

**Minutes of Assembly Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 66 East Smithfield**

Present: Claire Anderson (CA) - Chair, Adebayo Adegbite (AA), Jonathan Burton (JB), Ciara Duffy (CD), Ruth Edwards (RE), Brendan Jiang (BJ) – via vc, Gino Martini (GM), Matt Prior (MP), Tase Oputu (TO), Eleri Schiavone (ES), Lynne Smith (LS), Audrey Thompson (AT)

In attendance: Paul Bennett (PB), Karen Baxter (KB), Avril Chester (AC), Rick Russell (RR), James Davies (JD), Laura Wilson (LS), Elen Jones (EJ), Alison Douglas (AD) – via vc, Liz North (LN), Neal Patel (NP), Vicky Rutter (VR) (CPA) – Item 07 only, Beth Ward (BW) (CPA) – Item 07 only,

Apologies: Danny Bartlett (DB), Geraldine McCaffrey (GMC)

Observers: 1 observer joined the meeting

Item	Paper	Notes and actions	Action by
<b>Item 01 Welcome &amp; Apologies</b>		Apologies were received from Danny Bartlett and Geraldine McCaffrey.	
<b>Item 02 Items for Noting</b>		<p>The following items were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Code of Conduct &amp; Remit of Assembly and COG</li><li>b) Declarations of interest</li></ul> <p>[Secretary's Note: RE is now no longer a member of PDA]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>c) Minutes of the Open Business Assembly Meeting 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> July (noted and approved)</li></ul>	

		<p>d) National Pharmacy Board Reports</p> <p>e) President's Report</p> <p>f) Treasurer's Report</p> <p>g) 2024 Education &amp; Standards Committee Annual Report and minutes of Committee 18<sup>th</sup> October</p> <p>h) 2024 Science &amp; Research Committee Annual Report &amp; minutes of Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> July</p> <p>i) 2024 Panel of Fellows Annual Report</p> <p>j) 2024 Membership Committee Annual Report</p> <p>k) 2024 CPA Annual Report</p> <p>l) 2024 Health &amp; Safety Annual Report</p> <p>m) Inclusion &amp; Diversity update</p> <p>n) Scottish Parliament Lobbying Register Report</p> <p>o) EDI Action Plan</p>	
<b>Item 03</b> <b>Matters Arising</b>		None	
<b>Item 04</b> <b>UKPPLAB</b>		<p>CA gave a brief update to members, noting that since the last Assembly meeting one substantive Board meeting had been held in September which had covered a number of general items including the future vision for the Board. She noted that trust between the Board members was developing well.</p> <p>PB added that the working relationship between RPS and the Board continued to be a positive and constructive one and Sir Hugh Taylor had chaired a session at the RPS Conference last week.</p> <p>He has now been invited to join a sub-group of the Board with the CEOs of other Pharm organisations including the regulators to look into the importance of professional standards in education, assessment and credentialing post-registration and how this might best relate to the regulators.</p> <p>Fiona McIntyre had been appointed to the Board secretariat to help support their policy development work and her current duties at RPS will be backfilled.</p> <p>Noted that the timeframe for the Board overall was still currently 3-5 years and that the Society's timeframe to move towards RC status would fit very well with this. CA was asked if the Board had given any indication of support for the Society's RC journey and A&amp;C work and she noted they were very supportive of the RC progression but haven't said much more about A&amp;C.</p>	

		<p>PB has been very pleased by the way the CPHOs have shown their support for the Society's ambitions to become a Royal College. EJ added that she had attended a meeting yesterday of the Welsh Pharmaceutical Committee, a statutory advisory body to the Welsh Government, and had given an update/overview of the Society's C&amp;G work. The committee were very supportive of the work and will be sharing a statement to that effect with the Welsh Government.</p>	
<b>Item 05</b> <b>Constitution &amp; Governance Review</b>		<p>a) Roadshows</p> <p>LN gave a summary of the recent roadshow events, the last of which was held yesterday.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 in-person events had been held across GB with almost 1000 people attending</li> <li>• good mix of people from a broad spread of backgrounds</li> <li>• very good conversations and Q&amp;A sessions</li> <li>• notes were taken of all questions from the audience and the team are now working on a report which will be published early in December outlining these and setting out detailed responses</li> </ul> <p>TO thanked KB, LN &amp; CA for all their efforts in the roadshow events which had been a great initiative as it had been a real benefit to be able to be present across the country to speak directly to members. LN also stressed how important Board and Assembly attendance and input into the events had been.</p> <p>KB then summarised and a number of decisions taken by Assembly at the meeting yesterday:</p> <p>b) Special Resolution Vote</p> <p>Following agreement at the Working Day meeting, KR asked that Assembly Members approve the re-drafting of the Charter, noting that a small change to the wording used around students was necessary – AGREED.</p> <p>KB then asked members to confirm they were happy that any non-substantive semantic changes to the wording of the Charter that might subsequently be requested by Privy Council Office or Charity Commission be agreed by the C&amp;G Programme Steering Group and COG – AGREED.</p> <p>Assembly Members then AGREED the following wording for the formal resolution that Members would be asked to consider under the SRV:</p> <p><i>In accordance with Article 11 of the Society's Royal Charter, the Assembly resolves that it (i) amends the provisions of the Society's Royal Charter to conform to the draft Charter presented to the meeting [and initialled "A" for identification]; and (ii) changes the name of the Society to "ROYAL COLLEGE OF</i></p>	

	<p><i>PHARMACY"; subject to (a) confirmation of this resolution by the Members of the Society in accordance with the provisions of the current Royal Charter; (b) such changes as the Privy Council or its secretariat or advisors may require in agreement with the Assembly; and (c) the consent of His Majesty King Charles III by Order in Council.</i></p> <p>AGREED.</p> <p>Assembly further AGREED to delegate the authority to prepare the full final resolution (vote question with latitude clause) and notice of meeting to the Programme Steering Group.</p> <p>Members were then asked to affirm that, as permitted under Regulation 3.4, Assembly had agreed that the proposed changes to the Charter which must be agreed by a Special Resolution vote of Members and Fellows, would not be placed before a General Meeting but would be the subject of a wider ballot of the voting membership – AGREED.</p> <p>Assembly further AGREED that the SRV is being held in accordance with regulation 3.4, that the roadshows are the consultation and therefore the SRV is not to be debated at any General Meeting.</p> <p>TO however noted that the full detail of the changes to the Charter etc had not been available to members who attended the C&amp;G Roadshows. KB acknowledged that the information provided to members to date had not included the full legal details but she explained that it had certainly set out all the main material elements of the proposed changes. A fully detailed pack of information setting out at length all the changes required to the Charter, with a 'plain English' style explanation, would be created and published for members to read early in 2025.</p> <p>Assembly then provisionally AGREED the proposed date for the SRV [13<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025].</p> <p>Assembly then AGREED the process for the SRV as detailed in the SRV Scheme discussed at the Working Day meeting.</p> <p>c) Transition Arrangements</p> <p>Noted that although the transition arrangements to take the Society through to Royal College and Chairty status had been presented and talked through with Assembly at the Working Day but that members had not been able to formally approve the proposed approach as the detail presented on the slides had been too small to view adequately. The information will therefore be circulated to Assembly members via email after the meeting for approval. Assembly AGREED, once the detail had been approved by email, it would be</p>	
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	<p>happy for the Steering Group together with COG to make any non-substantive semantic amendments to this should PCO or CC require.</p> <p>d) 2025 Elections</p> <p>PB reminded Assembly of the points considered at the Working Day meeting of the Executive's proposal for reasons of pragmatism that the 2025 National Board and other governance post elections be cancelled. The key considerations leading to this conclusion being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• timing of elections to Boards in 2025 clashes with SRV timeline</li> <li>• Build up occurs across the time when we will be having a vote campaign – confusing messaging</li> <li>• bandwidth of staff teams involved</li> <li>• nature of the organisation members being asked to stand for would be unclear</li> <li>• informal submissions to PCO and CC will have been made and will have little scope to change – 'new Assembly' have their hands tied</li> <li>• Executive team therefore propose that the organisation does not hold elections at all in 2025 and extend term of office of those affected by up to one year but no greater</li> </ul> <p>He noted that there had been considerable discussion of the proposal to extend the terms of office for all those due for re-election in 2025 by up to 12 months at the Working Day, with members agreeing that it would be preferable to defer the elections in 2025. He noted that the importance of good governance and transparency had though been utmost in Assembly members' minds and it was therefore vital that this decision would be communicated out to the membership as soon as possible, with members being able to comment on the proposed changes to the Regulations to facilitate the cancellation as part of the required formal Gazette Notice process.</p> <p>CD asked about the wording of 'up to 12 months' and asked if it would be possible to have more definitive dates included in the amendments however AD reiterated the points made at the meeting yesterday (that this would not be possible as different dates would be applicable to the different roles, the exact dates of the elections in 2026 had still to be fixed, and the result of the SRV was not yet known, noting that a 'no' vote would necessitate elections be held later in the year in 2025) which meant that the wording used in the amendments to the Regs would need to be 'up to 12 months' in order to cover all eventualities. She added that it would ultimately be for Assembly to decide on the timeframe of any election in 2025, should it decide to hold once it had had chance to consider responses to the Gazette Notice.</p>	
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	<p>CD then asked whether it wouldn't simply be preferable to just to delay the 2025 elections by a couple of months until after the SRV had been held. PB noted the extensive discussion that had been held on this point at the meeting yesterday, although as CD had arrived late due to the adverse weather conditions she had not been present for all of it, when it had been noted that there were so many additional elements to take into account that Assembly agreed this was not a desirable or viable option.</p> <p>TO asked what criteria would Assembly use to judge the comments that might be received back from members on the proposed changes against. PB explained that there were no set criteria for this other than Assembly was obliged to 'consider' comments received – it would therefore be for Assembly members themselves to decide and put whatever weighting they felt appropriate on any comments that might be received.</p> <p>AD noted that the next formal Assembly meeting in March would be too late for members to consider the comments and so, depending on how many comments did end up being submitted, Assembly members would need to review these either by email or by an additional remote Assembly session.</p> <p>BJ stressed that wider comms about the gazetting should be done to highlight the chance for members to comment, rather than just rely on individuals who keep an eye out for the Gazette notices, which would be more in keeping with the recommendations of the LP comms review.</p> <p>ES noted that as GMC was unable to attend the meeting today, and had had a little difficulty hearing some parts of the discussion yesterday, she had sent some comments she asked to be shared at the meeting, and that whilst she was happy with the decision to postpone the elections she did though think it was important to still go through with the internal appointments [ie the governance post elections] and asked if there was an option for those in these positions to be re-elected or not. CA clarified that this had been discussed in full at the meeting yesterday and members had agreed that this wouldn't be a solution.</p> <p>MP stressed that the main decision being taken by Assembly at present was that the 2025 elections would definitely not be held within in the normal timeframe. PB added that Assembly would however still have the ability to hold the elections at a later point but no later than 12 months on if it wished.</p> <p>RE clarified Assembly members had, after considerable discussion, agreed at the Working Day that it was not feasible to hold the elections in March and the proposal was therefore to delay them for up to a year which may, dependent on the level of comments received on the gazetting, mean a need to hold them later in 2025 as well as early on 2026. PB reminded members that this had been agreed by a majority vote</p>	
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		<p>at the Working Day and Assembly was simply being invited to confirm this decision in order for it to be able to be recorded into the minutes of the formal meeting today - AGREED.</p> <p>e) Submission to PCO/Charity Regulators</p> <p>KB asked for formal approval to now make the necessary submissions to the PCO/CC, again with the caveat that authority be delegated to the Programme Steering Group/COG to approve any semantic changes necessary based on the legal advice provided in due course, and that the Programme Steering Group/COG also be authorised to make any further semantic changes that might be requested by PCO/CC. She stressed again that any material changes would be brought back to Assembly for approval – AGREED.</p>	
<b>Item 06</b> <b>Any Other Business</b>		<p>a) Posthumous Fellowships</p> <p>Clarification of the process for awarding posthumous Fellowships was noted and approved.</p> <p>b) NHS Change</p> <p>TO raised the issue of the current NHS Change consultation and asked what the Society's process for inputting into this. JD noted that a series of engagement events on workstreams with NHS would be held and members views would also be sought via a survey that has already been issued. Members would also be encouraged to provide individual submissions directly to the NHS.</p> <p>TO would encourage all members to ensure that they follow the process into how they can feedback to us.</p> <p>The open business session of the meeting was then adjourned until the guests for the next item arrived.</p>	
<b>Item 07</b> <b>International</b>		<p>Vicky Rutter (CPA CEO) and Beth Ward (CPA) attended the meeting for this item and the open business session of the meeting was resumed.</p> <p>LW explained that Tracey Thornley had unfortunately been unable to attend the meeting today and would therefore be coming to the March meeting instead. She then went on to give a brief presentation on recent FIP work including the recent Congress meeting in South Africa and a Celebration of Pharmacy event that EJ had attended in Iceland, as well as upcoming events and meeting.</p> <p>VR &amp; BW then gave a presentation on the work of CPA.</p> <p>CD asked what work the CPA might do for those pharmacists who worked in industry and for pharmaceutical scientists. VR noted that, as a charity, the Association had very specific set objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to improve pharmacy practice across the Commonwealth</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to enhance knowledge sharing between pharmacy organisations</li> <li>• to develop networks across the profession to help facilitate this</li> </ul> <p>As the Association was bound by these objective VR explained there was very little ability for it to touch on Pharmaceutical Science per under its charitable remit and the organisation was therefore much more patient facing at present.</p> <p>CD asked if it might be an area the organisation would consider at some point in the future. VR noted that the organisation did work closely with hospital pharmacists, including to support aseptic services, most notably in Ghana on cancer services.</p> <p>BA stressed how important it was for individual pharmacists to join the CPA and show their support for the Association, also to sign up for their email updates and show support via social media etc. CA also encouraged people to join as individual members.</p> <p>ES asked if CPA had any plans for work around access to medicines especially in countries like South Africa in relation to HIV etc. VR noted that the team had talked about their workforce training and access to medicines work at the RPS Conference and were quite well positioned to be able to help in these areas.</p> <p>TO felt that the concepts of fellowship and mentoring VR had outlined were exciting and would encourage pharmacists to get involved with this if they were able to. She went on to ask what the organisation's approach around pharmacy technicians in countries where there might be very few qualified pharmacists might be. VR explained that the team worked with pharmacist organisations where they existed and were recognised, but acknowledge that this was not the case in every country and in some areas pharmacists could well see pharmacy technicians as a threat where there were limited resources. The Association therefore had to be quite careful how it acted on a country by country basis to make sure it was aligned with the specific pharmacy organisations in what was often a very a tricky area to navigate politically.</p> <p>BJ, as RPS Treasurer, noted that he would be interested in meeting with VR/BW to discuss how the Society might continue to best support the Association, particularly in their work on credentialling etc. VR would similarly be happy to meet and BJ will therefore contact directly to arrange.</p> <p>ACITON – BJ</p>	
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<b>Item 08</b> <b>Date of the Next Meeting</b>		Noted that the next meeting will be Assembly Working Day 25 <sup>th</sup> March and Assembly Meeting 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2025.	
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