

Minutes of the meeting of the UKPHR Board held on Wednesday 24 April 2024 via Teams at 14.00 hours

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| <b>Present:</b> | <p>Andrew Jones (AJ) (Chair)<br/>         Viv Speller (VS) (Vice Chair)<br/>         Jessica Lichtenstein (Chief Executive)<br/>         Gill Jones (GJ) (Registrar)<br/>         James Sandy (JS)<br/>         Ranjit Khutan (RK)<br/>         Marianne Coward (MC)<br/>         Ben Humphreys (BH)<br/>         Joanna Dowd (JD)<br/>         Helen King (HK)<br/>         Linda Smith (LS)<br/>         Helen Featherstone (HF)</p> | <b>Apologies:</b> | <p>David Evans (DV)<br/>         Pav Johal (PJ) (Secretariat)</p> |
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- Welcome, apologies for absence and new declarations of interest**  
 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted as above. There were no new declarations of interest.
- Minutes of Board meeting held on 21 February 2024**  
 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

ACTION	WHO	WHAT	BY WHEN
	JL	Publish 21 February 2024 Board minutes on website	ASAP

- Actions and matters arising**  
 JL reported that all actions were on track.
 

24/2 – it was agreed to defer the evaluation of the complex case panel as there had not been enough panels to ensure an effective evaluation. Anecdotally the panel has been working well with GJ having the final say. The Board would appreciate a completion date to ensure that it is not overlooked. It was noted that it is recorded within the operational plan for February 2025.

24/4 – explore additional registration data reports – JL and GJ have discussed presenting more meaningful data within a new annual report rather than data presented at each Board meeting, which does not change that often.

21/55 – Light touch governance review - this has now been reframed and included in the operational plan after the Board strategy day. This will involve a broader review of various aspects of UKPHR governance, including the Board, committee structures, how decisions are made, standing orders and articles of association etc. It was agreed to remove this from the actions table as it is now incorporated into the 24/25 operational plan.

4. **Governance forward planner – 2024** The Board received and acknowledged a copy of the Governance forward planner for 2024. It was noted that the Board will discuss monitoring progress towards the 2024-2029 strategy and annual report template in June 2024.

**For decision**

5. **2024/25 Budget**

JL reflected on the Audit, Risk and Remuneration Committee's discussion on the 2024/25 budget, which was a challenging conversation as it is in deficit. However, the discussions assisted in focusing on what the Board would need to understand to accept and be comfortable with the budget proposed. Whilst the final management accounts for the entire 23/24 were not yet available, JL presented the predictions.

JL presented a summary of the previous financial year which ended 31 March 2024. Throughout the year the budget looked relatively balanced every time the management accounts were reviewed. A overspend of £14k was expected and the rest was balanced because of previously agreed spending using reserves. Last year included some unanticipated costs, which can be attributed to a new approach to budgeting and increase in costs due to the cost-of-living crisis which resulted in an increase in costs from suppliers. There was also an unanticipated cost surrounding the online public health practitioner conference; one-off Microsoft costs; no budget for an independent examiner; ROL development costs; increase in PSA fees; increase in travel costs; salary costs associated with maternity leave; increase in utilities; increase in moderators costs due to recruitment and training of a new cohort of specialist and practitioner moderators.

For the 2024-2025 FY, JL reported that during the fees review undertaken in late 2022, it was predicted that there would be a surplus of approximately £14k. The 2024-2025 draft budget presented to the Board predicts a net result of approximately minus £22k, which is a difference of nearly £37k from the original prediction.

e. JL confirmed that PSA accreditation has to be maintained each year and it is being taken more seriously by government as an alternative to statutory regulation; therefore it would be a significant reputational risk if UKPHR were to withdraw accredited register status. JL reported that it was not envisaged that non-UKPHR practitioner registrants would be charged this year for the conference, but the conference steering group would consider this as part of a 5-year conference strategy.

JL continued to reassure the Board that savings are also being made. There is savings of approximately £10-20k from the usual annual consultancy costs because of increased team capacity; a reduction of IT hardware budget whilst still including the possibility of a new laptop in the year; less frequent executive coaching for the Chief Executive; moving pension to NEST therefore eliminating the need to budget for a financial advisor, and applying charity discounts on subscriptions and payment processing fees.

At the request of the Audit, Risk and Remuneration Committee, the Board were presented a slide on how the budget could be balanced and the possible risks associated with the suggested savings. These ranged from cutting staff development spend, reduce staff salary increase, default on invoices, revert to virtual practitioner conference, revert to online only board meetings, cancel or limit subscriptions and external conference attendance, remove discretionary legal costs and discontinue cyber essentials certification. JL commented that the savings individually was minimal but would add up.

JL presented a longer-term trajectory. Projects that would impact the financial outcomes for financial years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 were a fees review for both registration and the SRbPA route; scoping a virtual office which could save up to £50k/pa from 2026-2027 and the end of the SiteOn contract. There is also work beginning on scoping a potential new post- practice registration category; an increase in multiprofessional public health trainee numbers who will then join UKPHR as a public health specialists and growth within practitioner registration linked to integration into national workforce strategies, apprenticeship programmes and a practitioner conference strategy to strengthen the event as a tangible benefit of registration.

HF commented whether the Board should be discussing how more revenue should be generated rather than steering towards cutting costs. HF also added that IT security is becoming increasingly important and therefore cuts shouldn't be sought in this area. JL added that she was cautious to reflect potential revenue that may come in from SRbPA portfolio development programmes as this is not guaranteed, however there is a lot of interest in these programmes and the successful London programme has been renewed. It was recommended that an in-depth discussion on revenue building can be held next year ahead of the 2025-2026 budget. Currently UKPHR is self-funded by registration fees alone and JL suggested exploring whether external funding needs to be sought, particularly if there is a change in Government. It was confirmed that it was part of the EDI action plan to increase diversity on the Register from the BAME community, which can support revenue.

JS commented that defaulting on invoices would be against UKPHR's commitment to uphold professional standards. JS also queried how the online registration software development would decrease over time and JL commented that this is because after initial interaction with the system there were changes as result of this exposure and over time development will be dictated by strategic or operational work, for example if UKPHR were to go ahead with a new category of registration.

DV added that the budget is initially uncomfortable especially given the fees rise which would have hoped to build up reserves again, however there are assurances that that the unknowns from previous financial year are now quantified and there is a clear commitment to the growth trajectory and spending to ensure a return on investment.

The Chair commented that the proposed budget is a 4% overspend and sought clarity from JL whether our independent financial advisors have raised any concerns. JL confirmed the company accountant who works mostly with charities has not raised any concerns with the proposed budget.

The Board agreed to approve the 2024-2025 budget.

#### 6. **Staff salaries for 2024/25**

The Board received a report on a proposed 4% pay rise for all staff. This was reflected in the 2024/25 budget the Board received and approved. It was acknowledged that the Board isn't tied to this, and the budget could be adjusted if a revision was proposed. The proposed increase was discussed in depth by the Audit, Risk and Remuneration Committee. It is predicted that there will be a 4% pay rise across all sectors and potentially 3% for the non-profit charity sector. Data has yet to be released on NHS and civil service increases. A 0.5% increase or decrease equates to approximately two £2000. The Committee felt that it was important to sustain staff morale and to continue to support them in the right way and they felt that a 4% pay rise was reasonable considering that we are still in a cost-of-living crisis, despite inflation figures have gone down. DV added that the Committee was comfortable with the pay rise despite the budget conversations. The Board agreed to implement a 4% pay rise for all members of staff.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
	JL	Implement a 4% pay rise for all staff from 24/25 financial year	ASAP

**7. Pension changes**

JL reported on the discussions she has been having with the accountant and pension advisor regarding pensions. The existing pensions are individual pensions connected with a financial advisor through UKPHR. Employee contributions are made individually and not done through payroll. This is an unusual arrangement in the context of employment and only really usual practice for organisations of one-two people, which UKHR is no longer. Independently, both the pension advisor and our accountant approached JL suggesting reviewing this arrangement. A straightforward option has been proposed of setting up a group pension through Nest, which can be managed in-house and linked to the existing payroll. This will also eliminate the need to pay the existing independent financial pension advisor which results in savings of £2000 a year. There is no significant change for the team and they will continue to be able to set up the pension according to their risk appetite. It was noted that staff have been engaging with the pension advisor with respect to this change and have been able to seek advice from him. The Board agreed this change.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
	JL	Move staff pensions to NEST	ASAP

**8. Decision making review:**

GJ reported that this review was important to conduct to align ourselves with other regulators and seek opportunities to refer straightforward decisions to the head office team and continue to refer more complex decisions to the Register. This is also with the aim to manage timelines more effectively. The recommendations proposed were presented to the Registration Policy Group, who agreed that there should be very clear thresholds to determine which decisions the office could make, and which decisions required Register referral. It was also noted that decisions would be annually audited to ensure transparency and robustness. The Board agreed with the recommendations.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
	PJ	Implement registration decision making changes	ASAP

**9. Board Strategy Day – Board development action plan**

The Board received a summary of the Board strategy day held in March 2024 and an action plan that has been drafted because of the outcomes. JL reported that the action plan is very much in the draft stage with no due dates, to confirm that the Board is comfortable with the format. JL also acknowledged that due to limited resources there is an element of proactiveness required from board members. HF agreed that it provides a good foundation for the Board to work from. JS suggested that LS and himself could assist in coordinating this with Board members individual learning plans. The Board were content with the action plan drawn up and with the proposal for JS and LS to coordinate next steps.

**10. MAPS regulation**

JL presented a report on registration of other professionals, particularly physician associates. It was agreed that it would be helpful to have a Board level discussion on the background of this development as it was noted that public health regulation was also being intermittently drawn into discussions. The debate on MAPS regulation has resulted in thinking about other professions and how they are regulated, in particular, public health and why isn't it regulated by the GMC as well. The Board were assured that as an organisation, UKPHR are on top of the debate and monitoring it very closely. There is no indication that public health is to be reviewed, nor does there seem to be an appetite for changing the way that public health is regulated. Nevertheless, it's unclear what may happen with any government, but so far, the messaging from the Department of Health and Social Care is that they are investing in the accredited registers, and they do not want to further expand statutory healthcare regulation. The Board appreciated the update.

**11. Staff satisfaction survey**

The Board received the results of the first staff satisfaction survey. The results were overwhelmingly positive and demonstrates a real change in the culture of team and how the organisation works. The Board thanked JL. JL reported that comments regarding health and safety have been picked up. It was also noted that JS has a pastoral support role for the team and the team are aware they can approach him with anything they may not be able to approach JL or PJ. BH reflected on Board decisions and how they impact the staff as anecdotally, in a small team, if one person leaves it usually snowballed to more members of staff following suit.

**12. Registration reports:**

**a. RAC mins 26 February 2024**

The Board acknowledged the minutes.

**b. RAC mins 25 March 2024**

The Board acknowledged the minutes.

**c. Registration statistics**

The Board acknowledged the statistics and future development of statistics in a more strategic manner.

**13. Audit, Risk and Remuneration Committee report – including Risk Register discussion**

DV reported that most discussions referred to in the Committee minutes have been considered earlier in the meeting, for example the 24/25 budget. The Committee also acknowledged the 24/25 operational plan for the team. The Board acknowledged the minutes.

**14. Education and Standards Committee report**

RK reported that the Committee were presented a report from the practitioner moderators. It was noted that the first public health practitioner registrant via the apprenticeship route was admitted to the Register. RK has also been appointed as a new Vice Chair of the Registration Panel. The Committee discussed a recurring issue of an individual being appointed to a Consultant in Public Health post when their portfolio was still being assessed and there were not yet registered. The Board were pleased that the Committee were discussing this topic. The Board acknowledged the minutes.

**16. Any other business**

The Chair confirmed that he has now retired from his role at Public Health Wales and been reappointed as a consultant advisor role for 2.5 days a week.

Board members were reminded to inform the team if their bio required updating on the UKPHR website.

**17. Date, time and venue of next meeting**

Wednesday 26th June 2024 at 14.00 via Teams. It was noted that this may change to the 27th June.

**Action points from this meeting**

	WHO	WHAT	BY WHEN
ACTIONS	JL	Publish 21 February 2024 Board minutes on website	ASAP
	JL	Implement a 4% pay rise for all staff from 24/25 financial year	ASAP
	JL	Move staff pensions to NEST	ASAP
	PJ	Implement registration decision making changes	ASAP

The Chair closed the meeting at 15.45 hours.