Comhairle na nDochtúirí Leighis
Medical Council

Council Governance Meeting – Minutes

Date	29 April 2026	
Time	10.00 a.m.	
Location	In person	
Meeting number	637th meeting of the Medical Council - Meeting No 12 of 2026	
Members present	Dr Suzanne Crowe (President) Ms Teresa Bulfin Ms Marie Culliton Dr Mary Davoren (Vice President) Mr Ian Drennan Mr Paul Harkin Prof Richard Greene Ms Jill Long Ms Louise Kavanagh McBride Prof Deirdre Murphy Prof Orla Muldoon	Mr Nauman Nabi Prof Ronan O'Connell Prof Desmond O'Neill Mr Martin O'Halloran Dr Margaret O'Riordan Mr Jim O'Sullivan Prof Mary O'Sullivan Prof Edna Roche Mr Ronan Quirke
Apologies	Ms Sinead Corcoran Mr John Gleeson	
In attendance for relevant sections of the meeting	• Dr Maria O'Kane (CEO) • Ms Jantze Cotter (Executive Director of Strategic & Corporate Affairs) • Mr Paul Byrne (Executive Director, Education, Innovation and AI • Dr Cyril Sullivan (Executive Director, Finance, IT and Digital Transformation) • Mr Ciaran Buggle (Executive Director of Professional Standards) • Mr Alan Gallager (Head of Communications & Stakeholder Engagement) • Ms Aoife Fitzsimons (Head of Regulatory Standards) • Ms Gail McAuley (Head of Corporate Affairs and Secretary to Council) • Ms Sukhneett Dhir (Corporate Governance Manager) • Mr John McBride (Head of IT and Digital Transformation) • Dr Bernadette Rock (Head of Research and Regulatory Data Insights) • Dr Rachel Kelly (Research & Regulatory Data Insights Manager) • Ms Patricia Ryan (Head of Business Intelligence and Data Analytics) • Ms Fiona McVeigh (Head of Regulatory Policy) • Mr Aidan O'Brien (General Counsel) • Ms Meaghan Ni Raghlaigh, Regulatory Policy Executive	

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

Comhairle na nDochtúirí Leighis
Medical Council

1.	**Private Session**	
	Council held a private session. At the end of the private session the CEO joined the meeting.	
	Ms Gail McAuley, Ms Sukhneett Dhir and the Executive Leadership Team joined the meeting.	
2.	**Conflict of interest check**	
	There were no conflicts declared.	
3.	**Governance Work Plan**	
	Council noted the Governance Work Plan which is a standing item on the agenda.	
4.	**Minutes for approval**	
	Council reviewed the minutes for contained in the meeting brief.	
	Council approved the minutes for: • 633rd Council meeting on 27 February 2026 by circulation of papers • 635th Council meeting on 27 March 2026 by circulation of papers **Council approved the minutes and their publication on the Medical Council website for the 628th Council meeting on 29 January 2026.**	**Decision**
5.	**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. Council requested that a more in-depth discussion take place once per year to provide for a deep dive to discuss challenges and concerns per Committee. This was recommended to happen on a rolling basis throughout the year.	
6.	**Audit and Risk Committee Report**	
	Mr Drennan presented the Audit and Risk Committee report, contained in the meeting brief to Council. Council were given an overview of the items outlined in the report which were for information and noting.	
6.1	**Risk Report (Redraft of the Corporate Risk Register for Approval)**	
	Ms Fitzsimons presented the Q1 risk report, contained in the meeting brief to Council. Ms Fitzsimons highlighted the planned approach to management of risk across the organisation. Council approved the proposed approach outlined in the observations report provided by the Office of the CEO. This sets out the approach to improve the organisation's risk culture; the risk registers content and governance; the strategic alignment between	

	the Statement of Strategy, the 2026 business plan and risk activity; and address the gaps in the current risk management policy.	
6.2	**Integrated Governance and Assurance Framework**	
	Ms Fitzsimons presented the Integrated Governance and Assurance Framework, contained in the meeting brief to Council Council were updated on the Integrated Governance and Assurance Framework which set out the governance and assurance mechanisms in place within the Medical Council to ensure the successful delivery of its objectives and embed key areas such as risk management, compliance and assurance. It was clarified that in relation to a project review group being established, that the terms of reference are to be drafted.	
	Council approved the integrated governance and assurance framework.	**Decision**
7.	**CEO Report**	
	Clarity was sought on a private discussion of red risks by Council. Executive members left the room at this point. The CEO, Board Secretary, and Council Governance Manager remained. Dr. O'Kane, CEO gave an overview of the CEO update paper, contained in the meeting brief to Council. Council raised clarifications on data protection matters and a comprehensive overview was given on several actions being taken. Discussion was also held on the PLAB and Pres 2 and the next steps to be taken. A query was raised in relation to the feasibility of using the ARAF process for uploading evidence of continuing professional competence schemes. This was suggested for exploration due to compliance issues which can arise in the PPC process, which can then result in FTP matters. It was advised that this can be explored further by the Executive for streamlining in 2027. It was requested that a means be considered for Council members to channel observations from Section 60 and Regulatory Hearings for document / process observations. The CEO updated on top risks and the actions which were being taken on these matters. It was noted that these risks will return with further detail in line with the work being undertaken by the Chief Risk Officer. An update was also provided on the recent meeting with the Minister for Health which provided an update on the progress across several initiatives.	
8.	**End of Life Care - Developmental Paper**	
	Council considered the End-of-Life Care Development Paper, presented by Dr O'Kane. Council were requested to review Council's previous decision to develop supplemental guidance for End-of-Life Care and instead consider the Executive's	

	recommendation to develop a dedicated webpage on the Medical Council website, signposting national resources/useful links and reiterating Medical Council expectations as outlined in the Guide. Following a detailed discussion, it was considered necessary to develop principle based guidance. The development of the end of life care guidance for the profession will form part of the 2027 business plan. An action was raised to consider whether the name of the Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics should be referred to as a "Code", which will be explored further.	
	Council decided to develop principle based supplemental guidance for End-of-Life Care and seek input from the profession and public.	**Decision**
9.	**Digital and Data Strategies**	
	Council considered the Digital and Data Strategy papers included in its brief meeting, presented by Mr. McBride. Mr. McBride delivered a PowerPoint presentation outlining a summary of the digital and data strategy. Observations were made to include succession planning and expertise from the digital and data strategy steering group, being necessary, with the changeover of Council.	
	Council approved the Digital and Data Strategy which set out the roadmap / plan for 2025-2028 on how the Medical Council will modernise its digital services and strengthen its use of information to better protect the public.	**Decision**
10.	**Policy on Council Members' Access to Council and Committee Minutes**	
	Council considered the Policy on Council Members' Access to Council and Committee Minutes, contained in its meeting brief, presented by Ms McVeigh. Council noted that the policy has been developed following a Council decision in December 2025 that Council members should have access to Council and Committee meeting minutes, past and current. Discussion was held on tiered access to the minutes which is to provide for the implementation of a structured framework for access to minutes, including the application of tiered access arrangements where minutes contain confidential, legally privileged, or otherwise sensitive information.	
	Council approved the Policy on Council Members' Access to Council and Committee Minutes.	**Decision**
11.	**General Division Project Objectives**	
	Council considered the Development of a regulatory position statement on the management of General Division - Progression Paper, presented by Ms Rock and Ms McVeigh. Council was provided with an overview of the next phase of work to support the development of a regulatory position statement on the General Division of the Register and the proposed regulatory objectives for the research.	

Comhairle na nDochtúirí Leighis
Medical Council

	Following discussion, further clarity was given on the phased timeframes for the research project in 2026 and 2027.	
	1) Council agreed the proposed regulatory objectives to guide the development of a regulatory position statement on the General Division of the Register; **2) Council approved the proposed research objectives and programme of work as set out in the accompanying paper.**	**Decision**
12.	**Fitness to Practice Composition**	
	Council considered the Fitness to Practise Composition Paper, contained in its meeting brief, presented by Mr Buggle. Council considered the limitations of the legislation and the request from the Executive to explore legislative amendments to facilitate enhanced completion of inquiries. Council understood the matter will be explored with the Department of Health as a next step. It was also advised that the matter will be brought back before Council, and a further Council decision will be required to proceed with any proposed amendments.	
	Council agreed that the Executive explores the option of seeking changes to s.20(8) of the 2007 Act, and related rule changes.	**Decision**
13.	**Planetary Health Position Statement**	
	Council considered the planetary health position statement, contained in its meeting brief, presented by Ms McVeigh.	
	Council agreed the proposed recommendations set out in Section 7 as the basis for further development of a Planetary Health Position Statement.	**Decision**
14.	**Presidents Report to Council**	
	Council noted the Presidents attendance at various engagements, which highlighted a very productive period.	
15.	**ETC Reports to Council**	
	Council noted the Education and Training Committee Report, contained in its meeting brief to include the Medical Council Training Survey.	
16.	**RAC Report to Council**	
	Council noted the Registration and Adjudication Committee Report, contained in its meeting brief.	
17.	**FAC Report to Council**	
	Council noted the Finance Advisory Committee Report, contained in its meeting brief.	
17.1	**Multi Annual Budget**	
	Council noted the paper on multi annual budget, contained in its meeting brief and presented by Dr Sullivan.	
17.2	**February 2026 Management Accounts**	

	Council noted the February 2026 Management Accounts, contained in its meeting brief and presented by Dr Sullivan.	
	The President extended thanks to all departing Council members for their outstanding engagement and commitment in shaping the work of the Medical Council during their tenure, and for the legacy being left behind. This list of members was as follows: • Prof Richard Greene • Prof Edna Roche • Prof Desmond O'Neill • Dr Liqa Ur Rehman • Ms Teresa Bulfin • Mr Jim O'Sullivan • Prof Mary O'Sullivan • Ms Marie Culliton • Mr Paul Harkin • Prof Orla Muldoon • Mr John Gleeson A letter of thanks from Ms Rachel Kenna, Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health, was received and read out by the CEO. The letter expressed personal gratitude for the President's service, steadfast leadership and time commitment to the Medical Council over the course of her presidency.	
	The in-person governance meeting concluded at approximately 1.30p.m. Council noted the next Governance meeting on 29 July 2026.	
	Following a break, Council members attended a facilitated risk management workshop which ran from 2.15-5.15 pm.	