Summary minutes of the meeting of the Medical Council held in person on the 24th April 2024 in Kingram House, Dublin 2.

MEMBERS PRESENT – 24th April 2024

Dr Suzanne Crowe (President)
Dr Mary Davoren (Vice President)
Ms Teresa Bulfin
Ms Marie Culliton
Dr Morgan Crowe
Mr Ian Drennan
Mr Paul Harkin
Mr John Gleeson
Dr Margaret O'Riordan
Prof Mary O'Sullivan
Mr Jim O'Sullivan
Prof Joe McMenamin
Mr John Murray
Prof Deirdre Murphy
Mr Nauman Nabi
Prof Ronan O'Connell
Mr Ronan Quirke
Prof Edna Roche
Dr Liqa Ur Rehman

APOLOGIES
Ms Sinead Corcoran
Ms Jill Long
Dr Orla Muldoon

In attendance for the entire meeting - In Person
Mr Leo Kearns (CEO)
Ms Gail McAuley (Head of Corporate Affairs and Secretary to Council)
Ms Mellisa Tierney (Council Governance Manager)

In attendance for relevant sections of the meeting
Mr Colm O'Leary (Executive Director of Strategy & Business services)
Ms Roseanne Fox (Executive Director of Finance, IT & Digital Transformation)
Ms Mairead Britton-Doyle (Executive Director of Fitness to Practise & Monitoring)
Ms Jantze Cotter (Executive Director of Regulatory Policy & Standards)
Mr Paul Byrne (Executive Director, Regulation, Operations & Support Services)
Ms Johanna Morris (General Counsel)
Ms Ruth Rock (Senior Services Legal Advisor & Associate General Counsel)
Mr William Kennedy (Head of Legislative Affairs)
Mr Alan Gallager (Head of Communications & Stakeholder Engagement)
Ms Jo Twamley (Communications & Engagement Manager)
Ms Fiona Redmond (Chief Risk Officer and Governance & Compliance Manager)
Ms Jan Fitzpatrick (Business Planning and Performance Coordinator)
Ms Fiona McVeigh (Head of Regulatory Policy)
Ms Bernadette Rock (Head of Research & Regulatory Data Insights)
Ms Collette O'Connor (Head of Monitoring)
Ms Aoife Grehan (Monitoring Case Officer)

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

Introduction to Risk & Goals Modules on Decision Time (Business Plan 2024)
Ms Redmond and Ms Fitzpatrick provided Council with training in relation to Risk & Goals Modules on Decision Time.

The Council members thanked Ms Redmond and Ms Fitzpatrick for the training and Ms Fitzpatrick left the meeting.

President's Report
Council noted the Presidents attendance at various engagements, which highlighted a very productive period.

Audit & Risk Committee (ARC)
The report of the Audit & Risk Committee was presented to Council. Mr Drennan confirmed that the report was for noting only.

Council noted that the ARC would be reviewing the draft financial statements for 2023 at its next meeting.

Risk Report
Ms Fiona Redmond, Chief Risk Officer, presented the Risk Report. The Council were provided with an update on the changes to the risk registers following the Organisation Design. A discussion on the required level of detail within the risk reports at both the ARC and Council also took place.

Council were provided with an update on new, open and closed risks as well as any significant movement on ratings. There was a focus on red risks and the actions by the Executive to address these risks. The Council were informed that the next proposed audit schedule would be influenced by the risk registers and the associated ratings.

Ms Redmond left the meeting.

Members of the Executive Leadership team joined the meeting.

CEO's Business

CEO Report
Mr Paul Byrne, Executive Director, Regulation, Operations & Support Services and Mr Colm O'Leary Executive Director, Strategy & Business Services were introduced to members of the Council, who were unable to attend the previous governance meeting.

Mr Leo Kearns highlighted the key aspects of the report to Council.

A detailed discussion took place on the cross-organisational issues relating to legal costs and the factors driving those costs, alongside short, medium and long-term goals.

Council discussed that the growing general division has been identified as a concern and the impact should be assessed in line with the MC remit of protection of the public.

It was confirmed that this matter was scheduled on the business plan for Q4 2024. It was agreed that a working paper will be presented to Council by the Executive at its next governance meeting in July to identify how the issue could be addressed.

Prof O'Connell left the meeting and Ms O'Connor joined the meeting.

Ms Grehan entered the room.

Monitoring Paper
This matter was presented to Council by Ms O'Connor. Ms. O'Connor delivered a PowerPoint presentation to Council.

At its last governance meeting in January, Council approved the plan for the establishment and development of the Executive Monitoring function.

Council was updated further on the progress of the establishment and development of the Executive Monitoring function.

Council considered the summarised results of the assessment carried out in phase one, the plan to commence monitoring of practitioners on a phased basis with consideration given to risk and available resources, and the proposed governance arrangements for the new Executive Monitoring function, as set out in the meeting paper.

Council approved, in principle:

1. that the monitoring of practitioners with Section 71 conditions and Section 60 undertakings / HCO's be delegated to the Executive initially, and
2. the proposed governance arrangements, noting that a formal delegation document and revised Terms of Reference for the Monitoring Committee will be prepared and brought to Council for approval in July.

Ms O'Connor and Ms Grehan left the meeting.

Draft ToR for the Finance Committee
This matter was presented to Council by Ms Fox.

Further to Council's agreement to establish a Finance Committee in 2023, Council reviewed the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) presented for approval.

Complaints Model Project-Phase 1 Part 1 Outcomes

This matter was presented by Ms Cotter. Ms Cotter delivered a PowerPoint presentation to Council.

Council was updated on phase 1 of the Complaints Model project, a project initiated by Council to develop a policy that will inform and make recommendations on the reform of its complaints model.

The policy being developed will re-consider Council's complaints handling model, particularly in light of pending legislative change. It aims to develop a comprehensive and sustainable complaints model that addresses current challenges but also anticipates future demands and complexities in the regulatory environment. It was noted that this reform occurs at a time when medical regulators worldwide are evolving complaints regulatory models to embed compassion and risk profiling. .

Council was provided with a high-level overview of the findings from phase 1 of the project which focused on gathering the evidence base to inform progression to phase 2. It was noted that over the next nine months, the Executive team will focus on examining the evidence base, stakeholder engagement, and drafting policy proposals for return for Councils consideration.

It was confirmed to Council that a working group would be established, and the membership of the group would consist of a Chairperson (the Vice President of Council), the chair or nominated representative of the FtPC, the Chair of the PPC, medical members of Council (numbers to be confirmed) and relevant representative stakeholders.

Council thanked Ms Cotter and her team on the work they had done to date.

It was requested that a review of European regulators should also be included going forward. It was also agreed that this project would be a standing item on the Council governance agenda.

Mr Kennedy and Ms Rock joined the meeting.

Statement of Strategy Update

This matter was presented to Council by Mr O'Leary who provided a status update on the Statement of Strategy to include timelines and next steps.

Council noted that the Strategy Working Group is expected to finalise the draft strategy in June 2024. A consultation process will subsequently take place with final approval by Council expected in late July following any feedback. The strategy will then progress for graphic design and typesetting, and a launch event is planned for August/September.

Council requested that a specific Council strategy session be held for it to meet and fully consider its draft Statement of Strategy. It was agreed that this would be held on an ECM date in advance of the consultation phase.

Council thanked Mr O'Leary for his presentation.

Media Monitoring Report 2023

This matter was presented to Council by Ms Twamley after a brief introduction by Mr Gallagher.

Ms Twamley delivered a PowerPoint presentation to Council on a Media Insights Report created by Ruepoint for the period January-December 2023 to include:

- a quantitative analysis of the Medical Council's content in ROI print, online and broadcast media
- a qualitative analysis on print and online media
- a spotlight analysis on the campaign for the Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics for Medical Practitioners.

Council noted that a number of projects were underway this year to continue to raise awareness of the Medical Council.

Council thanked the communications team for its work to date.

It was requested that presentations are shared in advance of meetings going forward to allow Council time to review.

Presentation on Website Updates
This matter was presented to Council by Mr Gallagher.

Mr Gallagher delivered a PowerPoint presentation to Council on Website Design & Content Refresh 2024.

Council noted the progress of the project from January 2023, to include the changes made to the website to date and the further planned updates to be in place by the end of Q2.

Council thanked Mr Gallagher and Ms Cronin, who could not attend the meeting, for their hard work to date.

Following a query raised, Mr Gallagher confirmed that social media content and platforms would be reviewed in line with a brand refresh and an update would return to Council later in the year.

Council noted that professional photographs will be taken of members later in the year.

Registration & Continuing Practice Committee Report
Council noted the contents of this report.

Registration Adjudication Panel Report
Council noted the contents of this report.

Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

The in-person meeting concluded at approx. 4.45pm for the day.