

Public minutes of the meeting of the UKPHR Board held on Tuesday 30 September 2025 via Teams at 11:00 hours

**Present:** Andrew Jones (AJ) (UKPHR Chair)  
 Jessica Lichtenstein (JL) (Chief Executive)  
 James Sandy (JS) (Chair)  
 Marianne Coward (MC)  
 Linda Smith (LS)  
 Joanna Dowd (JD)  
 Rachel Flowers (RF)  
 Jenny Douglas (JD)  
 Gill Jones (GJ) (Registrar)  
 David Evans (DE)  
 Pavenpreet Johal (PJ) (Secretariat)

**Apologies:** Ranjit Khutan (RK)

**1. 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 made.

**2. Minutes of Board meeting held on 18 June 2025**

The public and private minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

ACTION	WHO	WHAT	BY WHEN
	JL	Publish the 18 June 2025 public Board minutes on website	ASAP

**3. Actions and matters arising**

The Board received confirmation JL that all actions have been completed, with no outstanding items remaining and all project indicators marked as green. It was reported that introductory letters have now been sent to all ministers, including new and acting health ministers and the minister holding the public health portfolio for England. Letters were also sent to all Chief Medical Officers. The Board recorded its satisfaction with progress to date.

**4. Governance forward planner – 2025**

JL confirmed that a final decision regarding the office move is scheduled for the November Board meeting. Additional forthcoming policy areas were highlighted, including a review of fitness to practise policies, which has been presented to the Education and Standards Committee and will return to the Board for future approval. The Board was informed of ongoing work on accounts and financial projections requested by the Audit and Risk Committee, with further detail to be brought forward.

It was noted that the forward planner is a working document and subject to updates, providing members with an overview of upcoming issues and activities. JL invited comments and questions from Board members; none were raised and the Board indicated satisfaction with the current plan.

## 5. For decision

### Updated Financial Rules & bank signatories

JL presented the updated financial rules, which had not been reviewed since 2016. The updates reflect current financial practices, removing outdated references such as petty cash and cheques and simplifying processes. The chief executive's authority to sign off expenses independently was increased to £10,000 for unbudgeted items, while any expenditure over £25,000 requires chair approval.

JL highlighted the need to update signatory permissions for bank accounts. Currently, the signatories include JL, AJ, another board member, and DV. The proposal is to add both PJ and the accountant, David Seeley, as signatories to improve account oversight and communication with the bank, allowing the accountant to discuss account matters directly with the bank. Importantly, no single signatory can authorise payments independently; two signatories are always required.

Board members discussed the importance of clear governance and auditable transparency in relation to signing authority and account access. It was acknowledged that removing former signatories promptly when members leave the board remains challenging and requires improvement.

HF proposed formalising these arrangements in a scheme of delegation document to clarify authority and responsibility. She offered to share a template from her organisation to aid this process once finalised.

The Board agreed that the review of financial rules should be conducted again in 2027 to align with potential impacts from government digital identity initiatives on financial and business registration processes.

There were no further questions, and the Board approved the revised financial rules and signatory arrangements.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
	JL	<b>Draft a scheme of delegation document to clarify financial authority and responsibility</b>	<b>ASAP</b>

## 6. Registrar's term

The Board discussed the role and terms of the Registrar. The historical context of the Registrar role was noted, previously modelled on volunteer, term-limited FPH positions. However, the Registrar role at a regulator—especially one making legally binding decisions—is considerably different and requires deep, technical knowledge of processes and standards.

It was agreed that the Registrar role, currently a paid position, should become a permanent role without term limits to maintain continuity and retain essential expertise. The risk of losing technical knowledge with term limits and the difficulty of training new Registrars was highlighted. Broader regulator practice was acknowledged, noting most statutory professional regulators and accredited registers have permanent Registrar posts, often full-time employees or the chief executive.

Board members supported the recommendation, recognising the business continuity benefits and proposed appropriate contracted remuneration of approximately £6,000 based on sector benchmarking and workload review. The idea of conducting appraisals, led by the Chair and supporting ongoing performance management, was welcomed to ensure delivery expectations are met.

The Board approved eliminating term limits for the Registrar role and making it a permanent contract position with remuneration. JL confirmed the contract will be reviewed and updated accordingly.

ACTION	WHO	WHAT	BY WHEN
	JL	Review the Registrar contract to reflect the elimination of term limits	ASAP

## 7. Board composition

The Board considered the composition of the Board, focusing on future-proofing, succession planning, and ensuring an appropriate balance of skills. It was noted that several experienced board members are due to leave soon or have left, including AJ, JD and DV. The Board acknowledged the importance of continuing specialist expertise, reintroducing specialty registrar expertise and maintaining the right balance between lay and registrant members.

A proposal was made to maintain a 12-member Board, with a maximum of six lay members and six registrant members to ensure balanced representation. The Board agreed not to specify further subdivisions within the registrant category (e.g., numbers of practitioners, specialist etc) but highlighted the changing composition of the Register may necessitate future discussions about increasing practitioner voices on the Board.

Discussions clarified that medically qualified public health consultants, if registered with the GMC, would be classified as lay members on the Board, reflecting the regulatory rather than professional body nature of the organisation. The Board emphasised the importance of diversity of knowledge and background over fixed job titles.

It was noted by the Board that recruitment of registered professional members has been more challenging than for lay members, with a decline in numbers of registered professionals represented. This poses a risk to maintaining coalface expertise on the Board, which was widely recognised as crucial.

The Board also considered the importance of broad diversity and inclusiveness, including explicit commitment to enriching racial and ethnic diversity within the Board, aligning with the organisation's EDI strategy.

The Board acknowledged ongoing conversations around defining registered professional members and agreed the final terms, including any specification about UKPHR registration, would be subject to further review after examining practices of other accredited registers and professional regulators.

The Board approved changes to the standing orders effective from March 2026, establishing a maximum of six lay and six registered professional members, with recognition that detailed definitions and further governance refinements would be brought back for future discussion and approval.

The Board affirmed its commitment to maintaining a well-balanced, inclusive, and skilled membership that supports strong governance and effective regulation of the public health profession.

## 8. Annual data-driven report

The Board received the final draft of the second annual data-driven report. The report utilised data from the new online system, enabling comprehensive gathering and analysis of registration data.

Highlights included:

- An increase in registered numbers, reflecting positive trends aligned with the organisation's strategy.
- Introduction of a new section on apprenticeship routes, marking the first registrations of public health practitioners via the apprentices in 2025.
- Detailed data on SRbPA pre-applications and decisions, with continued improvements to reporting timelines.
- Inclusion of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) data, though with some gaps noted. Updates on these fields are planned in full for the next annual report.
- Information on engagement, including email query trends and event participation.
- Discussions around lapsed registrants, including reasons such as career breaks, retirements, and voluntary withdrawals, with plans to clarify restoration processes.

The Board commended the quality and presentation of the report, with suggestions to simplify the annual publication through infographics and review the summary to enhance accessibility for registrants. It was also recommended to develop a separate, more detailed EDI-focused report.

The Board noted the ongoing information-sharing agreement with the Faculty, with plans to align data analysis and feed into broader workforce and training discussions.

The Board expressed support for progressing with the report's finalisation and publication format, noting it serves as a critical tool for governance, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement.

ACTION	WHO	WHAT	BY WHEN
	PJ	Draft an UKPHR EDI report	Board meeting on 25 Feb 2026

ACTION	WHO	WHAT	BY WHEN
	PJ	Amend and format the final annual report in line with discussion and publish alongside an infographic	ASAP

## 9. End-of-year accounts

The Board were presented the end of year accounts for the financial year 2024-2025. The Board noted that the accounts had been extensively examined by the Audit and Risk Committee, including detailed scrutiny and queries with the accountant. The accounts show a significant apparent deficit for the year. The deficit is primarily due to an accounting timing issue caused by a mismatch between the registration year (July to June) and the financial year (April to March). Direct debit payments during April to June periods have complicated accurate account reconciliation, as payments are currently accounted for in a different financial year than when received. This issue is recognised as an accounting matter, not a cash flow or financial viability problem. Cash reserves remain healthy, with actual income and expenditure aligned with budget predictions.

The Audit and Risk Committee, working with the accountant, has developed improved processes (including a deferral mechanism) to ensure future payments are correctly accounted for. The board discussed reputational risk related to how the financial statements are presented publicly, particularly to Companies House. An independent examiner conducts a "mini audit" due to turnover levels not requiring a full financial audit, offering an additional layer of financial assurance. The Board agreed to consider adding a reputational risk related to the financial reporting process to the risk register, separate from financial risk.

The final audited report's wording and framing remain under review to balance transparency and minimise misunderstanding. It was noted that Companies House publishes the financial report in the public domain, but the PSA (Professional Standards Authority) only ensures statutory compliance without detailed feedback. Board members expressed openness to revisit technical questions with the accountant if required.

The Board approved the end of year accounts for the financial year 2024-2025. The Audit and Risk Committee will continue monitoring and managing the accounting timing issue. Consideration was to be given to how the accounts narrative is framed in public documents to mitigate reputational risk. The Board acknowledged the need for ongoing transparency and preparedness to defend the accounting treatment if queried externally.

ACTION	WHO	WHAT	BY WHEN
	JL	Submit final 2024-25 accounts to companies house, charity commission and OSCR	ASAP and by end of the year

ACTION	WHO	WHAT	BY WHEN
	JL	Add a new reputational risk related to financial reporting process into the Risk Register	ASAP and next ARRC meeting

## To note

### 10. 2025 renewals

PJ provided a verbal update on the 2025-2026 annual renewal process. Renewal completion was consistent with expectations, with no drop in the number of successful renewals. There was no significant increase in the number of registrants lapsing. An increase in the number of people withdrawing their registration was noted, which was acknowledged as a positive because it replaces lapsing with a formal withdrawal mechanism. This leads to more accurate registration data.

More registrants are completing renewal early in the May to July window, indicating increasing familiarity and ease with the renewal system. A comparison with other statutory regulators showed that renewal rates are on par with statutory regulators such as HCPC and GDC.

This was the second year of conducting a lapse survey; only 10% responded and the reasons for lapsing included perceived lack of benefit from registration and fee affordability issues. Many lapsing specialists had been registered for over eight years, suggesting some should have formally withdraw due to retirement. Newly registered practitioners who lapsed had only been registered a few years.

Overall, the renewal season was deemed a success and linked positively with organisational income and accounts. The Board acknowledged the update and recognised its reassurance regarding renewal and income.

### 11. 2025/26 Q1 accounts

JL presented the accounts for the first quarter of the 2025-2026 financial year, noting this was primarily a "to note" item previously reviewed by the Audit Committee. The accounts are prepared on a cash accounting basis, reflecting incoming and outgoing cash flows at a point in time without the reconciliations done in the annual accounts.

The Q1 accounts serve as a snapshot for assessing budgeting accuracy and prediction performance, with no alarming issues reported so far. An identified issue with increased Microsoft Azure charges was explained: the service provider had failed to apply an agreed annual discount

on time, but a compensatory discount on other work was arranged. Key expenditure areas highlighted include the Fortesium and annual PSA fees; both of which are now paid in instalments.

The organisation's reserves stood at a comfortable £156,000 at the end of the quarter. No comments or concerns were raised by the Board on this update and the Q1 accounts for 2025-2026 were noted.

## **12. Registration reports**

GJ presented registration report highlights referring to the minutes of RAC meetings held on 23rd June and 28th July. No unusual issues were noted; the governance process for registration panels is functioning effectively. Registration panel minutes are of high quality, supporting clear decision-making by the Registration and Approvals Committee (RAC). Work is ongoing with the Registration Panel to address issues with unassessable portfolios, which are causing inefficiencies due to being inaccessible and time-consuming.

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

DV recapped discussions from the Audit and Risk Committee, highlighting key points previously covered. The Board was reminded of ongoing Risk Register reviews, including explicit recognition of continued uncertainty in the health and care systems and local government, particularly in England. Reference was made to the recent announcement regarding regulation of NHS management, including managers in preventative and public health services for which UKPHR could become a destination regulator. Actions to monitor and respond to these regulatory developments are underway.

A briefing was given on current NHS England commissioning activities for practitioner registration. It was noted that some regions, such as Kent, Surrey and Sussex, are not currently commissioning, and London has paused commissioning, with expectations for resumption delayed by potentially a year or more. The situation is evolving rapidly, with reports of staff reductions impacting commissioning decisions. This creates practical concerns about commissioning continuity for NHS practitioner registration local schemes. The Board acknowledged the concerning nature of these developments and the need to consolidate response actions.

## **14. Education and Standards Committee report**

In RK's absence, JL delivered a brief report on the Education and Standards meeting held over the summer. The committee received a presentation and evaluation of the recent revalidation review. The outcomes of the revalidation review were largely positive, with details recorded in the meeting minutes provided to the Board. There was also discussion at the meeting on Multi-Source Feedback (MSF) tools, including revising the list of approved MSF tools used for revalidation. It was noted that there are currently no MSF tools specifically targeted for public health professionals, though Wales is developing one that is under consideration. An update was provided on ongoing work to review fitness to practise procedures, with more detailed information expected in due course before the Board.

## **15. Chief Executive's report**

Discussed in private meeting

## **16. Any other business**

Discussed in private meeting

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

Wednesday 26th November 2025 at 14.00 via Teams

## **Action points from this meeting**

ACTIONS	WHO	WHAT	BY WHEN
	JL	Publish the 18 June 2025 public Board minutes on website	ASAP
	JL	Draft a scheme of delegation document to clarify financial authority and responsibility	ASAP
	JL	Review the Registrar contract to reflect the elimination of term limits	ASAP
	PJ	Draft an UKPHR EDI report	Board meeting on 25 Feb 2026
	PJ	Amend and format the final annual report in line with discussion and publish alongside an infographic	ASAP
	JL	Submit final 2024-25 accounts to companies house, charity commission and OSCR	ASAP and by end of the year
	JL	Add a new reputational risk related to financial reporting process into the Risk Register	ASAP and next ARRC meeting

The Chair closed the meeting at 13.45 hours.

DRAFT