

Approved Public Board meeting minutes  
18 September 2025

Present

Caroline Corby (CC - Chair)  
Alan Clamp (AC - Chief Executive)  
Candace Imison (CI)  
Juliet Oliver (JO)  
Nick Simkins (NS)  
Ali Jarvis (AJ)  
Geraldine Campbell (GC)  
Eleanor Marks (EM)  
Ruth Ajayi (RA)

In Attendance

Jane Carey (JC)  
Amanda Partington-Todd (APT)  
Douglas Bilton (DB)  
Dinah Godfree  
Daisy Blench  
Osama Ammar  
Marija Hume  
Oyinkan Onile-Ere  
Ashim Bhaugeerutty  
Abdul Rahman Lawal  
Sarah Fox  
Salma Rahman  
Dan Scott  
Rachael Culverhouse-Wilson  
Akua Dwomoh-Bonsu  
Suzanne Dodds  
Siobhan Carson

Melanie Hueser (Secretariat)

Observers

See below

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Board meeting. Observers included members of staff and external observers: Anisah Chowdhury (GMC), Silvia Dominici (NMC) and Carol Haynes (NMC).

2. Apologies

- 2.1. There were no apologies.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 16 July 2025

- 3.1. The minutes of the last Board meeting held on 16 July 2025 were accepted as a true and correct record and approved.

4. Actions and matters arising from the meeting on 16 July 2025

- 4.1. All actions were complete, on the agenda or on track.

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## 5. Chair's report

- 5.1. The Chair introduced the item. As the summer had been quieter due to annual leave the report was verbal.
- 5.2. Two business planning meetings had been held over the summer, which had been very helpful and would inform this meeting's discussions, particularly those on the private agenda.
- 5.3. The stakeholder session the previous day had been very successful, highlighting the value of engaging outside London. The Chair thanked those involved in organising the session.

## 6. Executive report and project dashboard

- 6.1. The Chief Executive introduced the item. The Standards Review project was progressing satisfactorily, with discussions scheduled for later in the meeting. The strategic and business plan was also on the agenda for further discussion.
- 6.2. Work with the NMC Independent Oversight Group was ongoing. The group had met a few days ago. Updates on this would be provided later in the meeting.
- 6.3. The Department for Business and Trade was developing a regulatory profession framework, covering roles from entry level to regulatory leadership. Updates will be shared as more information became available.
- 6.4. The Board queried the decision to no longer routinely post on X (formerly Twitter). It was explained that the decision was made due to the platform's controversial content and alignment with other organisations' decisions. The Comms team continues to monitor X for relevant issues (and responding if deemed helpful) but focuses its efforts on other social media channels, such as LinkedIn. There was discussion about the political implications of social media choices and the need to remain non-political.  
**Action:** MV to discuss with DHSC colleagues the use of X.
- 6.5. There had been significant improvement in performance around KPIs for the Accredited Registers Programme, with a key KPI met for the first time in two years. The team was hopeful that this could now be maintained.
- 6.6. The Section 29 review and related process improvements were nearing completion, with pilots underway. Updates will be brought to the next Scrutiny Committee and Board meetings, including evaluation of pilots and recommendations for measuring success and communicating benefits. Early improvements were noted in decision-making quality, efficiency, and capacity. The first Section 29 annual report was about to be published.
- 6.7. An appointment seminar was planned for October, with places booking fast.
- 6.8. The Board discussed the importance of hearing from a wide range of voices, including staff, complainants, and registrants, especially in the context of the NMC audit and Fitness to Practise (FtP) processes. The team was considering how to incorporate more diverse feedback into audits and performance reviews, balancing this with resource constraints.
- 6.9. The potential for using AI to analyse large volumes of feedback and identify warning signs was discussed. It was confirmed that the PSA was exploring how AI could help manage and analyse data from 'Share your experience' processes and other feedback channels.
- 6.10. Updates were provided on the Research Conference and Sexual Misconduct Webinars. Registration for the Conference was due to open soon. The findings from the Sexual Misconduct Webinars will be written up once the last ones have taken place.
- 6.11. 28 out of 60 proposals for the Research Conferences had been accepted, the rest of the proposals, especially those related to FtP improvement would be kept on file for future opportunities.
- 6.12. Updates were shared on recent recruitment, noting successful hiring for several roles and high interest in advertised positions.

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- 6.13. The new People Strategy will incorporate a review of organisational values.
  - 6.14. The PSA's EDI self-assessment was complete and set for publication.
  - 6.15. The PSA had been targeted by a campaign highlighting alleged antisemitism in healthcare, with thousands of emails being sent to Board and senior leadership. IT had implemented rules to manage and filter these emails, and the process for handling such incidents was being reviewed.

## 7. Finance report

- 7.1. The Director of Corporate Services introduced the item.
- 7.2. A £24,000 deficit was currently forecast in regulation and standards setting, mainly due to increased staffing costs (maternity cover and pension contributions) and Section 29 costs, which are difficult to predict due to casework variability. There was discussion about improving forecasting and understanding cost drivers, with plans for a deep dive into Section 29 costs and strategy.
- 7.3. It was reiterated that the Section 29 costs are difficult to control or predict, as they depend on the volume and nature of casework and on factors outside the PSA's direct control.  
**Action:** NS to meet with the Finance team to discuss Section 29 forecasting and decide whether a Board discussion on the issue should be scheduled for the meeting in January 2026.
- 7.4. It was noted that forecasting was more robust this year, with budget holders and the Finance team working together to provide more realistic projections.
- 7.5. The Board **noted** the report.

## 8. Committee updates

- 8.1. **Scrutiny Committee:** The Committee Chair gave a verbal update as the last meeting had only just taken place. The Committee had trialled a new template for updates to ensure reports were focused on impact, risks, and achievements. This approach was welcomed and will be refined for future meetings.
- 8.2. The Committee discussed the Section 29 review, including improvements already observed through pilot projects. These improvements included greater flexibility in holding panels and quicker decision-making, leading to a reduction in statutory deadline decisions. A key issue discussed was the current volunteer model for decision-making panels, particularly for Section 29 but also for the Accredited Registers Programme. It was emphasised that Section 29 was a core statutory function that should be resource-planned and managed, rather than relying on staff volunteering. The Executive team will revisit the model to ensure equitable allocation of panel duties and clarify expectations for staff participation. Clearer expectations will be set for trained staff that panel work needs to be distributed more evenly.

## 9. Risk register

- 9.1. The Chief Executive introduced the risk register review, which takes place at Board level twice a year. A risk tolerance discussion as part of the strategic planning process will come to the November meeting.
- 9.2. Key risks were identified:
  - **Fitness to Practise backlogs:** This remains a high-priority risk. The situation is stable (not worsening or improving), with no obvious quality issues found in recent sampling (focused on sexual misconduct cases). However, the backlog continues to impact registrants, witnesses, and complainants.
  - **Regulatory reform:** Actions related to reform will be updated significantly in the next version, following ongoing work to bring a paper to the November Board.

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- **Horizon scanning:** The PSA has a system in place for horizon scanning and it is being used to identify improvement opportunities.
  - **Safeguarding:** This risk had been incorporated into the Standards Review project, and assurance on this will be sought when the standards are discussed.
  - **Public Confidence:** A new risk had been added regarding the mismatch between public, regulator, and PSA views of regulatory performance. This includes concerns about communication, the concept of zero risk, and the need for better messaging to the public and politicians. The Board agreed that horizon scanning should be emphasised as a key mitigation for the public confidence risk and the risk register updated accordingly.
- 9.3. The Board discussed how the stakeholder sessions from the previous day were highlighting concerns about the ‘weaponisation’ of regulation and the importance of public understanding. These insights were relevant to the public confidence risk and will inform future risk management and communication strategies.
- 9.4. The Board discussed the ongoing risk of the issues at the NMC. While there were mitigations in place, the risk is unlikely to reduce in the next three to six months.
- 9.5. The NMC was also undergoing a second period of enhanced monitoring.
- 9.6. The recommissioned external report on the NMC’s FtP process was now expected to be published in mid-autumn.
- 9.7. The Board **approved** the register.

## 10. Right Touch Regulation communications plan

- 10.1. The Head of Communication introduced the item, emphasising the Right Touch Regulation (RTR) publication’s role in explaining the PSA’s regulatory approach, guiding messaging, and supporting engagement with stakeholders. It aims to position the PSA as a thought leader in regulation, both within the sector and internationally, and to underpin related work such as Regulatory reform and the Standards review.
- 10.2. The communications plan recognises a broad range of audiences, including some less familiar with regulation. It had been designed to tailor engagement and materials to resonate with different groups, such as regulators, parliamentarians, and providers of health and social care. The Board highlighted the importance of including providers as a key stakeholder group and suggested more engagement in Wales, especially with upcoming elections.
- 10.3. The RTR document was scheduled to launch at the PSA Symposium in October, with a year-long communications programme planned. This will include quarterly engagement peaks, speaking opportunities, events, and the release of supporting materials.
- 10.4. The main document will be professionally designed for greater engagement. Additional materials, such as case studies and practical examples, will be produced to make the principles more tangible. External endorsement was being sought to enhance credibility, and opportunities for others to discuss and comment on the framework had been built into the plan.
- 10.5. There will be a focus on ensuring that communications about Standards and Regulatory reform are consistent with RTR principles. The Board emphasised the need to avoid siloed messaging and ensure coherence between RTR and other work.
- 10.6. It was confirmed that the plan was covered by the existing communications budget, with most spending front-loaded for design and production. While the plan is resource-intensive, especially for parliamentary engagement, the team was embedding it into the schedule.
- 10.7. The Board stressed the importance of making the document accessible, especially for lay audiences and politicians. The use of illustrative examples and shorter, more engaging versions was encouraged. The parliamentary bulletin and public-facing materials were suggested as channels for these messages.

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- 10.8. Participating in the March 2026 Institute of Regulation Conference and organising roundtables in Wales was suggested. The Comms team welcomed further ideas. There will be flexibility to incorporate new opportunities over the year.
- 10.9. The Board expressed support for the comprehensive plan, recognising its strategic importance and the need for ongoing review and adaptation as the communications programme unfolds.

## **11. Overview of PSA horizon scanning**

- 11.1. The Director of Intelligence and Insight introduced the item. The PSA does not currently have a formal horizon scanning process, and the need for one had been identified by an internal audit. The paper for this item summarised existing activities that bring external information into the PSA, both through proactive searching and through information received from stakeholders.
- 11.2. The PSA already uses an external issues policy, which was a standing item at every SMT and ELT meeting, allowing anyone to raise relevant external developments for discussion and potential action.
- 11.3. There were multiple informal and formal channels for horizon scanning, including engagement with stakeholders, monitoring sector developments, and reviewing external reports, but a lack of opportunities for staff and Board members to sit together and discuss the implications of external developments had been noted.
- 11.4. It was proposed to set up a quarterly open meeting for Board and staff members to discuss horizon scanning topics. The meetings would have provisional agenda items but remain open for anyone to bring forward issues. The goal will be to unpack topics collaboratively and assign follow-up actions as needed. It was suggested that this will be trialled for a year and reviewed for effectiveness.
- 11.5. The Board was in favour of this approach and meetings will be scheduled.  
**Action:** DB to schedule Board and staff horizon scanning meetings.

## **12. Board workplan 2025/26**

- 12.1. The Board requested that an annual complaints report be added to the workplan.  
**Action:** JC to add annual complaints report to Board workplan.
- 12.2. The Board **noted** the workplan.

## **13. Any other business**

- 13.1. There was no other business discussed.

## **14. Questions from Members of the Public**

- 14.1. There were no questions.
- 14.2. The Chair thanked the observers for their interest in the PSA.



**Signed by Chair**

**Date** 19 November 2025

### Action Log

On track (including not started) Delayed (or medium risk of delay for projects) Overdue (or high risk of delay for projects) Complete

Mtg. Date	Item No.	Action point	Owner	Date required	Action progress	Status
19 March 2025	5.2	Invite all Board members to attend the next Staff day.	MH	March 2026		
22 May 2025	10.1	Schedule Board risk appetite discussion for November.	AC	November 2025	On the agenda	
18 September 2025	6.4	Discuss with DHSC colleagues the use of X.	MV	October 2025	Complete – referenced in Executive Reports	
18 September 2025	7.3	Meet with the Finance team to discuss Section 29 forecasting and decide whether a Board discussion on the issue should be scheduled for the meeting in January 2026.	NS	January 2026		
18 September 2025	11.5	Schedule Board and staff horizon scanning meetings.	DB	October 2025	Complete	
18 September 2025	12.1	Add annual complaints report to Board workplan.	JC	November 2025	Complete	