard people speaking of shock tactics and Special Forces and change of command and what have you.

For Jeremy, the number three strangely seems to have a special significance. He always splints things into threes saying, "As I see it there are three separate issues here" or "There

are three things that we need to do to achieve this” or “There are three separate projects here” or “There are three things we need to consider”. In the two years I have worked for Jeremy, I have never ever had a single occasion when I can recall him saying that there are one, two or four things to do. It is always three and of course it he has been with us for three years as well.

Jeremy, you have approached your task here at the Society with enthusiasm, dedication and professionalism, and have paved the way for a successful professional body for the future. It was my pleasure to present you with your honorary membership certificate at the Council meeting in May and I know that you are extremely proud to receive the recognition for your work with us. Today I would just like to reiterate what I said on that occasion. It has been a pleasure working alongside you, Jeremy. The going has been tough on occasion but you have always appreciated what was needed and have got stuck in and done it. I do not think it is any exaggeration to state that without your dedication and sheer hard work we would certainly not be in anywhere near as good a position as we are now to effectively transfer our responsibilities and establish our new professional body.

Like the tall plant Jeremy ordered in his office when he arrived to brighten it up, which by the way has already started to pine and wilt, it just leaves me to say on behalf of us all, Jeremy, a huge thank you for all you have done for us and for the profession. We will miss you and we will wish you the very best for the future.

As a token of our appreciation, we have had a quick whip-round, Jeremy, and all that we could do really, all we could afford, was the name tag off your office door that you have just vacated so I thought I would rescue it before it got lost in the museum, Jeremy, and present you with that. But courtesy of your dear wife, Penny, she said to us that you would like some prints of Lambeth, she said, and three prints we have of Lambeth, because three is your favourite number. These are just my early sketches, Jeremy, but the actual finished articles will be with you in a few weeks' time. So they are very nice historical portraits of Lambeth. Just to finish off, a card which many of us have signed for you to keep on your mantelpiece for a while.

Well done, Jeremy, and thank you very much indeed.

(Applause)

The Chief Executive & Registrar: Thank you very much. These are beautiful prints. Thank you very much. I feel we have come a really long way together as a Council and a team. Three years, three again, three years ago the Society was a very different kind of organisation. We have been through the Clark inquiry which Council, I believe, was absolutely right to commission from an independent expert. We have been through TransCom which, again, I believe Council was right to allow to operate independently and to produce a prospectus borne out of extensive consultation. I also think it was right that Council had a healthy debate on that prospectus and then adopted it without change and we have been through the TWG process which turned that prospectus into an operational plan and increasingly involved the national Boards in that process. Thank you to everyone for your support for me throughout that whole process and for your commitment to discharging our important regulatory responsibilities as well at the same time.

I have never forgotten the fact that I am the Registrar as well as the Chief Executive and the fact that my combined post will no longer exist in two days' time is a tribute to Council as well as my staff colleagues in addressing the challenge of the demerger with such perseverance and with such success.

I have been extremely fortunate in my colleagues, my executive group particularly, the officers, but especially, if I may say so, in the President, and I would like to put on record my sincere thanks to them all. It has been a great privilege to lead the Society as its last Chief Executive and Registrar.

I believe it is now poised to take off as the new professional body for pharmacy and I wish it and everyone around this table every possible success. Thank you.

(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Jeremy. Could I just wish everybody a very good summer break and we will meet again for the very last Council meeting on 21 September. Thank you very much.
