



Communications & Public Affairs (CPA) Subcommittee Minutes

Date: Friday 15th September 2023

Start time: 10:30am

Location: Zoom meeting

Note: These minutes have been redacted to protect conversations around items of a confidential nature.

Members present: Tricia Kennerley (Chair), David Broome, Clare Kerr, Fin McCaul, Stephen Thomas.

In attendance: Sharlyn Beltran, Alastair Buxton, Mike Dent, Daniel Fladvad, Jas Heer, Gordon Hockey, Zoe Long, Melinda Mabbutt, Janet Morrison (CEO), Sian Retallick, Adam Thomas (Luther Pendragon – attended for first half of meeting), Adeola Wilson.

Apologies: Jay Patel, Prakash Patel

Conflicts of interest: none declared.

Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 14th July 2023 were approved by the subcommittee.

Matters arising: There were no matters arising.

ACTION 1-3: These actions have all been completed with post-Committee communications and polling data, as well as a statement on the public sector deal all published on the website.

ACTION 4: The communication plan for the vision was shared with the Committee by email and is being implemented around the launch on 19th September.

ACTION 5: We have stopped using the term 'members' in our sector communications and the style guide is being finalised with the changes discussed by the subcommittee.



Item 1: Subcommittee Workplan

1.1 The subcommittee noted the progress on the workplan and the chair thanked the team for the large amount of ongoing work as indicated in the subcommittee papers.

Item 2: Outputs from Committee Meeting

2.1 The subcommittee discussed the communications outputs following the Committee Meeting which will need to cover the negotiations, economic review, strategic discussions and governance. The subcommittee agreed that a meeting summary should be produced as last time with content to feed into the draft slides for the Regional Representatives. This should make clear that we had a big agenda as we reach a critical stage of negotiations, and that was a real focus on the big issues pharmacies are facing and on finding strategic solutions.

2.2 Resources about price concessions and medicine supply issues, including videos and infographics, will also be released to support pharmacy owners and promote engagement.

2.3 The subcommittee stressed the need to promote the upcoming pharmacy owner engagement event and wanted to provide more resources to help them to understand complex topics – such as around the Drug Tariff – over the coming months.

ACTION 1: Post-Committee communications to go live after the engagement event on September 18th.

Item 3: Public Affairs Activity Plan (this item was taken first, to allow Luther Pendragon to join the discussion)

3.1 Luther Pendragon briefed the subcommittee on the development of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat manifestos and the challenges posed by the current spending environment, which are expected to persist even under a Labour government. All parties are looking for low-cost high-impact policies.

3.2 The current Spending Review goes through to April 2025, ie after the General Election, and it is not yet known what approaches to spending reviews any new Government would take.



3.3 The significance of manifesto pledges was noted, along with the need to influence these, and subcommittee members noted the work that is already ongoing in this area and the need to put together a manifesto of pharmacy policies together quickly to help with this work.

3.4 The subcommittee agreed with the public affairs action plan, and suggested that the work being done on the value of pharmacy should be used for further work and to inform briefings when this is ready. If there is a delay, then some interim findings on data that we already have – such as on COVID services and flu vaccinations – could perhaps be used in the short-term.

3.5 The subcommittee noted the vision communications plan and messaging which had previously been shared.

ACTION 2: The Public Affairs Workplan to be implemented, with first steps being the launch of the vision in line with the communications plan, party conference events, and preparation of a pharmacy manifesto briefing.

Item 4: Save our Pharmacies campaign

4.1 The Subcommittee supported the draft plan for the Save Our Pharmacies campaign noting that the campaign remains important as conditions for pharmacy owners continue to be extremely difficult.

4.2 The trade media calls for the APPG to lead work on a Manifesto were noted but the subcommittee felt that that any APPG work should be supported alongside sector work on a Manifesto, not done instead of it. Having our own sector Manifesto will allow us to define exactly the asks that we want and mean that we can use our manifesto for wider influencing work such as with the political parties, Health Select Committee, and possible collaboration with the Daily Mail's campaign.

4.3 The public affairs and communications teams from the national pharmacy organisations are scheduled to meet on 21st September.



ACTION 3: Work on a pharmacy manifesto to go ahead, hopefully jointly with the other pharmacy bodies pending discussion later this month.

ACTION 4: Work to support the APPG in all its work to continue.

Item 5: Annual Report

5.1 Subcommittee members liked the look and feel of the annual report in the new branding and agreed that associated materials like animations would enhance engagement. They were concerned about how many people would read the report and the need to track engagement with its content was noted.

ACTION 5: The annual report to be published this month, with engagement of the different elements of the report to be tracked, especially digital assets associated with it.

Item 6: Pharmacy Communications and Engagement

6.1 The report paper was noted and an update given to say that the recent Medicines Supply and Concessions Briefing Webinar will very soon be available on-demand on the website. Infographics and other associated resources are also being prepared.

6.2 The webinar had received positive feedback and pharmacy owners were receptive to Committee Members being present on the panel. The chat function had been disabled in the webinar which Committee Members felt was helpful: Slido was used instead and this helped to maintain a focused and constructive platform for attendees to share their points. It was also positive for people to see how our teams work hard behind the scenes.

ACTION 6: Use of Slido and involvement of Committee Members to be repeated at future webinars including the engagement event on Monday 18th September.

Item 7: Public Affairs and Influencing

7.1 The report paper in the agenda was noted, and the work done to brief MPs for the very helpful and constructive Parliamentary debate on community pharmacies was highlighted. A number of



MPs had been briefed by Community Pharmacy England ahead of the debate (which we had supported Peter Aldous with) and had then supported the need for further investment and support for the sector in their speeches and this was helpful. The new Shadow pharmacy minister's team have already reached out to the office following the debate.

7.2 A new public affairs agency to provide Secretariat functions for the APPG has been chosen following discussion with the Chair of the Group.