

The Hearing Aid Council
 Minutes of the 149th meeting of the Hearing Aid Council
 Held in CLOSED Session at
 Queens Room, Middle Temple Hall, Middle Temple Lane, London EC4Y 9AT
 On Wednesday 11th March 2009 at 10.30pm

Present:	Christopher Hughes OBE	Chairman
	Professor Gerald Armstrong-Bednall Peter Ince Denise Yates Huw Vaughan Thomas Michael Bishop Mark Georgevic John Oates Peter Ormerod Professor Deepak Prasher	
Apologies:	Christopher Raine Tony Corcoran	
In Attendance:	Sandra Verkuyten OBE Chris O'Leary Janet Hawthorne Justin Parfitt Stuart Holland Christine Suett Amicie Knowles Paul McGee Sarah Cottis Jonathan Bracken Carol Rice	Chief Executive and Accounting Officer Registrar and Director of Policy Director of Legal Services Managing Director and Director of Resources Modernisation & Transfer Manager Operations Manager Executive Assistant Administrative Assistant Executive Assistant (minute taker) Bircham Dyson Bell Department of Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform

Council Meeting
28th January 2009

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 The Chairman received apologies from Chris Raine and Tony Corcoran.

2. Minutes (Closed) of the Last Meeting Held on 28th January 2009

2.1 The minutes of the 148th meeting of the Council held on 28th January 2009 were signed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Council noted that all matters arising from the last Council meeting had been actioned.

4. Declaration of Interests

4.1 All declarations of interest are as the register.

5. Chairman/ Chief Executive and Accounting Officer Briefing

5.1 The Chairman reported that the Hearing Aid Council (HAC) executive team have been working closely with the Department of Health (DoH) to ensure the criminal offence that will be in the S60 order is sufficient. This work has now been completed and the consultation on the S60 order will hopefully begin at the end of April.

5.2 The Chairman reported that although there has been a little slippage in the timetable but the DoH has stated this will not affect the final end date of the timetable.

5.3 Following a discussion, the Council agreed to hold a meeting to fully brief members on the S60 order.

Action

5.4 The Chairman reported that following agreement from Department of Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), the HAC have invited people with relevant experience to apply for the consumer representative member of the Council. The closing date for applications was Monday 9th March.

5.5 The Chief Executive and Accounting Officer (CEO) reported Hidden Hearing has agreed to pay the HAC £85,000 costs for the judicial review and following legal advice this has been accepted.

5.6 The CEO reported meetings have been held with Patrick Boyle from the Rent Agency to learn from their experiences in merging with the Valuation Office.

5.7 The CEO reported a meeting has been held with Lorraine Gailey from Hearing Concern Link to agree working in partnership to ensure consumers receive information about the HAC.

- 5.8 A programme of consultation events has been planned with various companies, charities and government agencies to discuss the S60 order.
- 5.9 Agreed The Council agreed for members to forward any communication ideas to the Modernisation and Transfer Manager (MTM). **Action**
- 5.10 Agreed The Council agreed for any frequently asked questions to be put on to the website and be updated regularly. **Action**
- 5.11 Agreed It was agreed to notify members of the programme of events so they may attend. **Action**
- 5.12 The CEO reported following a meeting with BERR, the National Audit Office (NAO) and the HAC it was agreed the HAC will produce a set of 12 months accounts for 09/10 and a set of 4 month accounts for 10/11. The additional costs for this are still being investigated.
- 5.13 The CEO reported following a BERR family conference the HAC has approached BERR to gain support for the hearing aid industry in the current economic climate.
- 6. Reports from Committees**
- 6.1 Strategy Executive Committee**
- 6.1.1 The Chair of the Strategy Executive Committee (SEC) reported they had not met since the last Council meeting.
- 6.2 AUDIT COMMITTEE**
- 6.2.1 The Chair of the Audit Committee reported they had not met since the last Council meeting.
- 6.2.2 The Managing Director and Director of Resources (MDDoR) reported the NAO conducted the interim audit in February, they will not be issuing a management letter as there are no issues to report.
- 6.2.3 The Operations Manager reported the internal auditors conducted a further review of the data handling policies and reported that they are content with the controls in place.
- 6.3 Education and Training & Examining Body Committee**
- 6.3.1 The Chair of the Education and Training & Examining Body Committee (ETEB) reported there have been two meetings since the last Council meeting. On the 16th February, the committee reviewed the responses from the consultation on Continual Professional Development (CPD) programme.
- 6.3.2 The Committee agreed to change the CPD programme from a points based system to a reflective practice system from the 1st April 2009. The committee also agreed to conduct a 2.5% audit in July for the years 07/09 and an additional 5% audit in December for the CPD for the year

09/10.

6.3.3 The Council agreed to publish more information on the new style CPD system to RHAD's via the post and the website. **Action**
Agreed

6.3.4 On the 25th February the ETEB met and discussed:

- The 2008(2) resit exams
- Data handling procedures for the current CPD system
- Foundation Degree Approval Panel
- New route for Aptitude candidates, which will ensure they are treated fairly without a drop in the standards of competence.

6.3.5 The Council agreed once the route for aptitude candidates has been finalised the information will be published on the website. **Action**
Agreed

6.4 Investigating Committee

6.4.1 The Chair of the Investigating Committee (IC) reported they have met once since the Council meeting where they:

- closed 7 cases.
- requested more information on 1 case.
- referred 1 case to the Disciplinary Committee (DC) for a full DC.
- Referred 5 cases to the DC for a Fast Track

6.4.2 The Chair of the IC reported there are 28 open cases.

6.4.3 The Council noted there has been an increase in the number of complaints received since January.

7. Update on Transfer

7.1 The CEO introduced the Statement of Internal Control and explained that BERR require input throughout the organisation and it has a different format.

7.2 Council members discussed the areas in details and the following actions were agreed.

7.2.1 The Council agreed the members and the executive are aware of risks and take steps to protect against them. However in order to make decisions sometimes the Council require more information.

7.2.2 Members agreed there is regular access to the accounts and if they require further information then they will contact the executive team.

7.2.3 The Council noted that despite the NAO being happy with the level of control in place for the final year further controls have been established to keep a tighter control on the budget.

7.2.4 The Council agreed to receive monthly overviews of the accounts from the MDDoR. **Action**
Agreed

7.2.5 The Council agreed to grade the Board Procedures and oversight as level 4, embedded and improving.

7.3 The Council noted the risk register.

8. Management Accounts

8.1 The Council received the Month 10 management accounts.

8.2 The Council noted the HAC is working to recover as many DC debts as possible and has contacted High Court Enforcement officers to help collect the larger outstanding debts.

9. Hotel Allowances

9.1 CEO reported a request had been forwarded to her from a Council member seeking a discussion at Council about overnight accommodation allowances as they considered it was insufficient to cover the cost of hotels in London. A list of hotel accommodation available in London within the accommodation rate was circulated to members. If members are unable to locate accommodation within the rate they should contact the CEO or the admin office.

10. Close of the Meeting

10.1 There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting.

Actions arising from the Council Meeting held in closed session 11.03.09

ITEM	ACTION REQUIRED	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE
5.3	Following a discussion, the Council agreed to hold a meeting to fully brief members on the S60 order.	Modernisation and Transfer Manager	ASAP
5.9	The Council agreed for members to forward any communication ideas to the Modernisation and Transfer Manager (MTM).	Council Members	ASAP
5.10	The Council agreed for any frequently asked questions to be put on to the website and be updated regularly.	Modernisation and Transfer Manager	ASAP
5.11	It was agreed to notify members of the programme of events so they may attend.	Modernisation and Transfer Manager	ASAP
6.3.3	The Council agreed to publish more information on the new style CPD system to RHAD's via the post and the website.	Modernisation and Transfer Manager	ASAP
6.3.5	The Council agreed once the route for aptitude candidates has been finalised the information will be published on the website.	Modernisation and Transfer Manager	ASAP
7.5	The Council agreed to receive monthly overviews of the accounts from the MDDoR.	Managing Director and Director of Resources	ASAP

**Agreements arising from the Council Meeting held in exempt session
11.03.09**

ITEM	DECISIONS AGREED
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5.10	The Council agreed for any frequently asked questions to be put on to the website and be updated regularly.
5.11	It was agreed to notify members of the programme of events so they may attend.
6.3.3	The Council agreed to publish more information on the new style CPD system to RHAD's via the post and the website.
6.3.5	The Council agreed once the route for aptitude candidates has been finalised the information will be published on the website.
7.5	The Council agreed to receive monthly overviews of the accounts from the MDDoR.