

**BACP Public Protection Committee Meeting
Wednesday 12th November 2025
MS Teams at 10:00hrs**

Report Information

Meeting Date	Wednesday 12 th November 2025
Venue	Teams
Confidential/Non-Confidential	Confidential
Author	Clair Parfrey, Governance officer

Purpose of the Report

To obtain approval	✓	To canvas opinion	
For information/ to note	✓	Regulatory requirement	
To provide advice		To highlight any emerging risks	

Attendees

Committee Members Present	Dr Paul Taylor	PT	Committee Chair
	Dr Lynette Harborne	LH	Committee Member
	Pippa Menzies	PM	Committee Member
	Ciaran Doyle	CD	Committee Member
BACP Staff Present	Caroline Jesper	HoPS	Head of Professional Standards
	Dr Lisa Morrison	DPSP&R	Director of Professional Standards, Policy and Research
	Clair Parfrey	CP	Governance Officer
	James Pickering	JP	Registrar
	Jo Holmes	JH	Safeguarding Lead
	Rebecca Grace	RG	Deputy Registrar
	James Walker	JW	Register Manager
Apologies	Leon White	LW	Committee Member

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Item No	General business
1.0	Preliminary matters

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1.1	<p>Welcome, introductions, apologies and quoracy.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all in attendance and thanked CD for acting as Chair for the last period. The meeting was noted as quorate.</p>
1.2	<p>Declarations of interest.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
1.3	<p>Minutes of last meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meetings held on 30 July 2025 and 1 September 2025 were reviewed and approved for signature.</p>
1.4	<p>To consider any items requiring redaction</p> <p>It was agreed that there were no items in the minutes of 30 July 2025 and 1 September 2025 that required redacting and therefore they can be shared on the website once signed.</p>
1.5	<p>Matters arising and review of action tracker</p> <p>The action tracker was updated and it was noted that several items would be discussed as part of this meeting.</p> <p>There were no matters arising</p>
2	<p>Briefing and Reports</p>
2.1	<p>Register Development Report</p> <p>JP Registrar spoke to his paper which committee members had read prior to the meeting.</p> <p><u>PSA annual check</u> JP noted that BACP has successfully completed its annual check with the Professional Standards Authority condition that was previously in place has been met and there's been one recommendation made as part of our annual check.</p> <p><u>PSA Consultation</u> PSA are currently consulting on some updates to their standards. Both JP and LM have attended workshops with the PSA and begun discussing some of their proposed changes. This is positive news from the PSA as they seem to be moving very much into spaces around collaborating more closely with the accredited registers, including the potential of a central register on the PSA website which will offer flexibility around how registers can demonstrate their meeting the standards, and some enhancements in areas of public protection, governance and data collection</p> <p>Whilst supportive of the changes being proposed by the PSA, concerns have been raised regarding the challenges of ensuring consistency in decision making across the Accredited Registers programme when flexibility is further encouraged.</p>

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Overall the meeting with the PSA was a very positive. Staff will be reviewing any resourcing issues as we move forward, but nothing the PSA is currently suggesting deviates significantly from planned work.

DPT project

As part of the report our internal procedures we have reviewed our complaints hearings processes. We identified that there were a number of adjournments over the last 12 to 24 months. We are trying to upskill our case processors to look at this, to interact with all parties earlier in the process, hold more case conferences with our associate solicitor and ultimately be more proactive than reactive. This will enable us to identify issues ahead of hearings and therefore ensure those hearings go smoothly for all parties and result in effective outcomes

2.2 Serious Case Report

JW gave an update on his paper which sets out the wide range of issues reported.

The need for Interim Suspension Orders (ISO) was discussed, particularly in relation to cases where there is a severe risk to the public. Failure to participate or engage with the register audit has resulted in several cases. The panel has a strict view on this which resulted in ISO's. The committee discussed the reasons for this lack of engagement and the support that BACP offers.

The paper sets out the procedure for implementation of an ISO:

Where an ISO is contemplated, the Board of Trustees will be asked to make a Resolution under Article 12.5 of the BACP Articles of Association maintaining the individual's membership for the purposes of the professional conduct process. Whilst in principle a complaint can still be progressed under the Professional Conduct Procedure notwithstanding a Member's resignation, the ability to apply and publish an ISO would be lost, diminishing the Association's public protection function.

The ISO prevents a member from resigning and enables us to convene a hearing and publish that there are concerns. Thereby protecting the public.

The opportunity for legal representation and subsequent appeals was discussed.

Since May 2025 there have been 6 new ISO's applied.

It was noted that we have not seen a significant increase in ISO's despite the increase in membership numbers. We are putting ISO's in place earlier in the process - on receipt of evidence rather than waiting for the case to pass through to the independent Investigation and Assessment Committee (IAC).

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	<p>The committee discussed the lack of awareness of this process by the members. It was felt that improvements in sharing the detail of care and attention that goes into this process may improve members perceptions of BACP.</p> <p>The Professional conduct team are working on an engagement plan as part of their 5 year plan. An article is currently being written for therapy today which will look at some aspects of professional conduct as a way of myth busting and showing positive support for our members in relation to conduct.</p>
3	Updates
3.1	<p>Safeguarding of members</p> <p>JH spoke to her paper and updated the committee on developments that have occurred since her appointment on 1 September.</p> <p>William Llorel-antoine has volunteered to take interim responsibility for safeguarding as a trustee.</p> <p>JH met with the DBS to discuss the need for board and committee members to undertake a DBS check prior to appointment. It was agreed that this would not be appropriate or necessary. It was also noted that any check carried out only relates to the county in which the individual resides.</p> <p>It was reported that there has been a slight increase in reported safeguarding issues compared to this time last year with 101 concerns from July to the end of October.</p> <p>Approximately 75% of those concerns come from members, with about a third of them involving young people as either clients or children of clients.</p> <p>We are developing a safeguarding strategy and have had discussions with the president and SLT regarding a safeguarding committee. It was decided we had enough support in place to not need an additional committee and therefore we will not put that audit recommendation into practice.</p> <p>Since writing today's report, we have been considering risks around international safeguarding and considering developments with AI.</p> <p>We are looking to improve our reporting system and after meeting with external providers have decided that it will be more cost effective to develop our own bespoke platform that will be fit for purpose, identify trends and give us a reporting mechanism with appropriate detail.</p> <p>Internally we are providing training for staff and are about to launch a bespoke training session to board members, which is appropriate to their role.</p>
3.2	Update from DPSPR

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Regulatory standards

Oversight of BACP regulatory standards is now part of the DPSPR's portfolio alongside professional standards to ensure that there's greater alignment.

It was felt that rather than waiting to see what the government does in terms of statutory regulation, we need implement our own systems and ensure that we are operating with principles that would underpin good regulation. With this in mind JP and the DPSPR will start to develop ideas alongside this committee.

We have recently embarked on the launch of a Commission on the future of counselling and psychotherapy. This is part of our partnership with the PCPB bodies (formally the SCoPEd partnership). The purpose of the Commission is to help us identify strategic priorities for the partnership as a collective and individually.

The first meeting held in October looked at where we are now as a profession - taking stock. The second session will lean into the question of statutory regulation, which will help inform further discussions around the principles of good regulation. We will be hearing from a person with lived experience, the PSA and UKCP in relation to it's work on statutory regulation.

By looking at various models and underpinning principles, we will be better placed to shape our ideas on what the profession will look like in the future.

Ethical framework

We are currently moving towards having the revised framework in place and are actively consulting with members on the 1st draught. We are hosting an event next Tuesday which will involve a panel discussion involving a number of members of the writing group that is pulling together all of the research and the evidence base that's been gathered at the earliest stages of this work. We will then be able to respond to any questions from Members. Currently over 800 members have registered for the event. Committee members requested a link to join the event.

An update on the session will be provided at the next committee meeting.

It was clarified that the event is open to members only and that the Chat room/Questions raised will be moderated.

Action

DPSPR to send committee members link to Ethical framework event

DPSPR to provide update on Ethical Framework meeting in March 2026.

3.3 AI Update

The paper was written in response to an action raised in late 2024 and was taken as read.

The second part of the paper provides a picture of current developments in relation to the business plan.

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The DPSPR outlined that we have developed a new cross-organisational work stream to provide appropriate guidance and support to members in the use of AI both within therapeutic work and as a tool to assist with their practice. This work is being led by the DD&T Ben Kay who oversees our transformation and digital development. Resources are being developed and specialist staff recruited to support the project.

The committee discussed the fast-moving developments in this area and the danger of becoming behind the curve. A project plan is in development which will identify milestones and priorities. It is hoped that guidance for members is shared via a website to prevent it from becoming static, we will also be signposting members to updates via newsletters etc.

It was noted that AI presented opportunities for BACP in its work that may be beneficial to adopt rather than to resist.

The committee also suggested that we discuss the possible developments in this area with insurance companies.

Future updates will be provided to the committee.

Action

DPSPR to raise suggestions with DD&T, and arrange a meeting to discuss ideas with CD

4

AOB

There was no additional business.

Next meeting:

11th February 2026 - Q4 standard meeting

Meeting closed at 11:15am

Approved by Committee on

11.02.26

Signed by Chair as approved



Dr P. Taylor Chair

