

Briefing 006/25: Summary of February 2025 Committee Meeting

Community Pharmacy England met in London for a full Committee Meeting on 5th and 6th February 2025. For the first time, recently appointed non-CCA multiple observers joined the meeting. As contributing observers, they participated fully in both Committee and subcommittee discussions, directly informing decision-making alongside the other three existing elected non-CCA multiple Committee members.

Committee discussions covered key topics including in-depth consideration of the 2024/25 and 2025/26 negotiations, as well as Community Pharmacy England's budget, levy and workplans for the coming financial year. The Committee also considered ongoing matters relating to governance and composition.

The Committee were joined by LPC leaders from the East of England region for part of the meeting. LPC attendees had the chance to talk with Committee Members, observe some subcommittee meetings and provide feedback from their local pharmacy owners and regions.

Overview of the full Committee Meeting

The full Committee considered the following topics at the February meeting.

2024/25 and 2025/26 CPCF negotiations

In late January 2025, [the Department of Health and Social Care entered discussions](#) regarding the 2024/25 and 2025/26 contractual framework with Community Pharmacy England. Much of the Committee meeting was devoted to these negotiations. The Committee spent a significant amount of time analysing and discussing the initial offer put to us and providing a mandate for the Negotiating Team on the key issues, priorities and red lines.

The Negotiating Team are continuing in-depth negotiations with DHSC and NHS England. All CPE Committee Members are fully aware of the sector's urgent need to resolve negotiations as robustly and speedily as possible, and are focused on securing the best outcomes for pharmacy owners.

Pharmacy owners who want to understand more about the process of negotiations can read our [funding and negotiation infographics](#), which detail how the negotiating process works and how



Community Pharmacy England works to influence pharmacy funding decisions long before entering the negotiating room. These include information about who influences pharmacy funding across Government, the NHS, and beyond, who sits on our Negotiating Team, and how we work to shape funding decisions.

In response to pressure from Community Pharmacy England during previous CPCF negotiations, NHS England commissioned an independent economic review of the sector. The review, or Economic Analysis, is intended to inform thinking about pharmacy funding and the cost of delivering the NHS service.

As agreed with NHS England, Community Pharmacy England considered draft findings of the review at this February Committee meeting, as part of the CPCF negotiations. We have submitted further comments to the report's authors this week and the Committee will consider the final report once completed, as part of this ongoing negotiation process.

On the negotiations, Janet Morrison, Chief Executive of Community Pharmacy England, said:

“This is an extremely stressful and worrying time for all pharmacy owners. However, due to the Government’s strict confidentiality requirements, we are unable to say anything further about the negotiations, or to offer any running commentary, until an announcement is made.

“As with every negotiation, we are working to secure the best possible outcome for the sector and after detailed negotiations the full Committee will decide whether to accept or reject the final offer. We will announce the outcome – and our analysis of what it means – as soon as possible once negotiations conclude.”

Budget, Levy and Workplans

The situation for pharmacy owners is incredibly difficult and Community Pharmacy England will do everything it can to continue to protect and increase pharmacy funding, influence positive and urgent change for the sector, and deliver our objectives for community pharmacy. As well as the short-term imperative, we need to continue to build a long-term, sustainable future for the sector.

The current national negotiations could not be more critical as we seek to agree funding for the sector but, beyond these negotiations, work continues on other core workstreams. Critically this includes ongoing work to influence macro-Government decision-making such as the Comprehensive Spending Review and NHS 10-year Health Plan which will affect the medium and long-term future for the sector.



This programme is supported by economic analysis and evidence-building with PA Consulting which makes the economic case for investment in community pharmacy.

We also continue to undertake key financial assurance processes – which ensure pharmacies are paid correctly and deliver over £100 million worth of savings through Drug Tariff changes every year – as well as to support the delivery and maximisation of income from services, to deliver regulatory changes which help the sector, and our influencing programme continues, ensuring that we take advantage of any political opportunities – such as that presented by the Primary Care Recovery Plan, which ultimately brought significant new monies into community pharmacy.

We also continue to support the community pharmacy network and LPCs effectively, providing more support on local commissioning as well as support on the running of LPCs and local influencing work. We will continue to ensure that pharmacy owners can feed into our thinking through communications and engagement, working closely with the LPC network – this will include engagement after the outcome of the negotiations, and a further set of regional events which will be open to all pharmacy owners.

Since rebranding to Community Pharmacy England (as part of the [RSG proposals](#) pharmacy owners voted for in summer 2022) and investing in key areas of work such as negotiation support, economic analysis and political influencing, we have been able to engage with Government and the NHS more effectively, focusing on both the value of community pharmacy and the serious challenges it faces. Meanwhile, [our strategy to improve the outlook for community pharmacy](#) has delivered key outcomes in investment, clinical services and political influence.

[Community Pharmacy England's Investment Priorities](#)

This briefing note sets out the key ways in which rebalanced levies have been invested by Community Pharmacy England in recent years, and some of the outcomes for pharmacy owners.

[Community Pharmacy England's Impact](#)

This infographic provides an overview of what we have achieved, the benefits secured, and the financial savings made in areas such as Pharmacy First negotiations, margin adjustments, audit and Drug Tariff work, media and public affairs activity, and our support for pharmacy owners and LPCs.

You can also [read our annual reports and accounts here](#) and our [mid-year review for 2024/25 here](#).

At the meeting, Committee Members assessed Community Pharmacy England's key goals and priorities for 2025/26, which include any remaining work on the 2024/25 and 2025/26 negotiations and its communication and implementation, ongoing economic work to ensure sector sustainability, engaging



in the NHS 10-year Health Plan and Government Spending Review, working to improve medicines supply issues, advancing the Primary Care Recovery Plan services, and more.

In reviewing the budget for 2025/26, the Committee also considered a recommendation from its Audit and Risk Subcommittee to a 2% uplift in the levy collected from LPCs from April 2025.

Community Pharmacy England has focused on cost control for many years, making use of its reserves where possible. This has been overachieved in most areas, with savings made possible by capping the use of specialised consultancy services and staff resources, and limiting the number of events and conferences held or attended. However, as our main source of income, the levies from LPCs, are the only way that we can achieve the additional capacity and resource needed to deliver important priorities and a demanding work programme at such a crucial time for community pharmacy.

Noting this need to invest in Community Pharmacy England's critical activities, the Committee agreed to make a 2% increase to the levy from LPCs so as to sustain our current level of activity and ambition. The 2% uplift, spread across 50 LPCs, aims to make sure we can continue to be able to resource our work and fulfil our role effectively. It is expected most LPCs will be able to absorb the increase without passing it onto pharmacy owners, as we have issued new guidance for them on managing reserves more flexibly.

David Broome, Chair of the Audit and Risk Subcommittee, said:

"Community Pharmacy England has much to do in 2025/26 as it continues in its mission to improve the outlook for community pharmacy. The national negotiations could not be more critical: our top priority is to deliver an improved contractual framework to address the current funding crisis and secure a stable future.

"The Committee wanted to do everything possible to keep any increase as low as we could, and so measures have already been taken to lower our reserves and introduce efficiencies. In reaching a decision on levy, the Committee was also assured that the increase is affordable for LPCs, with the majority not having to pass it on to pharmacy owners, who are continuing to face severe financial pressures."

Governance and Composition

Has Modi, Managing Director at Jardines (UK), and Mayank Patel, Director and Superintendent Pharmacist of Pearl Chemist Group Ltd., were appointed as non-CCA multiple observers on the Community Pharmacy England Committee in December 2024 to improve representation for pharmacy



owners with 10 or more pharmacies. They joined Committee and subcommittee discussions as contributing observers. Further information is included in the [news story announcing their appointment](#).

The new observer appointments were part of a process to help rebalance the multiple half of the Committee's composition and include more pharmacy owners with 10 or more pharmacies (10+ Multiples). The Governance and People (G&P) Subcommittee had previously identified that this needed to be addressed due to a significant change in sector ownership since the last elections to the Committee in 2023.

During the meeting, the Committee, including the two observers, discussed a recommendation from the G&P Subcommittee on proposals to change the Committee's composition and constitution, as well as those of the Local Pharmaceutical Committees (LPCs). These proposals seek to address permanently sector ownership changes, and more clearly define 10+ Multiples, and are intended to provide Community Pharmacy England's position, which will be the starting point for a period of consultation with interested parties from across the sector, including LPCs and other sector bodies.

The time needed to implement these changes, as well as their scale and impact, mean that it would not be practicable to introduce them to Community Pharmacy England and LPCs mid-term. However, the impact of the sector ownership changes on the Committee's representation is mitigated by the temporary appointment of the two non-CCA 10+ multiple observers, whose appointments are confirmed until March 2027.

Further information on the consultation process will be provided shortly.

Engaging with Pharmacy Owners

Pharmacy Pressures Survey

The usual Committee polling of the sector was replaced on this occasion by our annual Pharmacy Pressures Survey, launched on 17th January 2025. The survey consists of two parts – one for Pharmacy Business Owners/Head Office Representatives and the other for pharmacy teams. Community Pharmacy England is urging all those across the sector to participate in the Pressures Survey to support ongoing efforts in monitoring and quantifying the impact of the challenges facing the sector, while also helping to make the case for community pharmacy. Every contribution is vital: [Pharmacy Pressures Survey 2025: It's time to share your views](#)



Discussions from Governance Subcommittees

Note: most subcommittees met ahead of the main Committee meeting, allowing any recommendations or overarching decisions to be put to the full Committee for wider approval.

Audit and Risk (A&R) Subcommittee

The subcommittee considered Community Pharmacy England's budget and draft workplans for 2025/26, recommending that these be accepted – pending Committee and subcommittee discussions. The budget was put to the main Committee alongside an increase of the LPC levy by 2% from April 2025, recognising the need to make provision for appropriate resourcing to deliver the ambitious but critical plans to improve the outlook for community pharmacy.

Governance and People (G&P) Subcommittee

With the end of the Community Pharmacy England Chair's term of office approaching, the subcommittee agreed a timeline for recruiting a new Chair. Also discussed were proposals for changing the Committee's composition, recommending to the full Committee that these proposals be put out for consultation with LPCs and the sector bodies.

Updates from Advisory and Policy Subcommittees

Service Development Subcommittee (SDS)

Proposals from NHS England for a new process for the updating of the list of medicines eligible for the New Medicines Service were considered.

The subcommittee also reviewed the findings of the skills gap analysis completed by subcommittee members and discussed whether there was a need to appoint external members to SDS. It was concluded that the recent allocation of two further Committee members to the subcommittee and seeking additional feedback on services from pharmacy teams via user groups would address the identified gaps.

SDS also received updates on policy developments related to pharmacy vaccination services and reviewed progress on the rollout of the Pharmacy First and the other clinical services, and the support being provided to pharmacy owners and LPCs.

Legislation and Regulatory Subcommittee (LRS)

The subcommittee considered several key issues including those around the NHS Pharmaceutical Regulations for hub and spoke dispensing and those pharmacy owners have to follow when seeking changes to their core opening hours. It was also noted that less than 100 pharmacy owners will be subject to a post-payment verification (PPV) exercise on Pharmacy First.



Funding and Contract (FunCon) Subcommittee

The subcommittee reviewed a variety of key issues including the current price change timetable for branded products, Pharmacy First information from NHSBSA and DHSC, Cat M prices and the impact of the transition to the new Category A pricing mechanism. The sub-committee also received updates about the Margin survey, monthly price concessions, the progress of plans to align current special container rules with HMRs, and general funding issues.

LPC and Contractor Support (LCS) Subcommittee

The subcommittee reviewed the proposed new terms of reference, LPC support preferences for 2025/26, and the upcoming events programme. Additionally, the most recent Conference of LPCs (November 2024) and the Pharmacy Show (October 2024) were discussed, along with key highlights from the LPC HR and finance survey. Plans for 2025/25 Forum of LPC Chairs were discussed including the election of Janice Perkins (Chair, Community Pharmacy Greater Manchester) as the Vice-chair. The subcommittee also addressed the budget and support for LPC finances.

Communications and Public Affairs (CPA) Subcommittee

The subcommittee reviewed its 2025/26 objectives and approved more detailed plans on public affairs and media/comms activity for the coming months.

Next Steps

The Committee, who are all pharmacy owners or representatives of pharmacy companies themselves, know that this is an extremely stressful and worrying time for all pharmacy owners. The current national negotiations could not be more critical, and the Negotiating Team is working to secure the best possible outcome for the sector – and to announce it as soon as possible once negotiations conclude.

Alongside this, our core workstreams to monitor payments and funding delivery, supporting the delivery of services and regulatory changes, and influencing policymakers will continue. In 2025/26 this will include economic work to ensure sector sustainability, engaging in the NHS 10-year Health Plan and Government Spending Review, working to improve medicines supply issues, advancing the Primary Care Recovery Plan services, and more.

And at the heart of this are all pharmacy owners. We will continue to provide opportunities for you to feed into our thinking and help support our work to improve the outlook for community pharmacy.

If you have any questions or require more information, please contact: comms.team@cpe.org.uk