

Minutes of the PSNC LPC and Contractor Support Subcommittee

held on Wednesday 1st February 2023

via Zoom

commencing at 10.00am

Members of LCS present: Sam Fisher (Chair), Sunil Kumar, Niamh McMillan, Indrajit Patel, Jay Patel, Umesh Patel, Sian Retallick

In attendance:

Reena Barai, Peter Cattee, Ian Cubbin, Lindsey Fairbrother, Jas Heer, Clare Kerr, Sue Killen, Fin Mc Caul, Has Modi, Claire Nevinson, Bharat Patel, Adrian Price, Stephen Thomas.

Alastair Buxton, Mike Dent, Jamie Gilliam, Gordon Hockey, Zoe Long, Janet Morrison, Katrina Worthington, James Wood

Item 1 – Welcome from the Chair

1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the first subcommittee meeting of the year.

Item 2 – Apologies for absence

2.1 Rhys Martin

Item 3 – Conflicts or Declarations of Interest

3.1 None received.

Item 4 – Minutes of the last meeting

4.1 The minutes from the last meeting held on 23rd November 2022 were approved.

Item 5 – Actions and Matters Arising

5.1 The final version of the updated Model LPC Constitution along with the associated support documents have been published in the LPC Members' Area of the PSNC website.

5.2 Good progress has been made by LPCs working through the process to adopt the Model LPC Constitution and, for the first time, it appears that all LPCs in England will be adopting this constitution. There was some concern, from some LPCs, over the clause in the constitution regarding term lengths, namely whether this excludes an LPC Member from serving on PSNC after the 12 years on their LPC. Given LPCs are independent bodies they have the power to make changes to their constitution, including this clause, hence some variation between the constitutional arrangement of LPCs is expected. The unintended consequences of this change will be looked at in the wider Governance Review.

Item 6 – Vice Chair arrangements

6.1 No Eols have been submitted for a new Vice Chair for the subcommittee. This matter will be a carried forward item on the agenda for future LCS meetings and the new subcommittee from April 2023.

Item 7 – LPC and Contractor Support Workplan Update

7.1 The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda.

7.2 James Wood thanked members for their comments on the workplan, which aims to outline the major pieces of work for PSNC's Contractor and LPC Support Team during the year.

7.3 Key priorities for the year include supporting LPCs in relation to their change programmes, delivering LPC support events in conjunction with other teams and supporting LPCs with their elections.

7.4 An update on progress regarding the workplan will be given at each subcommittee meeting, as a matter of report moving forward.

Item 8 – LPC Elections

8.1 The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda, which included the draft guidance for LPCs.

8.2 Full guidance for LPCs on their election process is due to be published by Friday 3rd February. The draft guidance has been shared with PLOT for feedback and a sense-check, as well as the trade bodies (AIMp and CCA only) to check their role in the nomination process. Following this feedback, a few updates will be made to the guidance, including amending the included timeline so that it accounts for those LPCs progressing more quickly, for new committees starting in April 2023 and July 2023, respectively.

8.3 A number of electronic forms will be made available to LPCs to use in their election process and PSNC is liaising with the CCA and AIMp regarding bulk voting for their members.

8.4 An issue has been raised regarding the date LPCs are to use to determine the total number of pharmacy premises in their area, which will affect the composition of LPCs. In the LPC Elections guidance, PSNC has proposed an appropriate cut-off date of the 31st January to enable adequate time for election planning.

8.5 In the new model constitution, the wording of this section (3.4.3) was adjusted to deal with the transition year, given that most LPCs requested 1st July (rather than 1st April) to form new committees. It says: 'The numbers shall be those existing on 31 October in the year preceding the election, or an appropriate date' [With the appropriate date being fixed as 31st January].

8.6 The rationale for drafting into the guidance an appropriate date of 31st January is that the election cycle is being moved forward by 3 months and therefore a January date would maintain the spirit of the constitution and established custom and practice.

8.7 There needs to be sufficient time after the appropriate date to complete all the administration to deal with both appointments and elections.

8.8 There are provisions in the LPC Model Constitution to deal with changes in market ownership. LPCs who have adopted the Model LPC Constitution via a Special Meetings of Contractors have at the same time confirmed the revised boundaries of their LPC.

8.9 If by the time the new LPC is confirmed for the 1st July, change of ownership, closures and/or consolidations results in resignation of LPC members before the committee begins (or thereafter) there are provisions in the constitution to deal with changes in ownership mix in an LPC area: firstly by appointment to fill a vacancy, and secondly at this point, a duty to ensure that the composition of the Committee reflects the mix of pharmacy contractors in the area for which the Committee is formed.

ACTION: The language in the Template Letter contained in the LPC Elections guidance will be updated for purposes of clarity following feedback from the subcommittee.

ACTION: The draft LPC Elections guidance will be updated to include an explainer for those LPCs undergoing mergers/boundary changes.

Item 9 – Future PSNC Regions and support for PSNC Members

9.1 The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda.

9.2 Given that the future structure of the PSNC Regions has now been agreed and the increased investment in PSNC from April 2023 onwards, it is time to consider what additional support should be provided to PSNC Members. Several ideas have been proposed, including administration and infrastructure support, regional meeting standardisation, post PSNC meeting support and more. These ideas were supported by the subcommittee.

9.3 It was proposed that in future aslot at PSNC be reserved for the PSNC Regional Representatives to feedback what they have heard from LPCs at regional meetings. Regional Representatives should also be facilitated to feedback to contractors following regional LPC meetings.

9.4 If the expected time commitment for PSNC Regional Representatives is to increase then funding for the role needs to match this. How PLOT meetings can support the role of the PSNC Regional Representatives also needs defining.

9.5 Adrian Price noted that during the RSG process the consistent message was that the current burden on PSNC Regional Representatives was too great and so care needs to be taken not to increase their workload which is already likely to increase somewhat as a result of the changes to the structure of the PSNC regions. Fin McCaul noted the danger of potentially sidelining LPCs when it comes to communication with contractors and said it was important that the PSNC Regional Representative role was kept in scope.

9.6 David Broome suggested the idea of a meeting and training calendar to be developed as soon as possible to allow LPCs to plan meetings so as not to clash.

9.7 Alastair Buxton discussed how additional support could be provided for PSNC Regional Representatives centrally, building on themes in the paper.

9.8 The difficulties of fostering contractor engagement was noted and discussed as well as the likely high level of turnover among PSNC Regional Representatives. PSNC is planning an induction day for new PSNC Committee Members. From July, PSNC will provide LPCs with resources to support them with their local inductions for new members.

9.9 Janet Morrison explained that the PSNC Office is aware that the new Committee is likely to be made up of many new members and underlined the importance of organizing future committee meetings in a way that supports new members' understanding.

Item 10 – Review of PLOT Terms of Reference (TOR)

10.1 The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda.

10.2 PSNC committed to reviewing the PLOT ToR annually, which combined with the change in the structure of the PSNC Regions means that this is now a priority.

10.3 James Wood asked for feedback on the proposed changes to the PLOT ToR. Members agreed with the changes proposed.

10.4 Fin McCaul suggested that if PLOT is to be held monthly, then every fortnight then the LPCs by PSNC Region should have time allocated ahead of PLOT to meet to discuss key issues and share feedback.

10.6 The need to communicate clearly concerning PLOT was discussed as well as the current principles around rotation of the group's membership. James Wood noted that PLOT has helped further collaboration between LPCs across the different regions.

ACTION: A note should be drafted for new LPC and PSNC Members about PLOT's purpose, and where the notes can be accessed.

Item 11 – LPC TAPR Progress

11.1 James Wood gave an update on the progress LPCs have made in responding to the RSG proposals.

11.2 PSNC has produced a detailed Toolkit for LPCs to support them with their transformation journeys. Good progress has been made by LPCs, with all LPCs due to adopt the new Model LPC Constitution by July 2023.

11.3 The number of LPCs is likely to reduce from 68 to 49 by April 2024. The hope was that this figure could be achieved by July 2023, but some LPCs have indicated the need for more time. A few LPCs have expressed a desire to merge with neighboring LPCs, but other LPCs in their region have been unable or unwilling to move forward to support them at this time.. These LPCs are unlikely to be viable in the longer term making future LPC mergers likely and there will need to be ongoing focused support for these LPCs.

11.4 Many LPCs are currently writing to their contractors to give them notice of a special meeting to vote to amend the LPC constitution. By mid-March, PSNC should have a much clearer picture of what the future landscape of LPCs will look like.

11.5 James Wood gave a snapshot/status update on the progress made by each of the LPCs across the different regions. The slide deck will be made available on the iBabs portal after the meeting.

11.6 An updated version of the LPC Finance Guide was published in the Autumn of last year and a provision within the Model LPC Constitution requires LPCs to follow this. PSNC will also be running a session with LPC Treasurers later this year.

11.7 The Chair formally thanked James and the team for the considerable work they have undertaken to date in supporting LPCs with the TAPR programme.

Item 12 – PSNC elections contractor support

12.1 Briefings have been published on the process for the PSNC elections and a webinar for contractors will be held in due course.

Item 13 – LPC Communications

13.1 The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda.

Item 14 – PSNC and LPC Events 2023

14.1 The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda.

14.2 Jamie Gilliam gave an overview of the plans for this years PSNC and LPC Events.

14.3 James Wood noted that the May meeting of PSNC and LPCs is usually operationally focused and that the Annual LPC Conference has been pushed back from the usual September date to October to help with the workload of LPCs and give new LPC and PSNC Members time to settle into their roles.

14.4 The Chair suggested that an update on the PSNC Vision Work should be given at the May meeting of PSNC and LPCs, and a soft skills session could be run to support LPCs with managing transformation and change. Continuation of the Conference Working Group will be important.

Item 15 – Any other business

15.1 None recorded.

Date of next meeting

At or around the next committee meeting on 19th or 20th April 2023