Minutes of Rural Forum Steering Group Meeting

Minutes of the Rural Forum Steering Group Telephone Conference held on Tuesday 7 March 2017
Meeting Commenced at 20:00

PRESENT:

Dr Robert Lambourn Chair
Dr Mel Plant Welsh Representative on RFSG
Dr Michael Smyth Northern Ireland Representative on RFSG
Dr Chris Williams Scottish Representative on RFSG

IN ATTENDANCE:

Paula Lythgoe Rural Forum Administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS</td>
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<td>Rob introduced the group of attendees.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Drs Hal Maxwell, Malcolm Ward, John Wynn-Jones, Mrs Jane Randall-Smith and Mrs Lifa Zvimbande</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</td>
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<td>The Chair asked those present to be aware of their personal interests and to declare them if relevant to items discussed.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>INFORMATION GOVERNANCE</td>
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<td>The Chair reminded members present to be diligent regarding data security and information governance.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>MINUTES OF MEETING 15 FEBRUARY 2017</td>
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<td>The minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 15 February 2017, were agreed to be a true and accurate record, with one amendment that Item 13 – Any Other Business should have read Chris Williams to forward details to Rob regarding GP Frontline and not Chris Clark as was previously stated.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>MATTERS ARISING/ACTION LIST</td>
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<td>The action list from the previous minutes was discussed. Item 13 – Any Other Business – Chris Williams stated that Rob should appear in GP Frontline. Chris forwarded the details to Rob. Rob has received an automated response. Chris informed Rob that if he is not contacted soon regarding this, he emails Guy</td>
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Goodwin at GP Frontline, he should get a response. Guy is GP Frontline Editor.

7. **RURAL FORUM CONFERENCE & EDUCATIONAL EVENT**

A long discussion took place with regards to whether the Rural Conference should be postponed or should still go ahead. If it is postponed, the Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel will still charge 90% of their original quotation which is nearly £1000. The group decided that the event would still go ahead, albeit with a small group and that Rob would contact speakers to enquire if they were happy with the small numbers and that their sessions could be interactive.

Chris Williams will bring along the North of Scotland Faculty video-conferencing equipment and will set up facilities for remote members to join at any point in the day. Paula will email the RF and enquire if they are interested in joining the event to contact her and Chris will send joining details to the member.

8. **DISCUSSION ON RURAL FORUM WITH NIGEL MATHERS AND SIMON ASHMORE**

Rob attended meetings with Simon Ashmore on 24 February and with Simon and Nigel Mathers on 28 February. Rob had drafted together letter which included thoughts and aims for the Rural Forum beforehand. The meetings were successful and both Simon and Nigel are keen to engage with the Rural Forum. A follow-up meeting is due to take place in June.

Simon informed Rob that the Rural Forum have a budget set aside of £9000 per annum. Currently the budget is held in Euston Square. Ideally the group would like the £9000 to be transferred to the RF bank account to be managed locally by Paula and the RFSG members. Perhaps this query will be approached at the next meeting Rob has with Simon.

Although the Rural Forum was unsuccessful in securing a seat on UK Council they are looking at the possibility of a RF member to attend as an observer. Nigel informed Rob that he could put forward Rural Forum matters in his capacity of Rep on Council for North East England Faculty. Rob informed that group that he did not feel comfortable in putting forward Rural matters when his is representing NEE.

Council elections are due to take place and the Rural Forum has been encouraged to apply for a seat on UK Council. Candidates must express an interest by 31 March 2017. The RF has 795 members and the RF Discussion Google group have 593 members. If any RFSG member is interested in applying for a seat on UK Council, they could be canvassed through the Google group and Social Media to encourage RF members to vote.

It was agreed that Rob would write to the RFSG members individually to enquire if they would be interested in putting themselves forward for UK Council.

9. **EURIPA INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER**

Donata Kurpas through John Wynn Jones suggestion has contacted Rob asking if anyone from the RFSG would like to be a national representative on the International Advisory Board. Hal was previously on the board, but has resigned. Rob will contact Hal and enquire about what this involves. This position could be offered to the whole of the RF rather than just the RFSG.
10. **MAPPING OTHER RURAL ORGANISATIONS**

Rob will be attending the Rural Network Health meeting in London. The meeting is more about social care rather than health care. Rob hopes that by attending it will expand contacts for the RF and hopefully gain ideas for the future.

Nigel Mathers support of the RF is good for RCGP relationships between RF and Central Council.

11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Michael informed the group that the Practice Based Pharmacists in Northern Ireland working with the GP Federations works really well and feedback has been good, reducing GPs workloads. They have developed training needs which is competency based, with training in-house.

This system works well in comparison to the RCGP Competency Workbook which is poor on communication skills and is diagnosis based rather than symptom based and how you would reach a diagnosis.

Michael reported that in Northern Ireland GPs voted at the weekend and many GPs would be tendering their resignation. There is no funding and a lack of GPs in general. 6% of practices, mainly in rural areas will close.

Mel reported that in Wales there is a lot more money in the system, but there is still a crisis in Wales. The Welsh Minister is denying there are problems.

In south east England there are 30,000 patients without a GP. With no resources, will GPs be privatised and could this be the end of the NHS?...

12. **DATE OF NEXT TELEPHONE CONFERENCE**

Paula will send Doodle Poll for next teleconference after the Rural Conference.