



Community Pharmacy England Minutes

Date: 12 September 2024

Start time: 9am

Location: 14 Hosier Lane, London, EC1A 9LQ

Members present: Sue Killen (Chair), David Broome, Peter Cattee, Ian Cubbin, Phil Day, Marc Donovan, Sami Hanna, Jas Heer, Tricia Kennerley, Clare Kerr, Ifti Khan, Fin McCaul, Niamh McMillan, Prakash Patel, Olivier Picard, Adrian Price, Sian Retallick, Anil Sharma, Ian Strachan, Gary Warner

In attendance: Janet Morrison (Chief Executive), Shiné Brownsell, Alastair Buxton, Jack Cresswell, Mike Dent, Michael Digby, Daniel Fladvad, Gordon Hockey, Zoe Long, Melinda Mabbutt, Cathy Monaghan, David Onuoha, Stephanie Reeves, Rosie Taylor, Rob Thomas, James Wood, Katrina Worthington

Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Lindsey Fairbrother, Jay Patel, Beran Patel, Stephen Thomas and Faisal Tuddy.

Papers for report: The information in the agenda was noted.

Conflicts or declaration of interest: No new conflicts or declarations of interest were made.

Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on 27th June 2024 were approved by the Committee.

Matters arising: The Chair noted the action points from the last meeting. The Services Team is still open to feedback on the points mentioned in the paper.

Welcome from the Chair: The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chair reflected on the new Government and the importance of building relationships with new Ministers.

The Chair commented on the value of the work being carried out on the spending review project and the independent economic review, as health will be top of the agenda of the Government's next spending review. The Chair noted that messaging from Government so far indicated that additional funding would be limited.



The Chair referred to the published report of Lord Darzi on the NHS and the strong messages that were coming through. The work the Committee had done and the approach taken in the last year, will help the sector to be influential.

The Chair commented on the positive feedback received on the pharmacy owner roadshows, which took place in July.

The Chair was hopeful that the Government will find a way to see what community pharmacy does and to support the sector, as community pharmacy is part of community healthcare.

Item 1: Subcommittee reports

- 1.1 Key points of the discussion at the Audit and Risk (A&R) subcommittee were presented by David Broome.

Marc Donovan was appointed as Vice-Chair of the subcommittee.

The subcommittee approved the management accounts and commended Romali Wickramasinghe on the detailed and comprehensive management accounts that she produced.

Referring to the financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2024, David reminded the Committee of the importance of taking the time to check the accounts as the Committee are responsible for these. The Auditors confirmed that they were content with the accounts. It was confirmed that the Chief Executive will write to the Chair that the Executive were also content with the accounts.

The following recommendations were approved by the Committee:

- That the financial statements for 2023–24 be agreed and signed.

- 1.2 Key points of the discussion at the Governance and People (G&P) subcommittee were presented by Adrian Price.

The subcommittee discussed the need for an Appointments Panel to lead the process of appointing a new Chair of Community Pharmacy England, by September 2025. It was recommended that the Chair of the G&P subcommittee should lead the panel, which should include three other members of the Committee, and at least one LPC member.

The Committee approved this recommendation.

The subcommittee discussed the need for a Remuneration Panel to deal with remuneration issues as described in the G&P minutes. It was recommended that the group should consist of the Committee Chair, Vice Chair, Chief Executive and the Chair of the Audit and Risk subcommittee, maintaining a balance between multiples and independents. It was noted that if there was no balance, that the Vice Chair of the Committee may balance the group, as appropriate. The Committee approved this recommendation.

The subcommittee discussed the composition of the Committee. The views from various sources were considered, as well as looking at sector ownership data which indicated that there was a need for change. Adrian commented that a change to the Constitution and Rules, as appropriate, would take time.

Adrian indicated to the Committee the proposal outlined in the G&P minutes, to appoint two observers to the Committee, both community pharmacy owners with 10 or more NHS pharmacy premises in England. He said the subcommittee recognised that there was a gap in the voice of this group of contractors on the Committee and wanted to find an immediate temporary answer while discussions on appropriate changes to the Constitution and Rules were considered, a process that should start straight away. He said the issues also linked to LPCs and in reaching these recommendations the subcommittee had sought to recommend what was equitable to all concerned.

It was noted that the Committee would need to agree the process for appointing observers, who will be bound by the same code of conduct and rules on declaration of interests and confidentiality as Committee members.

It was asked if there had been a discussion with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) over the representation on the Committee. The Chief Executive confirmed that DHSC had been briefed on the composition issues and that they are regularly updated.

Adrian said he understood that this proposal may not satisfy everyone, but the points raised were reflected in the subcommittee's discussion. The subcommittee wanted to move forward quickly and suggested a further discussion to take place at the next meeting. There was a need to start the discussion straight away.

It was commented that representatives on the Committee represent their sub-sector but needed to act on behalf of the whole sector when making decisions,

It was acknowledged that change was needed quickly, but concern was expressed that this decision might not meet the aspirations of those affected by the decision.

It was commented that market volatility is continuing, and sector ownership should be re-visited in 12 months. Adrian acknowledged that this issue needed further work:

It was noted that Gordon Hockey would write to the IPA to communicate the Committee's decision.

There was reference to RSG discussions and some of the options discussed but not agreed at that time.

The strength of feeling on the issue by the trade bodies was acknowledged and that there is a need to get on with the process.

Following a vote, 21 members voted in favour of moving forward with the proposal and 3 members voted against (this included proxy votes).

- 1.3 Key points of the discussion at the Service Development (SDS) subcommittee were presented by Fin McCaul.

The Committee agreed that the following broad policy should be adopted:

- That all services involving the use of PGDs should be able to be provided by pharmacy technicians where the individual pharmacy wishes a pharmacy technician to provide the service and the individual pharmacy technician has satisfactorily demonstrated their competence to provide the service to the pharmacy owner.

- 1.4 Key points of the discussion at the Legislation and Regulatory subcommittee (LRS) were presented by Ian Cubbin.

- 1.5 Key points of the discussion at the Funding and Contract (FunCon) subcommittee were presented by Peter Cattee.

- 1.6 Key points of the discussion at the LPC and Contractor Support (LCS) subcommittee

were presented by Ifti Khan.

The subcommittee discussed the positive feedback received on the regional LPC meetings and pharmacy owner roadshows. The future of regional events was discussed and also the possibility of additional regional communications activity through the year. There was also a request for more Committee members to attend in future to support regional representatives. This will need to be considered as part of the planning process for 2024/25.

The subcommittee discussed the plans for the Conference of LPC Representatives 2024, due to take place on Thursday 7th November 2024 as a physical in-person event, at BMA House in London. It was noted that invitees included Stephen Kinnock MP, the Minister of State for Care, Department of Health and Social Care, and David Webb, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England. Ifti explained that this year there would be an end of day drinks reception for LPC delegates and a range of stakeholders, with a theme of the session being 'one year on' from the launch of The King's Fund and Nuffield Trust Vision for community pharmacy.

The subcommittee reviewed the approach to inviting LPC leaders (Chairs and Chief Officers) to observe some of the work of the Committee, to improve transparency. The feedback so far from LPC observers had been positive. It was agreed to continue with the approach so that we cover all 10 regions during the 2023/2024 -2026/2027 term of office, using the format that has already been established. The next observers from the East of England region are due to join the November 2024 meeting.

Whilst the Transforming Pharmacy Representation Programme (TAPR) had concluded, transformation resources are available for LPCs still undergoing discussions about the future. A further merger between Swindon and Wiltshire LPC and Avon LPC had been approved from April 2025. An update on the North West was provided and they will continue to be supported in their discussions.

- 1.7 Key points from the discussion at the Communications and Public Affairs (CPA) subcommittee were presented by Tricia Kennerley.

It was noted that the Communications team had been engaging stakeholders and MPs following the election. Tricia commented on the positive outcome of the meeting

between the Chief Executive and Stephen Kinnock MP and the Parliamentary event that took place on Tuesday 10th September. The Communications team continue with their messaging about the sector being in crisis and referred to a news story that morning on pharmacy closures. Tricia thanked the team for their continued hard work on this.

ACTION:

- The Chief Executive to write to the Chair regarding the financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2024.
- Gordon Hockey to write to the Independent Pharmacies Association regarding the next steps agreed on the composition of the Committee.
- Work to be taken forward as quickly as possible on Committee composition.

Item 2: PA Consulting Spending Review Project: Update

- 2.1 Mike Dent reminded the Committee that PA Consulting were working with Community Pharmacy England to act as a 'critical friend' during negotiations, to provide negotiating training to the Committee and to assist with project work. Mike explained that the project work has been focused on developing a submission to influence HMG's next spending review. Government's investment appraisal process was complex and PA Consulting were assisting with making a case for extra investment in HMG's preferred terms. It was noted that PA Consulting also worked on our submission to Lord Darzi's investigation.
- 2.2 PA Consulting provided an update on their support to Community Pharmacy England, to help influence the Government's Spending Review. The presentation included an overview of HM Treasury's Five Case Model and how PA Consulting are applying those principles to set out the case for community pharmacy funding.
- 2.3 They then talked about what services community pharmacy could provide if invested in, to support primary care recovery, improving prevention, public health and economic growth. This covered what viable options the business case must include and a shortlist of five potential options to capture a range of scenarios.
- 2.4 They also identified the main drivers for services with high economic impact. This analysis was based on separate work on the value of pharmacy. A member agreed that it was a

good idea to revisit the PwC report on the value of community pharmacy.

- 2.5 A member commented that there was a huge amount that could be done around secondary prevention.
- 2.6 There was agreement that this was a big piece of work designed to look at the medium to long term and provide input into the Spring spending review and beyond. The Committee wanted it made clear that if Ministers wanted new solutions, then the sector needed to be properly funded to stabilise the current financial crisis. This messaging was already being used in all of our influencing work.

Item 3: Independent Economic Review

- 3.1 Mike Dent provided an update on the Independent Economic Review project. This included Community Pharmacy England's obligations, the structure, key research questions and the risks.
- 3.2 Mike commented on the importance of ensuring that Frontier Economics understood the diversity of the sector, funding history and the current financial situation. The finish date of the project is expected at the end of January 2025.

Item 4: Government Relations and Negotiations

- 4.1 The Chief Executive provided a recap on the negotiations before the General Election, the DHSC funding proposals and Community Pharmacy England's negotiating position and the priorities around funding allocation.
- 4.2 An update was provided on Pharmacy First and on the progress of discussions on the monthly payment thresholds.
- 4.3 The Committee also reviewed the results from the pre-Committee polling on the monthly threshold. Despite the many challenges with the launch of Pharmacy First, it was noted that this was the most successful service launch the sector has undertaken and was a significant achievement.
- 4.4 It was noted that a discussion had taken place with DHSC about acceptable levels of pharmacies meeting the threshold. The Chief Executive commented that Ministers should want as many pharmacies as possible to be registered and committed to delivering the

service.

- 4.5 A member asked about further promotion of the Pharmacy First service and Alastair Buxton confirmed that the national pharmacy bodies were engaged in discussions with the marketing team at NHS England; however, at the time of the meeting detailed proposals were yet to be seen.
- 4.6 Zoe Long briefed the Committee on the results of the polling on the impacts of the GP Collective Action, including results on the pressure tracker. It was noted that almost 4000 pharmacies took part in the advice audit that ran through summer. Zoe also discussed the results from the YouGov polling. Zoe confirmed that the data will be shared with DHSC and NHS England.
- 4.7 The Chief Executive updated the Committee on the meeting with Stephen Kinnock MP.
- 4.8 The Chief Executive provided a recap on the key issues for the outstanding 2024/25 negotiations. At the time of the meeting no letter had been received from DHSC as they did not have an updated negotiating mandate and discussions linked to the spending review are ongoing across Government.

Item 5: Any other business

- 5.1 The Chair thanked the team and Committee for their hard work.
- 5.2 A member requested that the format of the Committee meetings be considered. The Chair commented that the timings of the meetings would need to be considered, as there was uncertainty at this stage on where the Committee will be with negotiations. The Chair commented that evening meetings may also be needed once the Committee entered negotiations. Committee feedback on Committee and subcommittee timings was however welcome.