Council Governance Meeting – Edited Minutes

Date	29 January 2025	
Time	9.00 a.m.	
Location	In person - Kingram House, Dublin 2	
Meeting number	566th meeting of the Medical Council - Meeting No 3 of 2025	
Members present	Dr Suzanne Crowe (President) Dr Mary Davoren (Vice President) Ms Teresa Bulfin Ms Marie Culliton Mr Paul Harkin Mr John Gleeson Prof Mary O'Sullivan Ms Jill Long	Mr Jim O'Sullivan Prof Ronan O'Connell Prof Ronan Quirke Prof Edna Roche Ms Sinead Corcoran Mr Nauman Nabi
Apologies	Mr Ian Drennan Prof Richard Greene Dr Orla Muldoon Prof Deirdre Murphy Dr Margaret O'Riordan Dr Liqa Ur Rehman	
In attendance for the entire meeting - In Person	Mr Ciaran Buggle (Interim CEO) Ms Gail McAuley (Head of Corporate Affairs and Secretary to Council) Ms Faye Mangan (Council Governance Manager)	
In attendance for relevant sections of the meeting	Executive Leadership Team: • Mr Colm O'Leary (Executive Director of Strategy & Business services) • Ms Roseanne Fox (Executive Director of Finance, IT & Digital Transformation) • Ms Jantze Cotter (Executive Director of Regulatory Policy & Standards) • Mr Paul Byrne (Executive Director, Regulation, Operations & Support Services) • Mr Alan Gallager (Head of Communications & Stakeholder Engagement) Ms Fiona Redmond (Chief Risk Officer, Head of Risk & Compliance) Ms Fiona McVeigh (Head of Regulatory Policy) Mr William Kennedy (Head of Legislative Affairs) Ms Jan Fitzpatrick (Head of Business Planning) Mr Kevin Cooney, Forvis Mazars Ms Colette O'Connor (Head of Monitoring)	

Note – all references to 'the Act' shall be construed as references to the Medical Practitioners Act 2007 unless otherwise stated.

1.	**Private Session**	
	The interim CEO and Council held a private session, followed by a Council only private session.	
	*Mr Buggle, Ms McAuley, Ms Mangan, Ms Redmond, and the Executive Leadership Team joined the meeting. Following a request by the President, it was agreed by Council to trial the removal of proposer and seconder at the governance meeting, when a decision was reached, unless it was deemed specifically required for a particular decision. It was noted that proposer and seconder was a custom and practise, as opposed to a requirement and that Council's decision was by consensus. While it was agreed to implement the trial, Mr Colm O'Leary advised that a further paper would be brought to Council at its next meeting to outline further details on a protocol for consensus decision making across Council and Committee meetings.	
2.	**Minutes from the Governance Meeting – 23 October 2024**	
	Council reviewed the minutes for 23 October 2024, contained in the meeting pack.	
	Council approved the minutes for the 556th Council meeting on 23 October 2024.	**Decision**
3.	**Matters arising – Action List**	
	The President presented the action list to Council which is a live document that is being implemented to keep track of requests arising at Council meetings. Following clarification, Council noted that the action list captured arising items that are not yet on the business plan, to provide Council with a line of sight on these matters. It was clarified that items on the business plan would not be duplicated on the Council action list. Mr Byrne updated on the Human Tissues Act. A broad discussion was held with several observations raised by Council members in relation to risks, budget requirements, legislative requirements and engagement with the Department of Health. Council noted that a detailed meeting brief will return with a package of information to include; • Overview of the Human Tissues Act is and its implications for the Medical Council • An impact assessment • A roadmap for the implementation of the Human Tissue Act as a multi-year project showing the phases and resources required Council understood that external legal advice was required initially to inform the Medical Council of the requirements.	
4.	**Presidents Report**	
	Council noted the Presidents attendance at various engagements, which highlighted a very productive period.	
5.	**Audit and Risk Report**	

	Council noted the Audit and Risk report in the meeting brief.	
6.	**Risk Report**	
	Ms Redmond, Chief Risk Officer presented on the Risk Reports, contained in the meeting pack. Council was updated on • new, open, and closed risks, with a focus on red and amber risks reflecting the period 1 October 2024 to 9 January 2025. • the reduction in the number of red risks which was predominantly due to the completion of work in the areas FTP/Health/Monitoring Risk Registers and risks being closed. • New red risks in Information Governance were highlighted with proposed suggestions to address them. • Actions will be added to each risk from the 2025 Business Plan. • Upon approval of the updated Risk Policy and Procedure, Target Risk will be assigned along with a clear risk appetite for each risk. Sectional risks will then be linked back to the Corporate Risk Register. Discussion was held on the publication of Council minutes. Mr Colm O'Leary updated that a plan was underway to resume the publishing minutes of Council Governance meetings, and that research had taken place to understand how other regulators approached publication.	
	Council approved the Q4 risk report, its contents and the outlined Actions and Controls to address the risks.	**Decision**
	Ms Redmond, presented on the updated Risk Policy and Procedure for approval, contained in the meeting pack. Council was updated on the purpose and the scope of the updated policy which outlines the implementation of its risk framework. It was noted that the policy was revised to • further standardise the risk approach across the organisation and ensure risk ratings within the risk categories are appropriate • provide guidance on the Council's risk appetite • update the previous Corporate Risk Register	
	Council approved the Risk Management Policy, Risk Appetite and Corporate Risk Register. *Ms Redmond left the meeting.	**Decision**
7.	**CEO Report (inc KPIs and Metrics)**	
	Mr Buggle, interim CEO presented the CEO report, to include the Q4 2024 Business Plan update. The interim CEO gave an overview of the quarterly report to Council for Q4 2024. Council noted the final report formatted around the 2019-2024 statement of strategy.	

	It was noted that the future CEO reports would be reporting on the 13 strategic objectives of the new 2025 statement of strategy and will align with the business plan, risk framework and financial planning. Clarifications were raised by Council members in relation to registration timelines, the committee delegation project, committee reporting which were clarified further by the Executive.	
8.	**Mazars Financial Review**	
	*Mr Cooney from Forvis, Mazars joined the meeting. Council considered the Forvis Mazars External Financial Review papers, contained in the meeting pack. Mr Cooney gave a presentation on the proposed financial model options recommended from the Forvis Mazars external financial review. This provided Council with an additional model following its previous consideration of the scenarios at its ECM on 15 January 2025. Following a questions and answer session, Mr Cooney left the meeting. Council held a further detailed discussion on the; • proposed scenarios to include the new scenario provided by Mazars • next steps required to include communications approach and engagement with the Department of Health.	
	Council approved the development of a revised financial model to be based on the new scenario (Scenario 6), outlined in the Forvis Mazars report on the proposal of John Gleeson and Mary O'Sullivan. It was agreed that the final submission to the Department of Health will include the Forvis Mazars report, Council's decision, an outline of measures to reduce costs and a supporting project plan	**Decision**
9.	**2025 Business Plan**	
	Ms Fitzpatrick joined the meeting. Mr O'Leary presented the draft business plan for 2025, contained in the meeting pack. A high-level presentation of the key strategic themes, the new approach to business planning, and an overview of the top 5 strategic priorities for each directorate was also given. A broad discussion was held and Council members main observations were as follows: • Further consideration on the wording of SMART objectives • Initial outline of a data strategy to be brought to Council so that it can chart its progression • A glossary of standard terms to be provided on Decision Time Business planning progress are reported on the Decision Time platform incorporating directorate status reviews.	
	Council approved the draft 2025 Business Plan.	**Decision**
10	**2025 Financial Plan**	

	Ms Fitzpatrick left the meeting. Ms Fox presented the 2025 financial plan to support and enable the delivery of the 2025 annual business plan. An overview was presented of the 2024 versus 2025 budgets. A discussion took place on financial planning and Council noted there was a hiring freeze until a permanent CEO is in place. It was noted that not all sanctioned roles are filled from an organisation design perspective and that a review of key priority roles would be considered by the ELT and CEO in Q1.	
	Council approved the 2025 Financial Plan.	**Decision**
11	**Updated conflict of interest policy**	
	*Ms Chappat joined the meeting. Ms Chappat and Mr O'Leary presented an updated conflict of interest policy, contained in the meeting pack. Council welcomed the updated policy and noted its importance. The main observations made by Council members were as follows • Potential impacts on Council quorum when a conflict of interest arises for Council members in attendance at FtP inquiries / callovers and the need for guidance • The importance of a standing agenda item for conflict of interest at every meeting • Consideration for the nuances which exist for committees and their quorum requirements Council noted the timeline and further implementation steps. It was also noted that the conflict of interest policy would be published following Council approval.	
	Council approved the draft conflicts of interest policy for Council and its Committees.	**Decision**
	*Ms Chappat left the meeting.	
12	**Complaints Model Framework Project Report**	
	*Ms McVeigh joined the meeting. Ms Cotter and Ms McVeigh presented the Complaints Model Framework Project Report, contained in the meeting pack. A detailed discussion took place across the 13 specific recommendations outlined in the report which were accompanied by suggested actions to enable their implementation. Council noted that the operationalisation of the 13 recommendations will be undertaken by the relevant Directorate, which may require reallocation of resources.	
13	**Scoping paper on General Division**	

	Ms McVeigh presented the scoping paper on the general division, contained in the meeting pack. Council held a broad discussion in relation to the paper which presented an outline of the work required to support the development of a regulatory position statement on the management of the general division of the Medical Councils Register. Following discussion, it was recommended that the next steps for progression was the establishment of a cross external organisation group, to create engagement in the coming months and further inform solutions for the future of the general division. An update on the progress and way forward will be presented at the next Council Governance meeting. *Ms McVeigh and Mr Kennedy left the meeting.	
14	**Update on the development of risk profile criteria for monitoring cases**	
	*Ms O'Connor joined the meeting. Ms O'Connor presented risk profile criteria to be applied to the current monitoring caseload. Council provided observations on the detailed risk criteria and how they are applied to cases. It was noted that additional case officer resourcing would be required to assist the monitoring function. *Ms O'Connor left the meeting.	
15	**Education and Training Report to Council**	
	Council noted the Education and Training Report, contained in its meeting pack.	
16	**Noting official resignation letters**	
	Council formally accepted the resignation letters of Mr John Murray and Dr Morgan Crowe. *Ms McAuley, Ms Mangan and the ELT members left the meeting.	
17	**AOB**	
	There were no further matters.	
18	**Reflective session**	
	Council and the interim CEO held a brief reflection session at the end of the Council meeting.	
	The in-person meeting concluded at approximately 16.15. Council noted the next ECM Council meeting was 7 February 2025 and the next Governance meeting on 2 April 2025.	