



Minutes of the meeting of the Special Purposes Committee held on 3 March, at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was held online.

Agenda Item 1 - Attendees & Apologies

Name	Role	Present (Yes/No)
Dr Denis O'Driscoll	President and Chair of the Committee	Yes
Prof Laura Sahm	Vice-President	Yes
Dr Ann McGarry	Chair of the Performance and Resources Committee	Yes
Mr Richard Hammond S.C.	Chair of the Regulatory and Professional Policy Committee	Yes
Members of PSI staff in attendance included:		
Ms Joanne Kissane	Registrar & Chief Officer – did not attend for agenda item 13	
Ms Aoife Mellet	Head of Legal Affairs, Governance and Programme Delivery	
Mr Des Butler	Fitness to Practise and Legal Affairs Manager	
Ms Ruth Baily	Governance Executive – did not attend for agenda item 13	

Colour code: Red—for decision; Green—for discussion; Blue—for information

Agenda Item 2 – Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

Issue
Declaration of interests by members of the Special Purposes Committee.
Information
Under item B of the Council Agenda, the Chair drew Committee members' attention to their obligations under paragraph 9 of Schedule 1 to the Pharmacy Act 2007, which deals with the necessary disclosure of certain interests by members of the Council.
Decision Approved and/or Action Requested
There were no conflicts of interest noted.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Meeting Agenda

Issue

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Information

The Agenda was briefly discussed by the Committee. The Committee agreed to take the items for approval first.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Decision/Action: The agenda was approved.

Agenda Item 4 – Request for approval of the draft Minutes of the meeting of the Special Purposes Committee held on 13 February 2026

Issue

Draft Minutes of the Special Purposes Committee Meeting held on 13 February 2026

Information

The Chair noted that the draft Minutes of the Committee meeting, held on 13 February 2026, had been circulated to Committee members in advance of the meeting and that no amendments had been received.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Decision Approved: The Committee approved the Minutes of the Special Purposes Committee meeting, held on 13 February 2026, by consensus.

Agenda Item 5 – Committee Updates

Audit and Risk Committee

Performance and Resources Committee

Regulatory and Professional Policy Committee

Issue

Committee Updates

Audit and Risk Committee

Performance and Resources Committee

Regulatory and Professional Policy Committee

Information

The Chairs of each Advisory Committee provided a verbal update to the Committee on the outputs of recent meetings and current matters of priority and focus.

Audit and Risk Committee (A&R)

In the absence of a Committee Chair, the Registrar provided the update. The Committee's

next meeting will take place on 13 March, at which the principal agenda items will be the Annual Report, the Financial Statements, and the External Audit Letter. The Registrar advised that significant work has been undertaken on the Corporate Risk Register following Council feedback, and that the Consolidated Audit Findings will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Performance and Resources Committee (P&R)

The Chair noted that the next meeting of the Committee will take place on 10 March. The Committee received an update on the Core Funding Review, with PSI continuing to engage with the Department of Health and responding to a number of queries. It was noted that it is hoped the Statutory Instrument will be signed by 1 April. The Committee was advised that applications have been submitted for a number of staffing sanctions—five new posts and two replacements. The Chair further reported that following advice from Davys on further diversification of accounts, the Treasury and Investment Management Policy will be considered by the Committee and subsequently by Council for consideration.

Regulatory and Professional Policy Committee (RPP)

The Chair noted that the next meeting of the Committee will take place on 11 March.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Decision/Action: There were no actions arising from this agenda item.

Agenda Item 6 – Review of draft Skills and Competency Matrix of Council

Issue

Review of the draft Skills and Competency Matrix of Council

Information

The Committee was advised that the draft Skills and Competency Matrix for Council was developed in response to a previous request for a more structured approach to identifying the competencies required for upcoming Council vacancies. The draft matrix was informed by an analysis of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and aligned with the PSI Corporate Strategy 2025–2028, ensuring consistency with governance and strategic priorities. The Committee noted that certain competency areas may be less well represented within the current Council, including digital transformation, cybersecurity, organisational development, and information governance. EDI, ESG, and sustainability were identified as emerging but increasingly important competencies reflecting evolving governance expectations. Following discussion, the Committee approved the draft Skills and Competency Matrix and agreed that the RFQ should proceed.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Decision/Action: The Committee approved the draft Skills and Competency Matrix for Council by consensus.

Agenda Item 7 –

1. Outputs of Self-Evaluation of Special Purposes Committee December 2025 (survey)
2. Council and Committees 2025 Self-Evaluation– Action Plan
3. Council and Committees 2024 Self-Evaluation– Action Plan - outstanding items

Issue

1. Outputs of Self-Evaluation of Special Purposes Committee December 2025 (survey)
2. Council and Committees 2025 Self-Evaluation– Action Plan
3. Council and Committees 2024 Self-Evaluation– Action Plan - outstanding items

Information

7.1 Outputs of Self-Evaluation of Special Purposes Committee December 2025 (survey)

The Committee considered the findings of the December 2025 self-evaluation. It was noted that updates provided by the Chairs at each meeting continue to support effective oversight. The Committee discussed its role in the performance management of the Registrar and highlighted the need for a structured succession plan for Council and Committee roles.

7.2 Council and Committee 2025 Self-Evaluation – Action Plan

The Committee reviewed the Council and Committee 2025 Self-Evaluation Action Plan and noted that a number of actions have been completed, are in progress, or are scheduled for forthcoming Council meetings. The Committee discussed the key themes arising from the self-evaluation, including the need to strengthen Council effectiveness, enhance governance practices, and support the functioning of Council and its Committees.

The Committee noted ongoing work to improve induction and onboarding arrangements, including the potential introduction of staged induction, continued access to training, and the development of optional site visits for all Council members. It was agreed that existing Committee structures support effective preparatory work for Council.

The Committee acknowledged the significant workload associated with FTP matters and the impact this can have on Council's ability to engage in forward-looking and strategic discussion. The forthcoming legislative reforms under the Pharmacy Act 2007 (as amended), particularly in relation to the statutory complaints process, were noted as areas requiring careful management.

The Committee identified timeliness of Council papers and minutes as a recurring issue and noted steps underway to improve the timely circulation of documentation. Attendance at meetings continues to be monitored, with follow-up where required. The Committee discussed meeting formats, recognising the operational and quorum considerations associated with in-person and hybrid arrangements. While routine Council meetings outside Dublin were considered to be cost-prohibitive, it was agreed that separate development or team-building events would be considered as appropriate.

The Committee noted the strong and constructive relationship with the Department of Health. A recurring theme from the self-evaluation was the importance of ensuring adequate space for strategic discussion and horizon-scanning within Council agendas, with a greater focus on emerging risks and longer-term issues.

7.3 Council and Committees 2024 Self-Evaluation– Action Plan - outstanding items

The Committee reviewed the outstanding items in the 2024 Council Self-Evaluation Action Plan. The Committee noted the ongoing refinement of wording of the meeting minutes and minute timelines in the plan, including the continued work to improve the timeliness of issuing minutes to Council and Committee members, as outlined in the action plan's proposed circulation timelines.

The Committee discussed the volume of documentation associated with statutory complaints and noted legal advice confirming that all relevant information must be provided.

The Committee noted that a Council training needs analysis will be procured this year, in line with the action plan. The Committee also discussed the agenda for the Training and Development Day on 5 March and noted that a range of topics is planned to support Council engagement and development.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Decision/Action: The Council Self Evaluation Plans for 2024 and 2025 will be discussed at a forthcoming closed session of Council.

Agenda Item 8 – Appointments to the PSI Disciplinary Committees

Issue

Appointments to the PSI Disciplinary Committees

- **Appointment of a Chair to PPC**
- **Appointment of a lay member to the PPC**

Information

The Committee considered appointments to the Preliminary Proceedings Committee (PPC). The Committee was advised that the term of office of the current Chair expires on 9 April and a new Chair must be appointed. For clarity, the Committee was advised that the current Chair is a lay member, and a lay majority is required on the Committee. Therefore, along with the appointment of a Chair, a new member must also be appointed.

The Committee was asked to recommend the following appointments to Council at their meeting on 26 March.

- That Mr. John Naughton, who is currently serving as Acting Chair of the Preliminary Proceedings Committee, be recommended for appointment as Chair of the Committee for the remainder of his existing term of office, which concludes on 4 February 2029.
- That Ms. Kathryn Clifford be appointed as a lay member of the Preliminary Proceedings Committee. Ms Clifford has been selected from the Disciplinary Committee Reserve Panel.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to the appointments.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Decision/Action: The Committee agreed to recommend the following appointments to Council at their meeting on 26 March.

- That Mr. John Naughton, who is currently serving as Acting Chair of the Preliminary Proceedings Committee, be recommended for appointment as Chair of the Committee for the remainder of his existing term of office, which concludes on 4 February 2029.
- That Ms. Kathryn Clifford be appointed as a lay member of the Preliminary Proceedings Committee.

The Committee agreed to recommend the above appointments to Council at their meeting on 26 March by consensus.

Agenda Item 9 – Feedback from the President 1-2-1's with Council members

Issue

Feedback from the President 1-2-1's with Council

Information

The Committee received an update on the President's 1-2-1 meetings with Council members. The President outlined the key themes emerging from the discussions, noting that feedback was consistent across both pharmacist and non-pharmacist members. Themes identified included the significant time and workload associated with Fitness to

Practise matters; the emotional impact of engaging with FTP material; the need for greater space within Council agendas for strategic and future-focused discussion; and the importance of timely circulation of papers and minutes.

The Committee also noted feedback relating to Council culture and meeting management, including the need for clarity on chairing arrangements, balanced participation, and support for newer members. Matters concerning induction, ongoing training, diversity and inclusion, and opportunities to strengthen communication between Council and the Executive Leadership Team were also referenced.

The President noted that the exercise was useful, particularly for newer members and if possible, should be repeated at the end of the year to see if the same themes emerge. The Committee noted that it may be a good idea for the Advisory Committees to carry out the same exercise.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Decision/Action: There was no Decision/Action from this item. This feedback will be discussed at a forthcoming closed session of Council.

Agenda Item 10 – Reflection of outputs of Chairs Training and next steps

Issue

Reflection of outputs of Chairs Training and next steps

Information

The Committee reported Chairs' training as useful and thought-provoking, prompting reflection on individual chairing styles and approaches. The training session highlighted the benefit of developing a more consistent PSI chairing approach, while still allowing for individual styles. The Chairs noted that the training raised awareness of how chairing style affects meeting dynamics, time management, and engagement.

Improved pre-meeting engagement between committee chairs and ELT members was identified as a way to reduce time spent clarifying issues during meetings. There was a discussion about opening the meetings for the Committee members 10 minutes prior to the start to discuss the agenda, the A&R Committee currently do this. Both the Chair of the P&R and RPP will discuss the introduction of the short agenda check-in at their next meetings. Wash-up sessions were also noted as a useful addition to the meetings.

There was support for continuing reflection on chairing effectiveness, including revisiting these practices after they have been trialled. The Committee noted the value of focusing on incremental improvements, rather than attempting to implement all training suggestions at once.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Decision/Action: There was no Decision/Action from this item.

Agenda Item 11 – Advisory Committees Terms of Office

Issue

Advisory Committees Terms of Office

Information

The Committee Reviewed the Advisory Committee Terms of Office. The Committee noted that following the previous Committee meeting on 13 February, Council is expected to appoint Ms Emily Kelly to the A&R Committee and then as Chair of the A&R Committee on 5 March. Council is expected to appoint Mr Richard Hammond S.C. for a second term to the RPP and P&R Committee, Ms Joan Peppard to the P&R Committee and Mr Eddie O'Loughin to the Business Transformation Board. The Committee noted that there will be a number of further appointments and reappointments throughout the year.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Action: None

Agenda Item 12 – Update Council appointments and reappointments, including an update on EOI for ARC external member appointment

Issue

Update Council appointments and reappointments, including an update on EOI for ARC external member appointment

Information

The Committee received an update on forthcoming appointments to Council and to the Advisory Committees to the end of the year. The Committee was advised that one Council vacancy will arise and that this appointment will be managed through the Department of Health and the Public Appointments Service. The Committee noted the resignation of an external member of the Audit and Risk Committee. An Expression of Interest process for external members of that Committee has been completed, with 25 responses received. The Committee was advised that a short out-of-course meeting will be required to review the applications and establish a panel, from which appointments to current and future external vacancies on the Audit and Risk Committee will be made.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Decision/Action: There was no Decision/Action from this item.

Agenda Item 13 – End-of-Year Performance Review of Registrar

Issue

End-of-Year Performance Review of Registrar

Information

Documentation relating to the year-end performance review of the Registrar had been circulated to the Committee in advance of the meeting. The Committee discussed the review, and the Chair agreed to make some minor amendments and to re-circulate the draft document to the Committee for final sign-off.

Decision Approved and/or Action Requested

Action: An update on the End of Year Performance Review of the Registrar will be provided at the next Council meeting.

Agenda Item 14 – AOB

Issue

There was no AOB

The meeting concluded at 14.10

Signed by

Chair

Date