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in practice and shapes health policies*

ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
LONDON BOARD
MINUTES
OPEN SESSION

Date: 4th December 2019

Time: 11.30 – 15.30

Venue: RCN London Office, 5th Floor, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN

Notes of the meeting of the London Board held on 4th December 2019 at RCN London Regional Office, 5th Floor, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN held under the terms of the RCN Confidentiality Policy.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Cynthia Davis	Council Member (Chair)
Maria Ponto	South West Inner
Michael Coram	North East Inner London
Noeleen Behan	North Central Outer
Joan Myers	South West Outer
Karen Sanders	Trade Union Committee

Observers:

Mike Smith	UK Stewards Committee
Sagila Thiruthanikasalan	UK Health Practitioner Committee
Annique Simpson OSEL	

RCN STAFF PRESENT

Jude Diggins	Regional Director
Sue Tarr	Operational Manager
John Considine	Communications Manager (after lunch only)
Pamela Nelson	Regional Service Manager
Samuel Mason	Regional Administration Coordinator

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Audrey Sothcott INWL
Alison Telfer (RCN staff)

Mary Wells PNC
Shamilah Nabyangwa ONEL
Diane Cameron OSEL
Jim Blair INCL
Joyce Inoniyegha ONWL
Jane Connor Learning Reps Cttee
Ian Norris safety Cttee
Mark Farmer (RCN staff)

OPEN SESSION – WELCOME OBSERVERS

Annique Simpson – Observer OSEL

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE noted

Nil conflicts reported

19.61 NOTES OF LAST MEETING

The notes of the open session from the last meeting were agreed.

Mike Smith noted his apologies were not recorded.

19.62 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising not otherwise covered on today's agenda.

The action log was discussed and the outcomes of each action reported on.

It was noted that Mark Farmer had met with Inner South West London Branch regarding the branch boundaries work.

Pam updated on branch finances. It was reported that the latest figures available had been circulated to the branches on a monthly basis. Pam ran through the specifics of each branch and identified expenditure and spending trends.

It was reported that money had been spent on Autumn of Learning and Black History month. It was reported that £4102 had been spent from the Board budget.

Governance would be advising on those who had registered for voting places at congress in the next week.

It was suggested that any outstanding branch funds be spent on recruitment materials. It was agreed that this could happen subject to the branches being advised of the final date for Branch expenditure. Pam agreed she would speak to the Business Accountant regarding accrual of these funds.

Cynthia confirmed all board members had signed the safe staffing petition. Jude noted that paper versions of the petition would no longer be valid so signatures were required electronically. It was noted that 68,000 signatures had been received so far.

19.63 REPORT FROM CONFIDENTIAL SESSION – VERBAL - Board Chair

Cynthia ran through the key matters from the confidential session for the benefit of the observer present.

Cynthia noted the effort of Jude and her team in making the year a successful one for the London Region.

Action – Sue Tarr to report the Board thanks to the London Region team at the next team meeting.

Jude reported on the process to fill the casual vacancy on the London Board, created by Joan Myers' successful election to Council. It was reported that next Monday interviews were being held to fill the vacancy.

The Chair noted her application for the casual vacancy.

It was reported that were the chair to be successful in her application for the casual vacancy next week she would remain in post as Board Chair as she was elected for two years. Should she not be successful, then an election for Board Chair would need to occur to find her replacement.

It was reported that Jim Blair would return to the Board after his RCN staff position finishes as he would have been under 6 months in employment – the threshold where this would not otherwise be possible.

19.64 FEEDBACK

- TU Committee

Karen reported earlier in the meeting (see above) as she had to leave for the TU Committee meeting at 11.00am.

Karen had invited for any questions to be submitted to her.

- Professional Nursing Committee

Mary Wells had sent her apologies to the meeting.

The PNC report to Board was discussed and changes to terms of reference highlighted for information.

It was noted that Mary Wells had stood down from her post on the PNC. Thanks from the Board had been sent. Professor Alison Leary had been appointed as her replacement and would take up the ex officio position to London Board.

19.65 UK REGIONAL COMMITTEES UPDATES

- Steward Representative Member - Mike Smith
- Safety Reps – Ian Norris
- Learning Representative Member – Jane Connor

- Student Committee Member – vacant
- Health Practitioner Member – Sagila Thiruthanikasalan

Mike noted his previously submitted report and reported on key issues.

It was noted that Activate, the activist magazine would be a quarterly publication.

It was reported that buying and selling of annual leave had been discussed at the committee as had child bereavement leave.

Sagila reported from the Health Practitioners Committee.

Topics discussed at the committee included Mental Health and asthma.

It was reported that not all were happy with the Nursing Support Worker name change.

It was reported that case scenarios would be useful for other workers to assist with their learning.

LUNCH

19.66 COUNCIL REPORT – Cynthia Davis

A Report from the Council meeting had been sent to the Board prior to the meeting.

Cynthia provided an update on some key topics arising from the meeting and the report including around the area of risk register.

It was reported that the RCN financial position was stable and having a healthy reserve fund was necessary to ensure the future financial viability of the organisation. This would be particularly relevant should the RCN be liable for paying strike funds to members in the event of any future industrial action.

It was reported that Council had looked at the complaints and resolution policy. Membership category review had also been discussed with associated payment plans. It was reported that one category with different payment plans had been proposed and this was out for consultation.

Prospective industrial action in Northern Ireland and Guernsey was discussed.

It was reported that modernising RCN magazines was discussed. Discussion was had on whether hard copies would be continued. It was reported that a large number of members prefer the paper copies.

It was reported that RCN Bulletin was to become a quarterly publication.

Cynthia reported on the process for election of Council members and noted that all members would stand down in 2023, raising a risk of a completely new Council membership in the

years following this. Consequently, a matter to bring back to the AGM is for Council members to serve for 2 and 4 years in line with the regulation

It was reported that the timing of the AGM was discussed and it was reported that the AGM next year would be on the Sunday of Congress.

It was reported that Election policy and process had been discussed and agreed.

19.67 STAFFING FOR SAFE AND EFFECTIVE CARE

A paper, circulated to the Board on Monday was discussed. This paper requires a decision as to whether decision making for England should pass to the OSC

It was reported that Noeleen Behan was on the Oversight and Scrutiny committee on behalf of the London Board.

The options for proposal were highlighted by Jude. It was noted that the process of having 9 separate Board decisions across the country was up for review due to the time decisions take to be ratified. One suggested option was to allow the decision making be made by the Oversight and Scrutiny Committee. A final option is to set up a further group for decision making consisting of relevant stakeholders from Regional Boards.

Comments were invited from the elected Board members present. It was suggested by all four of those present that maintaining the Oversight and Scrutiny Committee for decision making on Safe Staffing was the preferred option.

Cynthia noted that she had reservations over the Oversight and Scrutiny Committee “setting and marking the homework”. It was suggested that this may present a conflict of interest and there may need to be an amendment to the preferred option.

Action - It was agreed that a decision from the Board would be made virtually via e-mail on which of the options the London Board were going to support. 4 elected members present at the meeting supported option 2. Jude to send paper around again and elected Board members to vote on their preferred choice virtually.

19.68 EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS LEAD UPDATE

Sue Tarr

Sue updated on the Common Case Types pilot that the Region had been using for over a year. It was reported that by the end of January it would be known whether this would become permanent. This would then link in to the CRM use and how this is taken forward.

It was noted that the main change was that the member was now expected to submit their documentation prior to speaking to an RCN Officer, which helps the officer become better informed on how best to support the member. It was reported that the average Enquiry length was around 5 days which Sue reported was a slick process.

Joint Representative Development Day took place last week and was well attended. The theme was Health Safety and Welfare, and the legislation on health workers and assault on workers was discussed. A masterclass on mental health first aid took place in the afternoon which was well received.

It was reported that the rep expression of interest numbers had increased recently, which was likely to lead to more reps being accredited.

It was reported that full Membership in London Region had increased by a significant number, although Student numbers had reduced since this time last year. It was reported that overall the net membership growth for the past month was 370. The reasons for leaving were, mainly retirement, failure to pay direct debit. It was noted that RCN Direct made follow up calls to chase up members who had lapsed.

19.69 PROFESSIONAL NURSING LEAD UPDATE

Mark Farmer

Mark's paper which was previously circulated was noted in his absence. Jude drew attention to the key features of the report.

19.70 CONGRESS

- Congress update PN

Pam had updated on congress earlier in the meeting.

19.71 COMMUNICATIONS - John Considine

John introduced himself as the acting Communications Officer in Tom Colclough's absence.

John provided guidance on social media and what was not acceptable with regard to what is legally expected of an elected member of the RCN.

John provided the RCN General Election Manifesto for the Board's attention. This document notes what the RCN is calling for from the political parties and local candidates. Some had been asked to become "Nursing Champions".

It was reported that the RCN were doing targeted marketing specifically in marginal seats to make sure that members utilise their vote in the general election.

It was suggested that post-election, members may wish to invite their MP's to speak to groups regarding their pledges and actions for nursing.

It was noted that each of the main political parties had to differing extents identified nursing as an area for concern and each had made promises for nursing investment.

John presented on the Safe Staffing campaign to update the Board with what the Communications Team had been doing.

It was raised as to how best to advertise the campaign and the events that are happening around the campaign in London. John noted that enough time and notice needs to be given to allow people to get time off from shifts etc. It was noted that the campaign had been a standing item at all the autumn RCN events which had helped to raise member awareness.

It was reported that effort had been made to push the Safe Staffing petition on social media so as to make it more likely that it gets seen and signed.

John played a video demonstrating local action on the campaign.

John ran through the priorities for 2020, which were engaging with the new government, highlighting issues to the public and enhancing member engagement.

It was suggested to explore a “fringe” style event for all London attendees at Congress to highlight the campaign for Safe Staffing.

Free public transport was discussed for nursing staff. Jude noted that due to the high numbers of health workers involved such an initiative may be out of reach, however the concept of some form of discount card may be possible to explore further down the line.

John briefly updated on the cost of living survey and what stage that had reached. It was suggested that it would be ideal to get this information out prior to the general election to highlight the issue, however it was noted that this may be too tight a timeframe.

19.72 REGIONAL DIRECTORS REPORT – VERBAL - Jude Diggins

- Board Member Attendance
- Sub-group Attendance

Jude highlighted the Board member attendance list and advised members regarding their attendance. Some amendments to apologies were made.

Jude thanked Cynthia for all her work as Board Chair and Council Member. Jude noted this was Cynthia’s last meeting as Council member and her contribution was noted and thanked. The Board presented Cynthia with a gift in appreciation.

19.73 AGREE KEY MESSAGES

The key messages were agreed and Jude would circulate them over the coming days.

Action – Jude to circulate key messages to the Board.

19.74 ANY OTHER BUSINESS and DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next London Board meeting will be on 12th February 2020 with the Board development day on the afternoon of 11th February.

CLOSE