

Meeting of NRCPD Board 23 July 2014

**Board Members Present:** Huw Vaughan Thomas (Chair), Stuart Anderson, Gill Croft, Craig Crowley, Jim Edwards, Heather Fiskien, Michael Guthrie, Katherine Phipps, Sandra Verkuyten, Jenny White, David Wolfenden

**Secretariat:** Janice Spalding/Angela Nunn

**Sign Language Interpreters:** Peter Shilston and Darren Townsend-Handscomb

**Speech to Text Reporter:** Susie Lithman-Romeo

**In attendance:** Lindsay Foster/Dan Sumners

**1. Welcome and apologies Action**

No apologies were received. Lindsay Foster, Signature Chief Operating Officer and Dan Sumners, Signature Senior Policy Advisor attended as observers.

The Chair welcomed Stuart Anderson and Gill Croft to their first meeting. It was noted that this was Kath's last meeting. As this was Janice's last meeting, Huw thanked Janice for all the work she had done as Interim Registrar and for developing the role over the past year.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

None declared.

**3. Chairman's and CEO's Remarks**

The CEO mentioned that a lot of work is being carried out around stakeholder engagement including reports from Dan. It was noted that the reports of the meetings with ASLI, VLP and SASLI were published on the NRCPD website. Further discussion in relation to SASLI would be covered under agenda item 10.

The Chair added that Dan would summarise the results of the survey with registrants later in the meeting.

**4. Minutes of last meeting – 3 March 2014**

The minutes of 3 March 2014 meeting were accepted as a correct record. It was noted that the meeting had not been quorate. Any decisions had therefore been endorsed by email after the meeting.

**Matters arising**

DBS requirements. An action point from the March meeting was that NRCPD would explain to registrants the difference between CRB and DBS requirements. This has been done via a series of postings on the NRCPD website. NRCPD has also responded to letters and emails in relation to this on an individual basis.

NRCPD is not entitled to ask to see DBS certificates as it is not the employer. However, it still requires registrants to have a DBS certificate which should be available to employers or agencies if requested. This is to protect the public and service user.

**5. Options appraisal Action**

- **Internal assessment to strengthen NRCPD regulatory effectiveness**

Paper 2 was circulated with the agenda giving an update on how NRCPD is progressing towards meeting the PSA standards. Based on the work done so far it was agreed that NRCPD was not ready at present to seek PSA accreditation. However it will use the standards as a set of criterion against which it can measure itself.

It was agreed that NRCPD should not raise expectations of how long statutory regulation will take. To be realistic it needs to concentrate on the following 2 key standards over the next year to move forward:

- Can the organisation demonstrate financial sustainability? JE/LF
- Does the organisation recognise decisions regarding professional conduct made by regulatory bodies and other accredited registers when deciding whether a person should be admitted to, kept on or removed from the register? DS

In the meantime it was agreed to continue with the work being done to strengthen how NRCPD is run by completing the review of the code of conduct and complaints procedure as this would have a demonstrable and practical impact.

- **Stakeholder engagement report and action plan**

Paper 3 was circulated with the agenda outlining the proposed plan for stakeholder engagement over the coming months. It was agreed that more regular communication with registrants was needed. It was also important that all stakeholders are updated on the discussion regarding self-assessment and that the ultimate aim for NRCPD remains to achieve statutory regulation and be fit for purpose in this regard while prioritising the actions it takes over the next year.

Dan summarised the findings of the recent communication professionals survey. He will circulate the full report to board members and a revised version will be published on the NRCPD website. DS

## 6. **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

- **CPD audit report and CPD strategy**

Paper 4 was circulated with the agenda. It was agreed that due to the difficulties experienced by some registers in achieving the CPD requirements, the requirement would be frozen at 24 hours (a minimum of 12 to be structured) from 2015 onwards for all communication professionals.

Board members discussed moving from an inputs based CPD system to an outcomes based one. It was agreed to keep the CPD system currently in place (structured and unstructured) but work towards introducing an outcomes based CPD model in January 2016.

Discussion took place around the difficulty for STTRs and others to find opportunities of structured CPD. It was agreed to set up training days for a pilot group (STTRs, notetakers, interpreters for deafblind people) to consider the **Action**

reflective practice CPD model as a pilot for the outcomes based model. Attendees of the training would be able to record this as their structured hours. Kath Phipps, Stuart Anderson, David Wolfenden and Gill Croft will develop a CPD session in which participants will consider the reflective model and make some recommendations.

KP/SA/  
DW/  
GC

**NB** – The board agreed to defer discussion relating to the recommendations in item 8 of the CPD audit report to the next meeting.

## 7. Governance

### • **Proposal on board composition and recruitment**

Paper 5 was circulated with the agenda outlining proposed changes to bring the composition of the board in line with other regulators. It was proposed and agreed that the NRCPD board should in future consist of 4 professional members (registrants) and 4 lay members (non-registrants), plus a lay chair.

Subject to Signature endorsement it was agreed that a recruitment exercise would take place over the autumn period. It was also agreed that a wider governance review should take place to clarify the relationship with Signature and the financial stability of NRCPD.

### • **NRCPD letter of authority 2014-15 and annual report topics**

Paper 6 was circulated with the agenda. Members agreed the proposed approach to the style and textual content for the annual report. It was agreed that the draft annual report would be sent to Huw for consideration prior to wider circulation to board members.

DS

A draft letter of authority for 2014-15 was circulated as part of paper 6. It was agreed the targets would be amended to reflect the discussions at the meeting.

JE

## 8. Policies and procedures

### • **Returning to practise policy**

The draft returning to practise policy was circulated with the agenda. It was agreed that the policy be endorsed but as Appendix B relates to recommendations in Item 8 of the CPD Audit Report, it could not be put into full effect until after the next meeting when those recommendations would be considered.

### • **Complaints procedure**

A paper outlining changes to the draft complaints procedure was circulated with the agenda. The paper had been developed over the past 8 months with input from two lay advisors and with legal advice to better reflect current regulatory best practice and natural justice. The following proposed changes were agreed.

- that the lodging period for complaints should be 6 months but with a caveat attached that this would be at the Registrar's discretion. Not all complaints relate to assignments, for example, NRCPD could be notified that a professional has been convicted and this could be more than 6 months

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ago. In this case NRCPD may still wish to take action. The Registrar could therefore waive the 6 month limit if it involves a matter of public interest. Michael agreed to suggest a draft wording for this.

MG

- NRCPD would issue advice to communication professionals (particularly STTRs and notetakers) re keeping information relating to assignments for a particular/set period of time.
- that 2 independent case examiners should determine the next steps for the complaint after the investigation stage is complete. The Registrar should not be involved in this process.
- the use of the term “lay” would be looked at to ensure a consistency of usage in the document.

Whilst the procedure is intended for committee and internal use, a separate complaints handbook has been drafted for service users. Janice agreed to forward the draft complaints handbook to members for comment as this will be used for the consultation process.

JS

- **Code of conduct**

A draft revised code of conduct was circulated with the agenda. It was agreed that board members would send any comments to Michael within the next two weeks.

All

## 9. **Operational matters (confidential)**

- **Update on complaints and registrant numbers since last meeting/  
Types of complaints received**

Paper 10 was circulated with the agenda giving an update on complaints since the last meeting, numbers registered and a summary of the types of complaints received since 2009. It was agreed that members would email any specific queries they had on these to Angela.

## 10 **Correspondence**

Recent correspondence between NRCPD and SASLI was circulated with the agenda. It was agreed to reinstate the reciprocal agreement with SASLI though in line with current regulatory practice this would be termed an ‘equivalence process’. The details of this would need to be finalised with SASLI.

## 11. **Any other business**

Huw thanked Kath for the work she had done as a board member over the past few years.

## 12. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Monday 3 November 2014.