
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 27 January 2021, Teams Meeting at 10am

- Present: Moira Sibbald (MS) - Lay Chair
Stacey Goldman (SG), BACP Committee Member
Ewan Malcolm (EM), Lay Committee Member
Philip Matthews (PM), Lay Committee Member
Velia Soames (VS), Lay Committee Member
- In attendance: Fiona Ballantine Dykes (FBD), Chief Professional Standards Officer
Kris Ambler (KA), Workforce Lead - *(item 09/21)*
Tasneem Dhanji (TD), Associate Solicitor - *(item 04/20 only)*
Christina Docchar (CD), Registrar
Beckie Grace (BG), Assistant Registrar - Entry and Maintenance
Julie May (JM), BACP Governor
John O'Dowd (JO'D), Assistant Registrar - Professional Conduct
Tracy Shrimpton (TS), Clerk

01/21 Welcome, Apologies and Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

The Chair welcomed the Committee members, BACP staff and Governor, Julie May, who had joined the meeting as an observer. Apologies were received from Mervyn Wynne-Jones, Tamara Abood and Jo Burns.

There were no new declarations of conflicts of interest.

02/21 Minutes of the last meeting 12 November 2020

- **Accuracy** - The minutes of the meeting were agreed as an accurate record.
- **Matters Arising** - Paper A was noted with additional comments as follows:

27/20 That members of the Committee had found it difficult to navigate to the public protection web pages and that improvement was needed. It was noted that the BACP website was currently being updated and there was still opportunity to make suggestions. An update on work relating to the Governance and Committee pages was also requested.

Action: CD/RS/AP

34/20 Committee Recruitment: The Chair requested that this be actioned as a matter of urgency. It was agreed that the Registrar would contact the Head of Operations in relation to this.

Action: CD/RS

41/20 Departmental tactical plan: The Chair noted that consideration was being given within the Register Team to develop appropriate key performance indicators to measure achievement to the public protection strategy. This would be brought to the April 2021 meeting of the Committee.

Action: CD

48/20 Future dates for meetings: The Committee noted that the clerk would be in contact regarding dates for 2022 meetings with a view to setting them in June/July.

Action: TS

03/21 PSA review of the accredited register programme consultation

CD and FBD gave an overview of the PSA consultation paper and invited feedback on the draft response. It was noted that the draft response was generally supportive of the strategic direction but that further detail was required to fully understand the proposals. It was also noted that over 9000 members had completed a survey in relation to the consultation and that the survey would help to shape a final draft for consideration by the Board of Governors.

The following general comments were noted:

- That it was a helpful model for the profession and that licensing may help to improve the status of counselling and psychotherapy as professions.
- That the current proposals relating to fees were disproportionate.
- That BACP represented almost half of the total number of registrants in the PSA Accredited Register Programme.

In relation to the draft response to the consultation questions, the Committee made a number of recommendations and noted that these would be incorporated into the draft for the Board Away Day due to take place in February 2021.

Action: CD

04/21 Exclusion and social media accountability

TD introduced a draft Exclusions policy and emphasised that its purpose was to focus BACP's regulatory resources on public protection and help to manage expectations in relation to matters that BACP was able to take forward under its conduct procedures. There was general agreement with the principle of a triage process and of focussing regulatory resources appropriately. The Committee noted that the policy would be published on BACP's website and requested that careful consideration be given to language and clarity, noting particularly that it should not be entitled an "Exclusions" policy.

The Chair requested that the document be reviewed in light of the Committee's recommendations and brought back to a future meeting. It was also noted that the document would also need to be subject to internal discussions. An update was requested for the April meeting of the Committee.

Action: TD/TS

05/21 Risk Registers

The Registrar introduced the register risk register and the practitioner risk register. The Committee welcomed the consolidation of the two registers into one spreadsheet and acknowledged the work undertaken. The Chair requested that further consideration be given to the residual risk on points 1b and 1d relating to underreporting of complaints and establishment of boundaries on the practitioner risk register before submission to the PSA. The Committee also cautioned that any future Exclusion Policy must not increase the risk in the two categories.

Action: CD

06/21 Audit sample size

The Assistant Registrar E&M spoke to the recommendation that the current audit sample be reduced in light of the growing number of registrants and the high pass rate to refocus resources on other risk areas. The Committee noted that this would need to be approved by the PSA. The Committee agreed in principle but asked that careful consideration be given to whether to make the changes explicit to members and that the communications aspect be brought back to the April meeting of the Committee.

Action: BG

07/21 PSA Accreditation Report

CD spoke to the circulated report and clarified that the recommendations which had been issued by the PSA in July 2020 would need to be updated upon in the application for reaccreditation. The Chair requested an update on both the recommendations and the reaccreditation application at the April meeting.

Action: CD

08/21 Reports

Chief Professional Standards Officer: The report was noted.

Registrar: The report was noted. The Chair requested KPIs were included in future reports.

Action: CD

Assistant Registrar E&M: The report was noted and in particular the short-term Data Analyst post.

Assistant Registrar PC: The report was noted. The Assistant Registrar provided an oral update on statistics relating to professional conduct cases and ongoing work to streamline functions and tackle the backlog of hearings which had arisen because of Covid 19.

The Committee noted the logistical problems of holding virtual hearings. A written report was requested for both the April meeting of the Committee and as a standing item so there was a mechanism for the Committee to track numbers of complaints, hearings and resolutions.

Action: JO'D/TS

09/21 Upstream prevention - Employers

KA was welcomed to the meeting in his role as Workforce Lead for BACP. The Committee noted initial research with five Employment Assistance Programmes relating to complaints management within those organisations. Although there had been difficulties obtaining clear figures, useful insights had been gained relating to the types of complaints, such as sexual boundaries, that tended to be referred on to BACP. The Committee requested that this work be continued and developed to feed into the Upstream Prevention initiative and that a report be brought back to a future meeting.

Action KA/CD

10/21 Board reporting

The Chair asked the Committee to reflect on how matters of interest could be communicated between the Board of Governors and the Committee. The Committee noted that a Chair's report was provided at each board meeting and that the public protection strategy was also approved at the January meeting of the Board, although clarification was sought on how achievement of strategy would be measured. The Chair would report back on the key performance indicators in development by the Register department.

It was also noted that the CPSO would attend all meetings of the Committee and the CEO would attend on an annual basis.

11/21 Committee Conversations

The Chair presented a paper relating to conversations with members of the Committee about the work of the Committee. Post Covid-19, it was noted that half of meetings would be held face-to-face. The Chair highlighted key points in relation to how the Committee worked with staff and the need to both communicate and measure the public protection strategy.

The Committee agreed that the suggestions for future work be included in the 2021 Agenda:

- Future agenda item - Risks of online and digital working.
- The need for cross-committee working in relation to initiatives such as SCoPEd.
- Access to papers would become easier with the role out of new software
- Inductions - The Board were looking at the induction process.

The Committee was particularly concerned about its engagement with the BACP team when thinking about how the outcomes of the Committee deliberations were being taken forward. It was valuable for the Committee to see how its views were taken into account. The Chair asked that the BACP team consider how to do this.

Action: CD

The Committee agreed to include extra time at the end of each PPC meeting for Committee only meeting time. It was agreed that the Clerk would arrange this for all future agendas.

Action: TS

11/21 AOB

The Committee noted a request from a member of the Committee in relation to how BACP might engage with a research project relating to supervision and it might link in with the public protection strategy. The idea was welcomed and it was noted that this would be discussed within the organisation and the researcher would be contacted. The Committee would be kept advised as to how this would be taken forward.

Action: CD

37/20 Date of Next Meeting

28 April 2021, 10.00am to 1.00pm, via Microsoft Teams.
Committee only meeting 1.00pm - 2.00pm.

SIGNED: DATED:

Circulation List:
PPC Committee
Board of Governors
SMT