

Minutes of the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee meeting

held on 19th May 2022 at Double Tree by Hilton, 60 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9LA

Present: Reena Barai, David Broome, Peter Cattee, Clare Kerr, Ian Cubbin, Marc Donovan, Lindsey Fairbrother, Samantha Fisher, Mark Griffiths, Jas Heer, Tricia Kennerley, Ifti Khan, Sue Killen (Chair), Sunil Kochhar, Rhys Martin, Fin McCaul, Has Modi, Roger Nichols, Umesh Patel, Bharat Patel, Jay Patel, Prakash Patel, Adrian Price, Sian Retallick, Stephen Thomas, Gary Warner

In Attendance: Janet Morrison, Mitesh Bhudia, Shiné Brownsell, Alastair Buxton, Jack Cresswell, Mike Dent, Gordon Hockey, Zoe Long, David Onuoha, Suraj Shah, Gabriele Skieriute, Rosie Taylor, Rob Thomas, James Wood

Item 1 – Welcome from the Chair

- 1.1 Sue Killen welcomed the Committee to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair commented on the resilience of community pharmacy, especially through the last three years. The Chair added that when the Committee last met in February, it could never have anticipated the war in Ukraine and the implications that would have on the supply chain and economy, including inflation rising to 9%. The current cost-of-living crisis will drive health inequalities, which will have implications for everyone.
- 1.3 It was noted that public finances and the NHS, in particular, face serious challenges. The Chair felt that fresh thinking and innovation must therefore be on the Committee's wider agenda.

Item 2 – Apologies for absence

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Ghada Beal, Niamh McMillan, Anil Sharma, Faisal Tuddy and Indrajit Patel.

Item 3 – Conflicts or declaration of interest

- 3.1 None.

Item 4 – Minutes of the 3rd February 2022 meeting

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting which took place on 3rd February 2022 were approved.

Item 5 – Matters Arising

- 5.1 The information in the agenda was noted.

Item 6 – Introduction from the Chief Executive

- 6.1 The Chief Executive gave her reflections on the sector and on the Committee since starting at PSNC on 1st March. This included the sector's strengths and also the challenges faced. The Chief Executive commented on the massive effort of community pharmacy and how the sector stepped up in response to the pandemic with the introduction of new services and flu vaccination at record levels. At the same time,

there have been rising demand and expectations from the public using community pharmacies. The public rely now more than ever on their pharmacy, which shows they are valued and trusted, but they are also taken for granted politically. The sector continues to face considerable inflationary and workforce pressures which not only impact on their sustainability and capacity but is also impacting on the services that can be provided to patients and the public.

- 6.2 The Chief Executive highlighted some of the key elements of how the Committee and the sector could improve how it works with reflections on Governance, Strategy, People and Skills, Culture and External engagement. Key points highlighted on governance included:
- the need for the Committee to act in the interests of the whole sector
 - to review the focus of the Committee so that it focuses on being strategic and forward looking
 - to review the role, purpose and composition of sub-committees
 - the lack of a patient voice and the need to invite wider external input at meetings
- 6.4 Looking at the PSNC team, there is an expert and skilled team but with budgetary constraints and work pressures mean there is not enough capacity for strategic thinking, and a risk of burnout. There are some capacity gaps in terms of negotiating strategy, regular data insights and market data, communications and influencing and LPC support. There is also a lack of central service functions such as finance, HR and IT. It was noted that there is no budget for training and development of staff and the budget for IT is constrained. Time is needed for future thinking and planning. It was also noted that the contractual expectation of staff in terms of office/hybrid or home working will need to be reviewed. The office space will also need to be reviewed, including Committee expectations for face-to-face meetings.
- 6.6 The Chief Executive felt that we don't have a culture of recognising and celebrating success.
- 6.7 The Chief Executive commented that we need to build trust with the Government and NHSE&I, have a shared vision and strategy for the sector and need to be seen as promoting innovation and ideas. PSNC also need to use evidence-based influencing and commission more independent expert evidence and analysis to help influence the climate of opinion around decision-makers supporting an influencing and stakeholder engagement strategy. We also need to be able to strengthen negotiating capacity, skills and planning.
- 6.9 The Chief Executive thanked the team for organising her induction and for taking her through many complex issues. she also thanked members of the Committee and the CPs she has visited for their briefing and is keen to continue visiting community pharmacies and to learn more about LPCs and the local culture for contractors.

Item 7 – Update on negotiations

- 7.1 An update on the negotiations was provided and the Committee discussed progress.

Item 8 – Confidential item

Item 9 – Laying the groundwork for the next CPCF

- 9.1 The Chief Executive took the Committee through the activities as described in the agenda, which the team wishes to develop after the conclusion of Year 4 negotiations and to prepare for the next contractual framework. These included defining a Vision and Strategy for Community Pharmacy; developing an Influencing and Stakeholder strategy and strengthening the Negotiating Strategy.
- 9.2 Following a group discussion, the Committee approved further exploratory work to be carried out to develop plans and budgets for these work programmes, and to develop a business case for RDF approval.

Item 10 – PSNC response to Review Steering Group (RSG)

- 10.1 James Wood provided an update on the RSG programme work and vote. It was noted that the results will be declared to the sector on Wednesday 22nd June.
- 10.2 Zoe Long talked through the communications plan and progress to date, summarising what has been done so far and what events to expect next.
- 10.3 Gordon Hockey talked about the implementation timeline for a vote on RSG proposals. A ‘yes’ vote gives a mandate for change and Gordon reiterated the speed at which Committee’s decisions will need to be made to draft, sign off and implement the changes. In the event of a ‘no’ vote, PSNC still needs to consider appropriate governance developments-
- 10.4 The Committee met in groups to discuss what more could be done to ensure that all contractors understand the RSG proposals and exercise their right to vote and how the Committee could support this. The feedback will feed into the RSG communications plan which Zoe Long is working on.

Item 11 – Governance

- 11.1 The importance of keeping confidential PSNC information and discussion secure was reiterated.
- 11.2 Ian Cubbin reported that the May Committee meeting would usually be when elections of Chairs of Subcommittees take place. It was noted that PSNC are in an unusual position as the regional representative elections were delayed last year. The proposal was that the present tenure roll over for a 12-month period. The Committee was in agreement with this proposal.
- 11.3 It was noted that Mark Burdon resigned from the Committee on 6th April, creating a vacancy for the Chair of the Resource Development and Finance Subcommittee. Gary Warner also announced that he won’t be standing as Chair of the Service Development Subcommittee. The Committee elected David Broome as the new Chair of the Resource Development and Finance Subcommittee and Fin McCaul as the new Chair of the Service Development Subcommittee.
- 11.4 Ian Cubbin thanked Mark Burdon and Gary Warner for their work on the Committee as Chairs of the Resource Development and Finance Subcommittee and the Service Development Subcommittee respectively.
- 11.5 Gary Warner thanked the Committee and team for their support and hard work over the years.

Item 12 – Subcommittee reports

- 12.1 Key points of the discussion at the Resource Development and Finance Subcommittee were presented by Bharat Patel. Bharat formally thanked Mark Burdon for his contributions during his time as Chair of RDF.
- 12.2 Key points of the discussion at the Funding and Contract Subcommittee were presented by Peter Cattee.
- 12.3 Key points of the discussion at the Legislation and Regulatory Affairs Subcommittee were presented by Ian Cubbin. The following recommendation was approved by the Committee:
 - The regulations proposals (annexes A, B and C) are agreed as part of the Year 4 negotiations.
- 12.4 Key points of the discussion at the Review and Audit Panel meeting were presented by Adrian Price.
- 12.5 Key points of the discussion at the Communications and Public Affairs Subcommittee were presented by Tricia Kennerley.

12.6 Key points of the discussion at the Service Development Subcommittee were presented by Gary Warner.

Item 13 – Any other business

13.1 The Chair asked the Committee to get as many people engaged as possible on the RSG vote.

13.2 The Committee was invited to share any thoughts on how to improve Committee meetings or venues with the office.

13.3 The Chair thanked the team for all their hard work.