

Minutes of Meeting of the Societies Council

Held at Oxford & Cambridge Club 1st April 2014

In Attendance:

Liz McElligott (Chief Executive)

Vicky Parkinson (Society Administration Manager) Meeting Secretary

Gerry Willmore (Chair of Professional Standards Committee)

Faith Clark (Lay Council Member)

Steve Roche (Lay Council Member)

Apologies from Dr Chris Forester (Chair) and Wayne Bateman (Lay Member),

The Minutes from the last Council meeting on 18th November (circulated previously) were agreed by all. CE advised that redacted minutes for all 2013 Council meetings are published on both of the websites.

Council welcomed new lay Council member, Faith Clark and each person gave a brief personal introduction and background for the benefit of Faith Clark.

Previous lay Council member, Eimear McAllister has now stepped down due to a conflict of interest but continues to contribute to the Societies in her role as Lay Chair of the Professional Conduct Committee. CE has met with one other person (Aimee) who may be interested and has another person who has emailed and will meet with them if they want to proceed.

Report from Administration -Administration Manager, Vicky Parkinson reported to Council:

- To accommodate continuing growth the Societies have relocated their offices to larger premises with lots of room to grow.
- A new administrator was employed in January 2013
- The CRM database is now working effectively and proving useful
- Admin has switched over to a new accountancy software package to replace Excel
- A 'captcha box' is now on both websites to stop spam mail.

Report from Memberships Services – CE Liz McElligott reported to Council

- Membership Services Manager Katie Spendiff has resigned from the Societies, appreciation of her services over the previous 12 months were expressed by CE
- Recruitment for a new membership services manager has been successful and a new person is due to join the Societies in May (with a week's induction initially). Anticipated that they will be introduced at the next Council meeting in July.

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CE is confident that there will be no negative effective on the services we offer to our members during this interim period.

Faith told us about [REDACTED] which is a communication web based package that her organisation uses. Agreed to pass this on to the new membership services person to explore and compare with current systems that we use – for example with on-line Committee meetings.

Coffee Break

Report from Professional Standards Committee, Chair Gerry Willmore

Since the National Counselling Society achieved AVR status for its register - various organisations have approached us expressing an interest in joining the Society.

There is the need for discernment and Gerry assesses each approach with care.

Gerry gave examples of the different types of organisations and an update on those that are in the process of supplying further information for assessment.

CE also mentioned a couple of organisations who have approached the Societies in relation to getting their CPD Courses 'quality checked'. Not progressed beyond enquiry stage at the moment.

An update will be given on all above at the next Council meeting.

Lunch

CE Liz McElligott gave a report to Council on a variety of events and meetings attended since the last Council meeting

- The first annual AVR conference was attended along with 15 Society 'champions'. An informative day and a full report to all our members will be featured in the next newsletters.
- Agreed to send Society newsletters to Lay Council members
- The Societies' annual renewal of AVR status has been sent to the PSA – awaiting responses and feedback.
- National Voices Conference.
- Meetings with [REDACTED]
- Meeting with [REDACTED]
- Savoy Partnership Conference
- Meeting with [REDACTED]
- Meetings with [REDACTED]
- Meeting with Department of Health on 2nd April
- Meeting with [REDACTED]
- Annual Society audit scheduled for May

Independent Assessors reports presented to Council (and will now be published on Society websites)

Read through all the action points set by IA for 2013 and all achieved with the exception of clinic visits

[REDACTED] letter presented to Council

UKCP asked the NCS to be part of the Conversion Therapy Consensus Statement

IA Dr Phillip Rees will be observing the July Council meeting and a site visit to the new premises will also be arranged.

Discussed the possibility of holding Council meetings in new offices – main impact would be travel times of our lay members but might be something that could be arranged occasionally. Would be good to introduce them to all staff and see the offices.

Both Faith and Steve are going to create a brief 'bio' for the newsletters – will send to Liz along with a photo and hopefully add to May newsletters.

For future meetings will aim to send documents to be discussed to all to read ahead of the meeting

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No further business and all reminded that the meeting dates for rest of year 28th July and 25th November.

**Minutes of Meeting of the Societies Council
Held at Oxford & Cambridge Club 28th July 2014**

In attendance:

Liz McElligott (Chief Executive)
Gerry Willmore (Chair Professional Standards Committee)
Freya Bottomley (Membership Services & Marketing Manager)
Wayne Bateman (Lay Council Member)
Steve Roche (Lay Council Member)
Colin Irvine (Lay Council Member)

Dr Phillip Rees (Observer / Independent Assessor)

Guest

Rick Borges (Professional Standards Authority AVR Accreditation Manager)

Apologies from:

Dr Chris Forester (Chair)
Vicky Parkinson (Society Admin Manager)
Lucy Wightman (Deputy CEO)
Faith Clark (Lay Council Member)

The minutes from the last Council meeting, on 1st April 2014 (circulated previously) were agreed by Council. Dr Phillip Rees (Independent Assessor) requested that his (2013) proposal about the Societies arranging clinic visits be reconsidered and agreed that this can be discussed when Dr Rees arranges his site visit of the Societies offices (date tbc).

Council welcomed new Society staff member, Freya Bottomley, and Lay Council member, Colin Irvine, and everyone gave a brief personal introduction and background information.

Proposal to Council

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Report from Professional Standards Committee, Chair Gerry Willmore:

- The PS Committee is in the process of recruiting a new member and anticipates confirming details by Autumn 2014 – will give further details at next Council meeting.
- Different organisations have approached the Societies since we achieved AVR status.
- Gerry has carried out [REDACTED] site visits to training providers – one for counselling and one for hypnotherapy. Following full assessments [REDACTED] training providers have had their courses accredited by the relevant Society.

[REDACTED]

- Awarding body AQA has withdrawn their counselling qualifications – current courses will be honoured but programme wound down for future.
- [REDACTED]

Report from Society Administrator, CE Liz McElligott on behalf of Vicky Parkinson:

- The Society staff have upgraded their computers and engaged a local IT support person [REDACTED]
- Current membership figures were discussed and Liz explained to Council the difference between registrants and non-registrants
- All Society staff held a recent meeting to review current websites and share ideas for updates/changes

Report from Society CE, Liz McElligott:

- The Societies have successfully achieved the annual renewal of their AVR status for both registers.
- CE thanked Dr Rees on behalf of the Societies for the reports he produced to support the societies renewal application. [REDACTED]
- Gerry paid tribute to Liz for the external relationships she has built on behalf of the Societies – particularly with the PSA and other professional associations.
- Audits: constantly reviewing and further developing the Societies audit procedures. CE advised Council that the Societies have recruited a Deputy CE who will be involved with audits and the registers as part of her role.
- Conversion Therapy: the (draft) Memorandum of Understanding is now with the DH for their approval. Will circulate the final document to Council – and asked for agreement in principle that Council approve the memorandum - agreed by all.
- Further discussions amongst Council about the actual prevalence of so called ‘conversion therapy’ – CE shared information from initial DH meeting and research done by Royal College of Psychiatrists.
- CE gave a summary of concerns / complaints that have been received by the Societies between 2013 and 2014 so far. Advised that the Societies will be reviewing their Complaints procedures and Eimear McAllister is assisting with this. The current ‘Listening to Clients’ policy was created in a joint project with the ‘Clinic for Boundaries Studies’ and has been in place since 2012 and we want to review and improve our policies and procedures.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CE introduced Rick Borges who is Accreditation Manager for the AVR scheme and everyone introduced themselves – Rick had the opportunity to chat to individual Council members during lunch.

Lunch

AVR presentation from Rick Borges

- Rick informed Council that the PSA have existed since 2003 – previously called the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE).
- A lot of international interest in AVR scheme. Rick is going to Hong Kong in September to talk about AVR scheme. There is also interest from Australia and Canada about the scheme.
- There are now 12 organisations holding AVR's under the PSA scheme
- Continuing to build links with NHS England and discussing different ways that AVR could be recognised in commissioning
- Dr Rees (who works within the NHS) commented that the AVR scheme is not known within the NHS on the ground- particularly within mental health services
- AVR are trying to raise profile in NHS and are going to be meeting with CCG's to let them know what the AVR scheme can offer
- Meeting planned with AVR's and Luther Pendragon to let them know what the AVR communication plans are and share ideas of how each organisation can spread the word
- Consulting with private health care insurers (including Bupa) how they could recognise and reimburse treatments from practitioners who are on AVR register.
- PSA Talking to Comic Relief to build recognition of the AVR scheme
- The scheme needs individual registrants to help disseminate information to the public about the AVR scheme
- Currently revamping AVR/PSA website to make information clearer for the public and easier to understand
- Question was raised as to who the PSA report to – they report to Parliament, Health Select Committee although they are funded by the Department of Health.
- CE asked about the current fee structure – in relation to affordability for smaller organisations. Rick said it was unlikely to change - although he did state that to help smaller organisations they have a cluster model which can be used and another option is for smaller organisations to ask the Department of Health to help fund them if needed.
- Currently awaiting applications from new organisations including some that are considered high profile by NHS England so this will in turn raise the overall profile of the scheme.
- Council thanked Rick for coming and for his talk

Other Business.

CE will be discussing current committees with Deputy CE – with the aim of her taking responsibility for these

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Next Council meeting will be in November 2014 and CE suggested that when planning for next year's meetings will include a visit to the Societies' offices in Worthing.

Minutes of Society Council Meeting

Tuesday, 25th November 2014

At the Oxford & Cambridge Club

In attendance:

Gerry Willmore (Deputy Chair for Society and Chair of Professional Standards Committee)

Faith Clarke (Lay Council Member)

Wayne Bateman (Lay Council Member)

Steve Roche (Lay Council Member)

Colin Irvine (Lay Council Member)

Susan Archer (Society Administrator/Council Meeting Secretary)

Apologies:

Dr Chris Forester (Chair)

Vicky Parkinson (Society Admin Manager)

Liz McElligott (CEO)

Freya Bottomley (Membership & Marketing Manager)

Notes from meeting:

Meeting opened at 11.20am.

The Minutes of the last Council Meeting on 28th July 2014 (circulated previously) were agreed by Council.

It was noted that some members had not received an invitation to write an introductory article for the Society newsletters. Gerry confirmed that this would still be welcomed.

Introductions:

Council welcomed new Society staff member, Susan Archer and everyone gave a brief personal introduction.

Professional Standards Committee update

- Gerry reported increased interest from training providers – [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- Council asked about clustering and Gerry explained in detail. Gerry doesn't think we can offer this at the moment and has advised training providers that have enquired. Applying for Accredited Register status is expensive does exclude smaller organisations.
- "Register of interests" form signed by all Council Members present and returned to Susan.

- PSC has engaged a new lay member Susan King. Susan was Qualification Development Manager (Counselling) for AQA. AQA winding up their counselling programme and Susan brings some knowledge of counselling and substantial experience on education administration to the position.

- **Action point**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Society Administrator's report

- Gerry read Vicky's report. Two new team administrators joined in August 2014 and Council asked about Susan and Amy's position within Society. Gerry and Susan gave brief explanation.
- Figures – see report.
- New website under construction – hoping to launch in New Year.

[REDACTED]

Marketing and Membership Services update

- [REDACTED]. Council thought it was good advertising for the Society and commented on the enormous audience reached with small branded goods.
- **Action point** : Council asked how successful the Society was at attracting new members [REDACTED]. Does the Society gather data about how new members hear about us ? Gerry agreed to investigate and respond.
- Discussion about teaching Mindfulness nationally and its importance. Particularly in schools. Meetings with MIND. Gerry spoke about "We Need to Talk coalition" – Gerry briefly outlined what it was to Council.
- [REDACTED].
- CAMEXPO – Council asked what it was – Gerry explained and he said Liz felt excellent contacts were made as a result of attending CAMEXPO.

CEO Report

- Gerry read Liz McElligott's report. Council asked when replacement would be found for Deputy CEO Lucy who resigned due to illness. Gerry reported interviewing was planned January 2015. Advised Council Freya to take on Public Protection Officer Position with Gerry's support.

- Review of complaints – Gerry read report. Question raised by Steve how complaints were dealt with and who arbitrates in event of disagreement between register holders. Gerry commented that ideally PSA should perhaps arbitrate. Gerry explained how different counselling modalities sometimes take differing views re what is acceptable/unacceptable behaviour by practitioners. Gerry is revising the whole complaints process. Drafting leaflet to simplify procedures.
- Council asked if there are any other ways to expand our CPD offerings. Confirmed that this is planned for 2015.
- [REDACTED]

Break for lunch 1:05

Meeting resumed at 1.32pm

- Gerry began with the PSA. Discussion about the voluntary register. Now to refer to them as Accredited Registers. No longer to be called scheme should be programme.
- **Action point** : Steve requested the PSA email be circulated to council – Gerry agreed to arrange.

AOB

- **Action point** :

[REDACTED]

- Meetings scheduled for 2015 – All Council members present can make all 2015 meetings, apart from Faith who cannot make 10th November 2015.

Meeting finished at 1.55pm.