



Royal College of Nursing
Shaping nursing since 1916

Report to members of the confidential and open meetings of Council held on Wednesday 7 and Thursday 8 December 2016 at Novotel Birmingham Centre, 70 Broad Street Birmingham, B1 2HT

Financial and corporate services

1. The first agenda item was a workshop session led by Janet Davies, Chief Executive & General Secretary. During this session Council worked with the Executive Team on the risk appetite and risk tolerance of the organisation and what our risk appetite statement should look like.
2. There was also a discussion about the first draft of a new format risk register which takes on board the findings of the internal audit which took place early in the year. The purpose of the review is to ensure that our approach to risk is driven by the organisation's strategy and the key challenges and risks to it achieving its priority objectives.
3. The Chair of the Audit Committee also took us through in some detail the work the Audit Committee had been doing over the past 12 months. Its focus has been to ensure that the new integrated approach to planning, budgeting, risk, compliance and performance being put in place will deliver the robust control framework we are looking for across the RCN group; and that the internal audit work is focussing on the areas that will make the biggest difference to the long term performance of the organisation.
4. In the coming year the Committee will be looking in particular at the project management of the new business and technology projects the organisation is currently undertaking to help ensure they will realise the benefits needed to support our future strategy and service operating model.
5. The first item after lunch was a discussion on a new Commercial Strategy. Currently non-membership income only accounts for a small proportion of total income for the RCN. The 2013-2018 Strategic Plan

includes an objective to “increase our income by marketing products and services built on our professional knowledge and reputation”.

6. During 2016 the RCN engaged the use of consultant support to assist in the development of a commercial strategy and underpinning business intelligence.
7. Council discussed a summary of the report of the consultant’s findings and agreed a strategy to develop a plan to generate an increasing proportion of income from RCN commercial activities.
8. The next stage is for a new Business Director, who is currently being recruited, to develop an implementation and delivery plan which will be based in the first instance on existing trading activities using an agile (incremental) approach to new product and service development.
9. We then moved on to the usual finance session chaired by Dave Dawes, the Honorary Treasurer.
10. The December meeting is when Council approves the annual plan of work and budget for the coming year.
11. The Business Committee had met twice in the lead up to the Council meeting to inform our decision making by looking in some detail at the plan and budget and in particular at the current status and the next phases of development for the projects that the organisation is undertaking to improve productivity, better meet the growing needs of our membership and support a strong organising model.
12. As a Council we have spent some time exploring in detail with the Chief Executive & General Secretary and Executive Team their operational priorities for delivering the annual plan and the benefits members would see from the investments we are making in our technology; the development of our staff to work in different ways and the benefits members will see.
13. As usual we also went through the Management Accounts for the last quarter; reviewed the corporate key performance indicators, and discussed the exception reports from the Board Chairs.

Agenda Committee and Congress

14. We had an update on the arrangements for 2017 Congress in Liverpool. Since we last held Congress in Liverpool there is a new hotel next to the Conference Centre and there is also a new exhibition hall where we will be holding the final night “thank you” on the Tuesday evening.

15. 2017 is also the 50th year of RCN Congress and we are looking at how best to mark this half century.
16. We will be holding Congress in May 2018 in Belfast and Council was updated on some of the practical arrangements we will need to make.
17. Council also agreed that Bournemouth will be the location of 2019 Congress.
18. We are also looking to reserve venues for 2020 and 2021 by the summer of next year.

Governance Support Committee

19. The September meeting of Governance Support Committee had been a long and important one.
20. It had spent time working on the implementation plan for the Council Review and in particular the terms of reference and role descriptors for the new Council Committees.
21. The Committee reviewed all our AGM processes. It agreed that all the processes were in line with accepted good practice and that it was our communication to members about those processes and in particular voting, that needed to improve.
22. It presented Council with 11 recommendations for improving members' understanding of the AGM processes and we will be ensuring that all the recommendations will have been addressed and the changes in place before the documentation for the 2017 AGM in Liverpool is published.
23. Governance Support Committee also reviewed, at the request of members at the 2016 AGM, whether to revert to aligning our election cycle with the AGM year.
24. Council agreed with the recommendation of the Governance Support Committee that it was too great a reputational and financial risk to make such a significant change which would require an amendment to the Standing Orders so soon after the transition to the new arrangements had been completed and in the midst of the Council Review transition.
25. Council did however agree to go ahead and introduce the new policy and process document to replace the Congress Constitution at Congress 2017.
26. This was approved by Council in 2015 following an all member consultation process in 2014/2015 and will bring the documentation for

Congress in line with the new constitutional framework agreed by the membership at the 2010 Annual General Meeting.

Council Review

27. The terms of reference for the two main Council Committees were agreed by Council and we also agreed that they would be called:

The Royal College of Nursing Trade Union Committee
The Royal College of Nursing Professional Nursing Committee
28. We also spent some time discussing the detail of the election process for the two Council Committees.

RCN Foundation –Change of Objects

29. As we have reported before the Trustees of the RCN Foundation have applied to the Charity Commission to make a Scheme to amalgamate various of its funds into two main Benevolent and Education Funds and to update the objects that apply to these funds.
30. The aim of the amalgamation is to enable the funds to be used as effectively as possible by the Foundation and at the same time continue to recognise the donors and purpose of the original funds as far as possible.
31. The Charity Commission requires the Foundation to consult with its stakeholders including RCN members in relation to the changes to these funds before it will make the final scheme. The consultation will take place at the beginning of 2017 and will set out the advantages to the beneficiaries of the broader funds and objects.
32. RCN Council agreed to support the application by the Foundation Trustees to the Charity Commission and to facilitate the consultation with RCN members through its website; Bulletin/Activate and Nursing Standard and the member consultation process.

Chief Executive & General Secretary's Report to Council

33. Open Council started with an update from the Chief Executive & General Secretary who briefed Council on the key current issues for the profession and in particular her meetings with Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Health, at Richmond House and Philip Dunn, Minister of Health, when she had been able to pick up a number of these matters. They had discussed the Nurse Associate and the apprenticeships in England and a number of other issues relating to nurse education and continuing professional development including the role of the Advance Nurse Practitioner.

34. The Chief Executive & General Secretary also highlighted the evidence she had given to the House of Lords on sustainability of the NHS; the work of the health alliance on climate change and the work the NMC was doing on undergraduate standards and registration.
35. In conclusion Janet highlighted two events in November – the International Centenary Conference which had successfully showcased nursing internationally and the Annual Dinner which had been attended by important stakeholders for the RCN.

Communications report to Council

36. Then we heard about our communications activity between July and November 2016.
37. Highlights of the report included an initial report on the findings of our member research; an update on the Nursing Counts pay campaign including our evidence to the NHS pay review body and our Labour Market Review both of which gained supportive coverage in national, local and trade media.
38. More than 70,000 people have signed our petition to date asking the government to scrap the cap on NHS pay and 1,400 have written to the Chancellor and thousands more have required Nursing Counts campaign packs and have used our pay calculator.
39. Communications activity had focussed on continuing to promote messages about the effects of Brexit on the nursing workforce, the implications of the new Nursing Associate role, safe staffing and the risks of reducing skill mix, pressures on A & E units, the drop in school nurses; new asthma guidelines and end of life care.
40. The report also covered the International Centenary Conference, our Annual dinner, continuing work on the website development; the use Committee members are making of the new Member Communication Centre and progress with member research aimed at improving how we communicate with members.

Strengthening the Royal College Agenda

41. Council heard from Dame Donna Kinnair, Director of Nursing Policy and Practice on work to strengthen the Royal College function with four purposes in mind:
 - To drive up standards of care
 - To drive up standards of education across the UK
 - To influence policy in the UK and globally; and
 - To be the place to go for advice on nursing issues.

42. The priorities are:
- To support a national framework for career development
 - To support service development and service improvement
 - To promote professional learning and development in the art and science of nursing
 - To develop a comprehensive engagement and management plan
 - To identify professional opportunities and gaps in the market for product and programme development to meet the needs of a range of sectors and settings; and
 - To advocate for the nursing community with key influencers and decision makers
43. The Nursing Practice and Policy Committee is planning a development session in January when it will be fleshing out each of these areas in the work programme for 2017 and setting measureable success criteria for each.

Our Corporate Organisational Response to Brexit: the work of the Cavendish Coalition

44. In the summer we agreed to join an emerging coalition of health and care organisations across the UK and Council received an update on the work of the Coalition to date.
45. The primary purpose of the coalition is to work together to interpret, address and response to the outcome of the EU referendum and the decision to withdraw from membership of the European Union.
46. The coalition is focussed on three core principles:
- supporting the economic and social health of the communities we work within through the creation of opportunities for training and employment
 - promoting employment policy and practice which ensures that the UK continues to be able to attract vital skills from Europe and around the world to work in health and social care; and
 - seeking certainty for those already working in the UK by advocating for the right of the current health and social care workforce to remain here.
47. The coalition has identified the workforce supply chain as its primary focus and agreed to focus on three aspects:
- the commissioning of evidence and use of soft intelligence;
 - developing policy which meaningfully shapes post-Brexit activity by decision makers; and

- effective strategic influencing and communications work.
48. Work is currently underway to shape these activity plans and we will be keeping the membership up-to-date with progress as the work develops.

Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2017 -2020

49. A draft of a new equality and inclusion strategy and implementation plan was presented to Council for approval by the Membership and Representation Committee.
50. It is focussed on five priorities:
- The way that the RCN connects and communicates with its members and stakeholder groups on the issues of equality and inclusion
 - Identity and Intersectionality
 - Building the capacity of accredited representatives and RCN staff to promote inclusion and challenge inequality and discrimination
 - Inspiring Members into activism through a focus on inclusion and equality
 - The use of evidence to provide constructive challenge to employers, policy makers and service providers to improve inclusion outcomes for RCN members
51. The strategy was agreed by Council. The next stage will be for action plans to be developed by each country/region/directorate across the organisation.

Reports from the Council Committees

Nursing Practice and Policy Committee

52. We heard from Janet Marsden, Joint Chair, that the Committee had spent the morning discussing its ambitions for the College as nursing's professional body and the terms of reference for the new Committee to oversee this agenda.
53. The Committee had also discussed the launch of credentialing and proposals for a clinical fellowship; plans for a UK publication on integration of health and social care; activity related to health visitors and the impact of potential changes to public health funding and why

promoting nursing in care homes as a career choice was a priority for the RCN.

54. How the RCN should engage with the plans for Sustainability and Transformation plans and the RCN position on the leak of the proposed curriculum for nursing associates were also discussed.

Membership and Representation Committee

55. The Committee decided that the agenda for its development day in January should be: taking early findings from the Independent Sector organising project and thinking about organising for the future and the question of the role of the future rep and learning from other Trade Unions.
56. The next phase of the impact of healthy workplace project to improve the working environment for members was discussed and supported and the plans for the ongoing Pay Campaign and building and strengthening local engagement for the longer term were welcomed.
57. The Committee spent some time discussing the RCN and the NHS Staff side approach to workforce planning and agreed that the RCN should lead work on workforce planning in the Independent Sector. It also supported work undertaken by the staff side on Agenda for Change and noted that the Grampian Board had expressed an interest in carrying out the required analysis.

International Committee

58. When the committee met on 11 October the main item on its agenda was its key international alliances with the Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation; and EFN.
59. The impact of Brexit on nursing in the UK; the RCN's membership of the Cavendish Coalition and ongoing work to support international nurses in the UK was the other major agenda item.
60. The committee also noted that the research study on health care support workers and the potential for a common training framework across Europe was due to be published very shortly as part of the EU health workforce action plan.
61. Better support for UK based RCN members involved in international volunteering was also discussed.
62. At its next meeting the Committee will be discussing how it could use the recommendations from the All Party Parliamentary Group on how developing nursing will improve health, promote gender equality and support economic growth.

Health Practitioner Committee

63. The Health Practitioners Committee had met on 25 August and 1 December 2016.
64. Discussion at both meetings had focussed on the proposals for the new apprenticeship model and the new nursing associate role and plans for NHS Trusts moving into the Home Care Market and the implications for HCA's and AP's and the RCN's professional offer to HP members.
65. The Committee was very pleased with the supportive response it received from Boards to a paper it prepared on support for developing CPD for HCA's and AP's and for funding HP members to attend Congress

Student Committee

66. At the meeting on 23 September the Students Committee had focussed on plans to provide a development opportunity for all SIOs across the UK and what it should look like.
67. There was also a discussion on RCN services for student members and the Committee asked countries and regions to do more to encourage student participation in country and regional events and to achieve consistency across the UK of provision of local events relevant to student members.
68. There was a discussion about membership of ENSA and whether it was the best way for the voice of UK student nurses to be heard in Europe. It was agreed that a member of the Committee would attend the 2016 ENSA AGM in October to inform a paper to the International Committee which would also review other ways the RCN could engage with nursing students in Europe.
69. The Committee is also assisting with the review of two RCN publications "Guidance for Mentors of Nursing Students and Midwives" and "Helping Students Get the Best from Their Practice Placements."

Fellows Co-ordinating Committee

70. The October meeting of the Fellows Co-ordinating Committee had focussed on the proposals for credentialing, clinical fellowships and work to review the process for awarding Fellowships.
71. The agenda for the full fellows meeting on 18 January was also finalised and the timeline and process for the election of the new Fellows Convenor and a new member of the Coordinating Committee was agreed.

72. This was the last Council meeting Jane Denton would attend before she stood down as Convenor and Council took the opportunity to thank Jane for all her work during her term as Convenor and congratulated the Fellows on their successful 40th Anniversary Tea and Public Lecture

RCN Foundation

73. Deepa Korea, Head of RCN Foundation thanked the RCN members and staff who took part in the West Highland Way walk and the RCN Walk 100 for the Foundation
74. She also briefed Council on the projects that the Foundation was funding on nursing in Care Homes and the changes that were being made to streamline the Foundation's grants process.

National Pensioners Convention

75. Dame June Clark updated Council on work of the RCN representatives on the NPC National Council, Executive Committee and working parties and their continued frustration with the role of the network within the RCN and its relationship with RCN retired members.
76. There will be a meeting in the New Year to discuss the issues raised in her report to Council.

Reports from the President and the Deputy President

77. Both Cecilia Anim and Rod Thomson have had had a busy few months in their respective roles.
78. Cecilia had met members in her centenary visits around the UK. She also talked being part of the Pride of Britain judging panel and the wreath laying services she was taking part in to remember the legacy of our founding members.
79. Rod Thomson had also attended a number of RCN centenary events, taken part in the West Highland Way walk for the RCN Foundation and his lobbying on nursing issues at the Home Office and Department of Health, and House of Commons.

The next meeting of RCN Council takes places on 4 and 5 April 2017. Country and regional board members will be invited to attend this meeting so please do put the date in your diary now.