

Minutes of Societies Council Meeting
Tuesday 7th of November 2017
At the Societies' Offices, Worthing via Skype

In Attendance

Vicky Parkinson (CEO Societies)
Freya Bottomley (Societies Deputy CEO)
Kate Mahoney (Societies Professional Standards Manager)
Megan Nunn (Societies Administration Manager)
Samantha Hurdley (Societies Public Protection Officer)
Rob Kidd (Lay Council Member)
Steve Roche (Lay Council Member)

Apologies

Dr Chris Forester (Chair of Societies)
Ros Wright (Lay Council Member)
Wayne Bateman (Lay Council Member)

The meeting was opened, and all were welcomed to the meeting. Thanks were given to all for attending.

It was noted that Gerry Willmore will no longer be attending Council Meetings, as Kate Mahoney has taken over this aspect of the role in her capacity as Professional Standards Manager.

It was confirmed by all that there were no declarations of interest.

The minutes of the last Council Meeting on the 11th of July 2017 were agreed by the Council. There were no changes to make to the minutes, and no questions from the Council.

Report to Council from CEO

The previous Council Meeting was overseen by Dr Phil Rees, Independent Assessor. The report was positive, with a suggestion that, when confirming the minutes of the previous meeting, it is also important to check whether there are any mistakes or amendments from the minutes of the previous meeting which need correction. In addition, the Council should consider whether there are any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting. The IA strongly recommends that these be included in future Council Meetings. It was confirmed with the Council that they were happy to do this going forwards.

As mentioned in the previous Council Meeting, the Society has been undertaking an 8-week Membership consultation on our proposed new Code of Ethics, which is due to finish in mid-December with the aim of the new Code coming into force in January. The main purpose of the review of the Code was that, since the Societies had grown, it was determined that the old Code had some grey areas that needed clarification. The Council confirmed that they had received the proposed new Code of Ethics. The overall response to the new Code is positive. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We talk to our members: people who are out there practicing on the front lines. And we put all of that information together to form our new updated Code of Ethics.

Subsequent to a further suggestion from the Independent Assessor, we have updated our Terms & Conditions, and they are currently under review with our solicitor. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

We also had a PSA site visit and panel hearing, and learned that our Accreditation renewal was successful at the end of August. No concerns were raised, and they were pleased with how we treated both the complainant and the Registrant in the event of a complaint. The Panel provided a Learning Point to be verified at the next annual review of accreditation, which was that the Societies should consider making the information about the different registrant grades clearer to the public. It is unclear exactly what it meant by this; potentially make clearer how the grades tie to Ofqual levels.

The Council asked if the Societies had received any feedback from members of the public about the grades being difficult to understand, to which the CEO replied that we have not. The CEO asked the Council for their feedback on whether or not the grades were difficult to understand, to which they replied no.

The CEO has confirmed that they will discuss this recommendation further with the PSA.

The PSA Panel confirmed that no Conditions or Instructions would be issued as a result of the annual review of accreditation.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We will be trialling the new Direct Debit system with our new members, with a view to rolling it out to all members if it is successful. [REDACTED]

The Council agreed that this was a good idea, and noted that it sounds like a busy time at the Societies. The Council had no further questions for the CEO.

Report to Council from Administration Manager

The administration team continue to work very well together, with processing being completed accurately and within timescales. There appears to be a high level of morale within the team, which bodes well for staff retention and productivity. The team are eager to learn new skills and gain further knowledge, which hopefully means that the burden on other staff members will decrease over time with more services and processes being moved away from individual staff members and into the administration team.

There have been no staffing changes, however the administration manager will be taking maternity leave in May 2018, so there will be recruitment and training to consider in the near future.

[REDACTED]

As mentioned in the last Council Meeting, we have now launched our Practitioner Self-Care online CPD course. This has proven to be a very popular course, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As mentioned in the previous Council Meeting, due to the exorbitant costs associated with expanding our current telephone system to accommodate our recent growth and changes in requirements, we have opted instead for the more cost effective solution of moving to a cloud-based telephone system that allows for unlimited up-and-down-scaling free of charge, only increasing the monthly line and call fees. The initial outlay involved in moving to the new phone system is considerably less than the cost to purchase the necessary cards and licenses to perform the necessary upgrades to our current PBX system, and the monthly call costs are equitable to our current arrangement, with the added bonus of increased services being offered through the cloud-based system (for example, a call-waiting system, multiple calls available on multiple lines, and the ability to ring other numbers in the event that a call is not answered within a certain number of rings). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[Redacted text block]

Planning for 2018 CPD events will commence shortly. We have some very interesting new courses that will need to be reviewed by our Head of Professional Standards and Professional Standards Manager before adding to the calendar, but they are in line with requests for topics that we have received from members so will hopefully be popular.

[Redacted text block]

Report to Council from Public Protection Officer (PPO)

[Redacted text block]

In the interests of knowledge sharing, a monthly review of complaint outcomes from other Accredited Registers takes place, and any relevant information is recorded on CRM and communicated to relevant colleagues as necessary.

The Council had no questions for the PPO.

Report to Council from the Professional Standards Manager

[Redacted]

The Professional Standards Manager also attended an ARC meeting on the 17th of November, the aim of which is to understand any changes being brought by the Professional Standards Authority. The Society sends a representative to every ARC meeting to ensure that we are represented, and have a voice.

The Council had no questions for the Professional Standards Manager, but noted that it sounds very positive.

Report to Council from Deputy CE

We have had a very positive year, with lots of organisations getting in touch with us and productive conversations about recognition and partnerships.

The Deputy CE has attended a variety of meetings since the last Council Meeting, [Redacted]

[REDACTED] We are currently looking for more HS events, and more events that we can have a presence at without a full stand.

[REDACTED] We are partnering with them to provide reduced rate counselling sessions with our registrants. We are also offering support and knowledge around counselling and mental health. They have already partnered with organisations like Mind and Samaritans. Hopefully we can fully launch this in the next couple of months.

[REDACTED] They currently offer a one day face to face course for professionals working with adult survivors of abuse. They used to only offer training to groups of people. We suggested using our online training platform would be a good way to reach more people. We surveyed our members earlier in the year to see if they would be interested in completing the training – it was a unanimous yes but the majority said it was far too expensive to go to the face to face training. So this collaboration should solve that and make it accessible to even more people [REDACTED]


[REDACTED]. It is good for our members to have work, and also for us to raise recognition to relevant professions. We also provided literature and online CPD discounts at the events they spoke at. [REDACTED]

We are continuing to write to organisations about specific job roles that do not currently include us. We have also been proactive in writing to and chasing large organisations [REDACTED]

New training provider renewal forms are now in use for all levels of course recognition
The second Professional Development & Supervision Committee Meeting of the year was held last week.
Members of the committee feedback useful insights and ideas from member perspective.

A.O.B.

[REDACTED]



The CEO will send through potential dates for next year's Council Meetings. It was agreed with the Council that March, July, and November Council Meetings worked well.

The Council asked if there was a distinction between counselling and therapy, to which the Society advised that practitioners will tend to call themselves counsellors rather than therapists, but that all counsellors are therapists. Not all therapists are counsellors.

Meeting was closed.