



# Medical Council

**Business Plan - 2020**

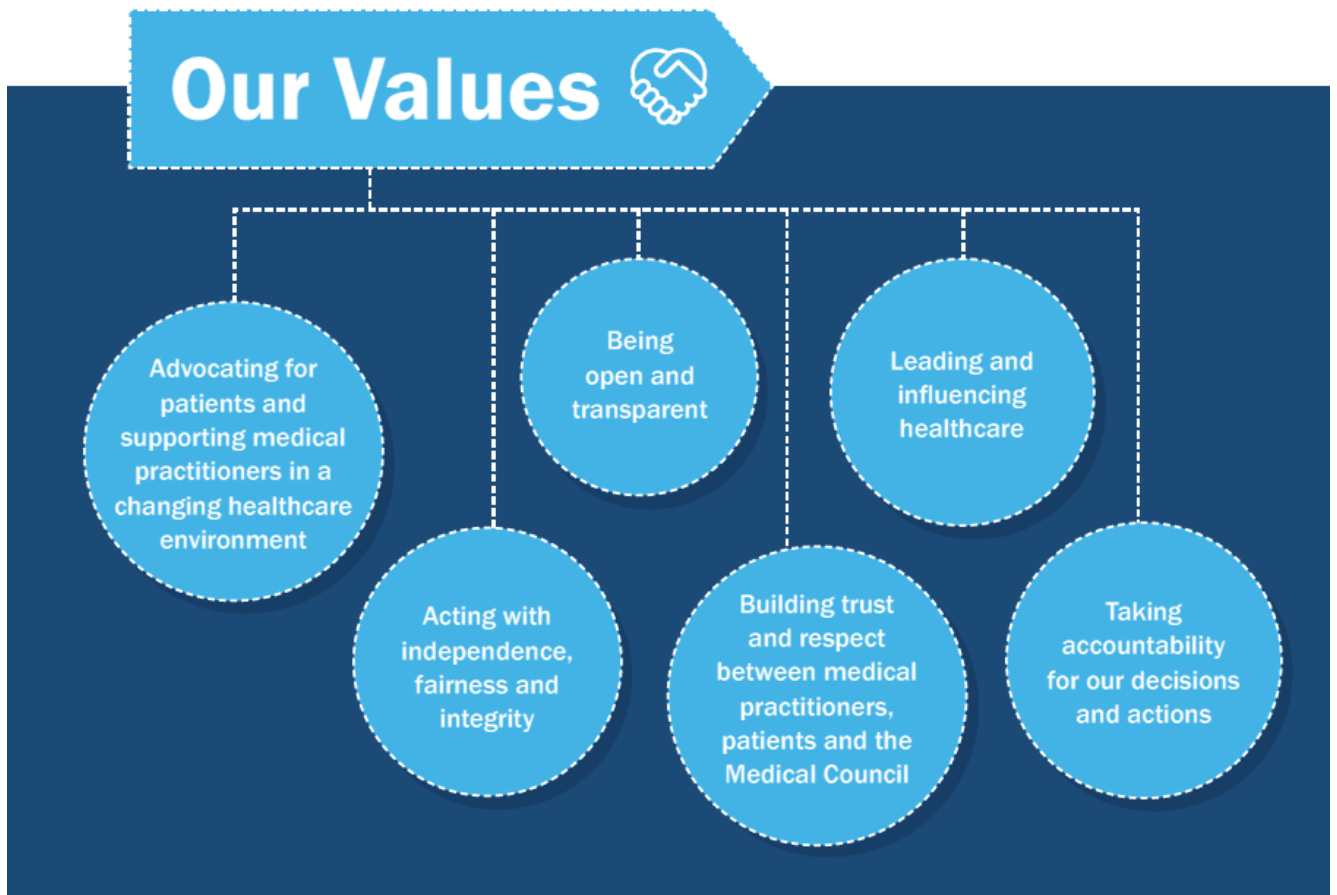


**Comhairle na nDochtúirí Leighis  
Medical Council**

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## 1. Vision, Mission & Values of the Medical Council



## 2 Strategic Objectives 2019 – 2023

To deliver the strategy the Council has defined six key strategic objectives and several key actions.

The six key strategic objectives for this term are:



**1**

Ensure medical regulation protects the public and supports registered medical practitioners



**2**

Ensure consistency in application of quality assured standards across the continuum of education, training and lifelong learning



**3**

Learn from experience to enhance the delivery of an efficient and proportionate model of regulation



**4**

Improve the understanding of the role of the Medical Council



**5**

Review and recommend changes to legislation regulating the medical profession



**6**

Develop the Medical Council as an engaged, effective and empowered organisation

## **Introduction 2020 Plan**

The 2020 Business Plan is the result of a mid-year review following the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. This plan reflects a rethink as to the key business outcomes of the Council. It takes account of how the requirements of government policy reflecting social distancing, working remotely, etc., have impacted the ability of the Council to deliver on its legislative remit.

The plan remains challenging yet tempered by the need to consider how the Council operates within the structures of government advice and direction on conduct of business. The 2020 Business Plan may not reflect the significant work the Council undertook to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. In quarter two, the Council was at the forefront regarding provision of guidance on matters relating to issues of practice and ethical considerations, and in the registration of doctors returning to practice under Covid-19 specific legislation.

The Business Plan, as presented, reflects the efforts of the Council to return to its core business and deliver outcomes aligned to its Statement of Strategy.

Philip Brady  
Chief Executive Officer

## 1. Ensure medical regulation protects the public and supports registered medical practitioners

### 1.1 Maintain the application of standards that ensure the efficient and effective registration of medical practitioners

Action	Target date	Owner
Ensure that relevant Registration processes and supporting guidance/information is updated to reflect Brexit related changes	December <sup>1</sup>	Director of Registration
Ensure year end on hand first-time applications is < 500	December	Director of Registration
Complete assessments and make determinations on all applications for specialist registration  Ensure that Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies (PGTBs) complete >95 per cent of assessments within the specified 10-week elapsed time period	December	Director of Registration
Ensure Register is up-to-date and captures all relevant changes in practitioners' registration  Ensure >98 per cent of annual retention fees are paid/received	August	Director of Registration
Complete assessments and make determinations on all intern applications  Ensure that >95 per cent of qualifying interns are registered	May	Director of Registration
Ensure that Registration application information is updated to reflect relevant changes upon ratification/implementation of Brexit	December <sup>2</sup>	Director of Registration

### 1.2 Maintain the application of proportionate and targeted regulatory interventions

Action	Target date	Owner
Undertake evaluation and report on implications associated with any decision to soften Maintenance of Professional Competence compliance monitoring	September	Director of Professional Competence

<sup>1</sup> This item is subject to the approach taken by the UK Government as to Brexit negotiations and deadlines

<sup>2</sup> This item is subject to the approach taken by the UK Government as to Brexit negotiations and deadlines

Collate RCPC and Council inputs, develop agreed position and implement recommendations		
Undertake Performance Assessment activity as endorsed by RCPC and Council (*4 assessment on hold subject to constraints due to COVID-19)	November	Director of Professional Competence
Complete review of existing arrangements and develop proposals for enhancement of Regulatory systems, processes and procedures to reflect changes in legislation/ investigative powers  Agree changes to Regulatory systems, processes and procedures with CEO and ensure implementation	September <sup>3</sup>	Director of Regulation
Complete assessment of Professional Standard training needs <sup>4</sup> associated with the enactment of the Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Bill  Ensure that all 'critical' and 'necessary' training is provided to relevant staff and committee members	September <sup>5</sup>	Director of Regulation
Complete review of: (i) Evolve case management system and (ii) IT functionality requirements associated with enactment of the Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Bill  Develop recommendations identifying costs and benefits associated with Evolve system upgrade versus migration to an alternative case management system	September <sup>6</sup>	Director of Regulation
Enhance transparency and awareness through the publication and sharing of statistics detailing e.g.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number and nature of complaints received</li> <li>- Section 60 orders</li> <li>- Breakdown of public vs. private enquiries</li> <li>- Other (to be agreed)</li> </ul> Ensure proactive quarterly communication of related information to stakeholders through agreed channels	December	Director of Regulation
Ensure the continued, efficient and regular support for registered medical practitioners with identified relevant health and practice issues through activities of the Health Committee	December	Director of Regulation

<sup>3</sup> Subject to enactment by legislation

<sup>4</sup> Identified as 'critical', 'necessary' and 'desirable'

<sup>5</sup> Subject to enactment by legislation

<sup>6</sup> Subject to enactment by legislation

**1.3 Identify, harness and use Medical Council expertise to develop clear positions on key healthcare issues and contribute to health policy development which impacts on patient safety and the medical profession**

Action	Target date	Owner
Design and conduct public consultation exercise on updated Section 11 rules following enactment of the Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Bill Present related proposals for Council approval/endorsement	December <sup>7</sup>	Director of Registration
Ensure that Registration business processes and systems are updated to reflect changes arising from the enactment of the Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Bill	December <sup>8</sup>	Director of Registration
Examine the patient safety concerns around the prescribing practices of benzodiazepines, pregabalin and Z drugs to enable Council to make healthcare policy recommendations and to support doctors in the area of safe prescribing	December	Chief Executive
Examine the opportunities and challenges of telemedicine to inform Council guidance and make recommendations on healthcare policy initiatives	December	Chief Executive

**1.4 Collaborate with Irish and international medical regulators to contribute to and enhance best practice regulatory models and standards**

Action	Target date	Owner
Ensure that the Medical Council secures World Federation of Medical Education recognition as an approved accreditation agency	June	Director of Education & Training
Develop an action and implementation plan to address all recommendations for improvement made by the World Federation of Medical Education Ensure that all priority ('critical' and 'necessary') improvement recommendations are implemented	December	Director of Education & Training

<sup>7</sup> These items are subject to action by government to enact the *Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Bill*

<sup>8</sup> These items are subject to action by government to enact the *Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Bill*



<p>Liaise with the General Medical Council in relation to their processes and procedures, to identify relevant learnings that may be applied to the Medical Council processes in Ireland</p> <p>Develop action plan and timelines for implementation of agreed changes to Medical Council processes</p>	September	Director of Regulation
<p>Agree joint GMC/MC processes, protocols and timelines for post-Brexit information sharing as it relates to doctors practising in the respective jurisdictions</p>	September	Director of Regulation

## Objective 2:

### Ensure consistency in application of quality assured standards across the continuum of education, training and lifelong learning

#### *2.1 Continued development of a proportionate, evidence-led, regulatory model to quality assure medical education, training and lifelong learning*

Action	Target date	Owner
Develop a comprehensive set of draft Medical Council standards for undergraduate, intern and postgraduate medical education and training and clinical training sites for stakeholder consultation	December	Director of Education & Training
Conduct a tender process for the engagement of a third-party provider to develop a support system for the practical application of new education and training standards to include SOPs, policies, guidance documentation for assessing and monitoring compliance, etc.	December	Director of Education & Training
Complete accreditation process for 1 undergraduate and 11 postgraduate medical education and training programmes (subject to constraints due to COVID-19)	December	Director of Education & Training
Undertake evaluations of all medical schools and postgraduate training bodies to determine adherence to Medical Council standards since date of last accreditation	July	Director of Education & Training
Ensure that areas of non-compliance are identified and remedial actions/requirements are relayed to the respective medical education and training bodies	December	
Ensure that all applications for recognition of new specialities are processed in accordance with indicative process time parameters	December	Director of Education & Training
Determine which Anatomy Departments should receive priority in the inspection cycle and ensure that they are inspected (subject to constraints due to COVID-19)	December	Director of Education & Training
Complete evaluations of all Anatomy Department anatomical returns, assess adherence to Medical Council policy and report associated findings/ recommendations	March	Director of Education & Training
Provide Professional Qualifications Directive Training to relevant staff, assessors and Council members	October	Director of Education & Training
Develop online training module and ensure that relevant staff, assessors and Council members complete training on the EU Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications and related Regulations		

Undertake evaluation of approaches adopted by selected comparator organisations and develop internal appeals process for review of Education & Training Committee decisions	December	Director of Education & Training
Complete review of international evidence and best practice with a view to enhancing the Maintenance of Professional Competence framework  Obtain RCPC and Council endorsement	December	Director of Professional Competence
Undertake review of existing PRES Level 2 (MCQ) arrangements and impacts on registration applications  Develop and submit viable/workable options for organisational consideration	October	Director of Registration

### ***2.2 Ensure all education, training and lifelong learning interventions are evidence-based***

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Review policy, governance systems and contextual information by December 2020 to identify needs for developing CPD accreditation model  Engage ACCME to assist MC in scoping the development of CPD accreditation model	September	Director of Professional Competence

### ***2.3 Ensure professional identity formation process, from lay person to skilled professional, is embedded in education, training and lifelong learning***

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Ensure Professional Competence schemes are compliant with contractual arrangements through the analysis and reporting KPI and qualitative data to RCPC and communicate advice to PGTBs on agreed actions  Collate RCPC and Council inputs, develop agreed position and implement recommendations	August	Director of Professional Competence

### ***2.4 Guide the development of outcome-based education, training and lifelong learning programmed appropriate to the student or registered medical practitioner's career stage***

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Develop updated guidance document detailing Council's CPD priorities and requirements of Professional Competence Scheme operators Ensure understanding of CPD priorities/requirements and commitment to adoption is secured on behalf of all operators	November	Director of Professional Competence

**2.5 Undertake or commission targeted medical education research that addresses strategically important themes that advance medical education, training and lifelong learning quality in Ireland**

Action	Target date	Owner
Design, develop and launch trainees' & trainers' survey to inform solutions and actions to address issues impacting on trainers and trainees working in the Irish health system	December	Director of Professional Competence

**2.6 Provide leadership to students and registered medical practitioners on their professional conduct and ethical responsibilities**

Action	Target date	Owner
Develop plan to review the Ethical Guide and activate research and consultation following ethic committee endorsement	September	Director of Professional Competence

**2.7 Support and advocate for the physical and mental well-being of students and registered medical practitioners**

Action	Target date	Owner
Develop and launch a doctor wellbeing campaign to highlight the importance of doctors caring for themselves for patient safety.  Develop customised doctor wellbeing campaign, highlighting the importance of doctor self-care, as a patient safety requirement  Develop campaign to optimise awareness and ensure that initiative is launched by August	August	Chief Executive (Comms)

### Objective 3:

## Learn from experience to enhance the delivery of an efficient and proportionate model of regulation

### *3.1 Proactively identify and deliver improvements in regulatory activities*

Action	Target date	Owner
Research, develop and submit recommendations, for the evolution of the Irish Professional Competence Scheme, to the RCPC and Council	December	Director of Professional Competence

### *3.2 Analyse and use relevant information (internally and externally) in a targeted way, to better inform decisions*

Action	Target date	Owner
Analyse and report details of complaints, registration, retention and related data with a view to informing health sector workforce planning decisions	December	Director of Professional Competence

### *3.3 Collaborate with stakeholders to encourage sharing of information, experiences and joint learning*

Action	Target date	Owner
Develop informed and authoritative policy positions/recommendations on health service delivery and practice and ensure clear articulation at quarterly tripartite (NDTP/Forum of PGTBs/Medical Council) meetings	December	Chief Executive

### *3.4 Be a learning organisation committed to continually improving what we do*

Action	Target date	Owner
Develop, agree and introduce governance self-assessment protocols and questionnaires for all Council Committees	September December	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Establish arrangements for annual self-assessments, reporting and review of outcomes		
Ensure that all Council personnel complete refresher Freedom of Information and Data Protection training	November	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Develop, agree and implement Freedom of Information and Data Protection orientation plan for all new personnel joining from 1 <sup>st</sup> January.		

Ensure that all objectives, requirements and obligations as outlined in the 'Equality in the Public Sector' Working Group document are implemented by year end	December	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Undertake review and develop proposals/recommendations to streamline: (i) complaint procedures, (ii) PPC/FTPC procedures and associated correspondence  Agree recommended changes to procedures and correspondence for implementation	December	Director of Regulation
Complete assessment of training needs <sup>9</sup> associated with the enactment of the Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Bill  Ensure that all 'critical' and 'necessary' training is provided to relevant staff and committee members	December	Director of Regulation
Review, develop and present case management proposals and recommendations to streamline/optimize efficiency of: (i) inquiries and (ii) call-overs	June	Director of Regulation
Research and recommend suitable ICT or similar solution which would allow inquiries to be conducted remotely and/or at relevant physical distance	June	Director of Regulation
Complete review of best practice/lessons learned in managing litigation, appeals, judicial reviews and other legal actions within comparator (common law) regulators  Develop and recommend related proposals for adoption by the Medical Council	December	Director of Regulation

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<sup>9</sup> Identified as 'critical', 'necessary' and 'desirable'

## Objective 4: Improve the understanding of the role of the Medical Council

### 4.1 Promote an open and transparent organisational ethos

Action	Target date	Owner
Create and commence publication of quarterly Freedom of Information Disclosure Logs. The first log published will include backdated data from 2019	August	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Ensure that 100% of data breaches are reported to the Data Protection Commission within the timeframe as outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	December	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Ensure that at least 90% of requests for information under Freedom of Information & Data Protection legislation are issued within the timeframes outlined in relevant legislation	December	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Ensure that media queries are acknowledged in a timely manner and comprehensive responses are issued promptly	December	Chief Executive (Comms)

### 4.2 Establish meaningful two-way communication channels and engage opportunities with stakeholders

Action	Target date	Owner
Ensure that working groups (Council, President, Committee) who require Corporate Governance support are identified/agreed/documented upon establishment and met on an on-going basis	December	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Devise, develop and agree key engagement principles to underpin all Oireachtas Committee public affairs campaigns Ensure effective and on-going engagement with elected officials and Oireachtas Health Committee members in accordance with agreed principles	September	Chief Executive (Comms)

#### **4.3 Outline and share the Medical Council's methodologies, operations and processes to key stakeholders**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<p>Design, develop and agree presentation and external messaging on the Council's complaints processes and requirement for local level reporting/resolution in cases of first instance, that is, at clinical site level</p> <p>Develop and implement engagement plan and schedule for meetings with: (i) the HSE, (ii) registrant indemnifiers, (iii) GP representatives and (iv) patient safety groups</p>	December	Director of Regulation
Develop and agree information requirements and seminar themes for registered medical practitioners	December	Chief Executive

#### **4.4 Publish and promote relevant Medical Council activities**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<p>Design, develop and agree stakeholder presentation and messaging as it relates to the Council's professional competence schemes</p> <p>Develop and implement engagement plan and schedule for meetings with key stakeholder groups</p>	October 2020	Director of Professional Competence
Ensure in all instances that launch plans and related information/ media/ campaign strategies are developed and implemented to optimise awareness of Council research and reports	December	Chief Executive



## **Objective 5: Review and recommend changes to legislation regulating the medical profession**

### ***5.1 Review the current legislation regulating medical practitioners to inform and recommend changes***

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Through the Council Away Day, develop scope of the projects which will deliver for this objective.	September	Chief Executive
Complete review and recommend leading practice approaches to Registration and regulatory compliance for consideration by RCPC in transition to a new model of registration	December	Director of Registration
Complete review and evaluation to identify gaps/requirements as they relate to Part 10 of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007 and submit recommendations	September	Director of Education & Training

### ***5.2 Examine international health professions regulatory practice and legislation to inform and recommend changes in the regulation of medical practitioners***

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Ensure initial scoping of international health professions regulatory practice and legislation is completed, to inform broader thinking and direction.	December	Chief Executive

### ***5.3 Review and recommend changes to legislation regulating the medical profession***

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Ensure initial scoping of areas of changes to legislation regulating the medical profession is completed, to inform broader thinking and direction.	December	Chief Executive

## Objective 6: Develop the Medical Council as an engaged, effective and empowered organisation

### 6.1 Develop, align and support a skilled and knowledgeable team required to deliver on the Council's strategic objectives

Action	Target date	Owner
Review 2020 Learning & Development Plan objectives and determine programmes/training which will be delivered remotely in Q3 and Q4. Develop updated agenda, plan and activity programme for Council's autumn Away-Day.	September	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Identify core functionality requirements and issue tender for a suitable governance software system Ensure successful implementation of governance software board meeting support module Ensure successful implementation of governance software performance and risk modules	December	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Review requirements necessary to ensure full compliance with procurement legislation/controls and address any resource or related gaps arising	July	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Ensure that review of existing structure is undertaken and proposed organisational design is developed/agreed Ensure that revised Workforce Plan is developed and submitted to the Department of Health	July	Director of Corporate Services (HR)
Review, revise, update and publish Staff Handbook	August	Director of Corporate Services (HR)
Develop and agree integrated/strategic training plan for the organisation and ensure implementation in accordance with associated timelines	September	Director of Corporate Services (HR)
Review, develop and update all Medical Council job descriptions and role profiles Ensure that a customised Medical Council competency framework is developed, agreed and implemented across the organisation	October	Director of Corporate Services (HR)
Review, develop and update all Medical Council HR policies and procedures	November	Director of Corporate Services (HR)

Ensure that interview skills and PMDS training is provided for all Medical Council personnel in support of the new competency framework	November	Director of Corporate Services (HR)
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### ***6.2 Create a culture that encourages collaboration and shared learning within the Medical Council***

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Identify and propose ICT and related solutions to: (i) increase efficiency and (ii) support remote access/e-working	September	Director of Corporate Services (ICT)
Ensure full compliance with health and safety legislation in implementation of remote working	June	Director of Corporate Services (Facilities)
<p>Ensure that Employee Engagement meetings are held on a regular quarterly basis and that emerging issues are addressed</p> <p>Ensure that monthly wellbeing meetings take place and agreed actions delivered on</p> <p>Design and administer regular staff surveys, report findings to CEO/Director of Corporate Services and develop action plan to address issues necessitating intervention</p> <p>Develop schedule for regular lunch and learn sessions, ensuring that key learning topics are agreed and promoted</p> <p>Ensure that agendas are developed and that staff meetings are held on a regular monthly basis across the organisation</p>	December	Director of Corporate Services (HR)
Undertake review of arrangements within comparable organisations and develop customised Medical Council wellbeing strategy and supporting objectives	December	Director of Corporate Services (HR)

### ***6.3 Provide a working environment and infrastructure that will support the strategic direction of the Council***

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Complete and embed the organisation's move to the CloudMigrate servers and services that are suitable to reside within the MCIRL Cloud instance	June	Director of Corporate Services (ICT)
Ensure successful Implementation of the new integrated finance system	December	Director of Corporate Services (Finance)

Define/agree internal terms of reference, review the Council's income model and report recommendations to Audit, Finance and Risk Committee	December	Director of Corporate Services (Finance)
Develop and implement customised COVID-19 infection control policy and protocols to minimise infection risks for Council, staff, visitors and all stakeholders	July	Director of Corporate Services (Facilities)
Ensure successful completion of refurbishment and M&E infrastructural programme which meets spatial, environmental, disability, H&S and related requirements	December	Director of Corporate Services (Facilities)
Identify, propose, agree and deliver meeting space solution(s) which address key meeting objectives/requirements	December	Director of Corporate Services (Facilities)
Administer on-line self-assessment survey of Council's governance and performance and report results against 2019 findings  Identify and engage facilitator to explore results and identify emerging issues/requirements/proposals with Council members during a dedicated Learning and Development session	August	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Agree and implement procedures for replacing Council members upon resignation and ensure that vacancies are filled in a timely manner	September	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Develop, agree and implement protocols for convening, chairing and managing Council meetings on a remote basis  Complete satisfaction surveys and develop enhancement recommendations after 3 and 6 months of operation	September December	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Manage the Record Management process to include a full clear down of the office by end Q2/mid Q3 and support the appointment of a new Document Management Support Service by year end	September	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Monitor Council member meeting attendance rates and report results to members, Strategy & Governance Committee and President at year end	September	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)

Nominate and agree c. 12 'Record Champions' to support the implementation of the new Document Management Support Service and provide training/assistance to colleagues	October	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Working with the SGC, ensure that all committee chairs review their committee's terms of reference and develop proposals for adoption for SGC review/approval	November	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Complete review of arrangements within comparable organisations and develop customised Remote Working policy for Medical Council personnel	June	Director of Corporate Services (HR)
Determine key messages and ensure that training programme on successful management of remote working is provided for relevant personnel	June	Director of Corporate Services (HR)

***6.4 Continuously review and align the governance structures to the strategic priorities of the organisation***

Action	Target date	Owner
Develop proposals and agree arrangements (with Council and DoH) for implementation of rolling Council terms with effect from June 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2021	December	Director of Corporate Services (Governance)
Develop and successfully implement a customised Environmental Action Programme for all aspects of the Medical Council's operations, delivering required targets for Public Sector Organisations	December	Director of Corporate Services (Facilities)
Ensure that the organisation's combined energy consumption is reduced by a minimum of 3 per cent against 2019 baseline levels	December	Director of Corporate Services (Facilities)