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## Chair's Report – June 2023

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To flag developments at HCPC from the Chair's perspective and to update on activities of note.

### **2. Succession Planning**

July Council will be our first meeting with new Chief Executive Bernie O'Reilly, who joins the HCPC on July 3. The day after Council is also a significant annual event – our All Employee 'Awayday'. A great deal of thought and energy goes into its planning, and it will be a great opportunity to spend some less formal time together, as well as joining in the activities.

I know that Bernie will want to be, 'everything, everywhere, all at once', and I thank the colleagues who have prepared for getting him more deeply acquainted with HCPC and our wider context. The new Office of the Chair and Chief Executive has been especially active, as I see by the plethora of introductory meetings in my diary. Congratulations to Zoë Allan, who is establishing the new role of Business Manager for the Office.

### **3. Reform – and regulatory flexibility**

As Council knows, it has been announced that HCPC, together with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), will be in the next phase of regulatory reform, following the General Medical Council (GMC). In June I met with the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) Director of Workforce to discuss a range of issues. It was clear that there is strong mutual interest in advancing regulatory reform as fast as resources permit.

### **4. Strategy and Finance – Sustainability**

Council's next workshop will be on the theme of sustainability, when we will have an opportunity to hear about what progress we have made and better understand what the next stages of the journey will look like.

### **5. Professional Standards Authority**

Together with the Interim Deputy Chief Executive, I met the Chair and the Chief Executive of the Professional Standards Authority (PSA). They were complimentary about HCPC's progress in regaining further Standards. We emphasised that we remained focused on retaining all the current ones and attaining the final two. Other regulators (but not all) have been challenged by timeliness in Fitness to Practise and this will need to remain a priority until it is brought firmly under control.

Further investment, which the proposed fee rise would make possible, will be necessary to achieve improvements at the desired pace.

The PSA also spoke about work they are doing on the revised EDI Standard, their aim being to raise the bar to drive further improvement.

We also had an interesting discussion about hybrid working. We explained how we had reduced the office footprint and had reorganised the space (congratulations James McMahon and colleagues for the recent stylish soundproofing and new technology for videoconferencing). However, attendance at the office appears to be primarily at the beginning of the week and by the end (for example on a Thursday when I was there recently) the building is largely empty. I explained the advantages (and disadvantages) of asynchronous working. HCPC is not the only organisation in a transition with hybrid working. We must continue to evolve our position.

## **6. Proposed fee increase for registrants**

We are awaiting finalisation of the date for laying the necessary legislation. DHSC understands the financial impacts that the current delays have on HCPC. We continue to work constructively together to achieve the soonest possible timing.

## **7. Parliamentary discussions**

In the period, among the notable meetings I had were with Jackie Baillie MSP, Scottish Labour Deputy Leader, and Karin Smyth, Labour MP for Bristol South (and Shadow Minister for Health and Social Care). Both conversations were wider than fees and covered relevant policy ground.

## **8. Concluding comments**

On June 18, I spoke at a 'webclave' on 'Infrastructure – what can we do to make us disaster-proof?' along with discussants George Barnes, Deputy Director National Security Agency, Professor Michael Mainelli, and Elisabeth Braw, the distinguished expert on societies and resilience.

Our engaging Council workshop on EDI took place on June 22. Thank you to our executive colleagues and workshop hosts, Adrian Barrowdale, Madeline Connor and Mark Platt for helping us build on our progress of the last year.

Annual reviews with Council Members are in progress. These are energising conversations when I am reminded of each individual's commitment, knowledge and unique personality!