

**General
Dental
Council**



Right time
Right place
Right touch

Corporate Strategy 2020-2022
Costed Corporate Plan 2020

gdc-uk.org



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Foreword



Ian Brack
Chief Executive and Registrar

The GDC exists to protect patients and maintain the high levels of public confidence in dentistry and oral health services. Whilst we believe that we have met our responsibilities in these areas, we recognise that we have been less effective in sustaining the confidence of the professions in their regulator. This is why our previous strategic plan sought to work with the professions and our partners to improve our overall performance while continuing to meet our statutory objectives. Our belief was that this would both enhance our effectiveness and build registrants' confidence in the organisation.

One of the drivers of these changes was that we recognised that too much of our time and effort was being directed toward enforcement, rather than on prevention. A focus on the prevention of harm benefits the public and dental professionals. 'Shifting the balance: a better, fairer system of dental regulation', set out our proposal for change and addressed the need to provide clarity and timeliness in addressing patient concerns, to secure the support of the professionals we regulate, and to be more flexible and proportionate by adopting a more preventative approach.

In parallel to this, we took steps to improve cost effectiveness and financial management. We have moved our operational hub to Birmingham, providing significant long-term savings. The end of 2019 marked the conclusion of our estates' refurbishment programme and means that all of our hearings will now be held in our London offices, at a considerably reduced cost, from the start of 2020.

Because the costs of regulation are reflected in the Annual Retention Fee (ARF) paid by the relevant professions, reduced GDC costs impact directly on the ARF. We have made decisive moves to address the issue of fees, updating and further refining our costs analysis and introducing fees for first registration. We have also made changes to our reserves policy.

We want the system of dental regulation to promote professionalism and we have been facilitating conversations with members of the public and the professions to develop a set of principles that will protect patients and be fair to professionals. Developing and promoting a set of principles of professionalism will also help to promote high quality education and lifelong learning, focusing our resources on ensuring high standards of care and professional conduct. However, there is also further work needed to ensure that patient concerns and complaints are routed to the right place (which may not be the

Foreword

GDC) and, when they come to us, are being dealt with quickly and effectively.

The document that follows is fundamental to sustaining these changes and continuing the improvement of the GDC - a costed, three-year corporate plan which sets out the mechanisms by which we will deliver our corporate strategy. Of course, this is the first time we have taken this approach and we recognise that like all plans, it will need to adapt. In some areas we have detailed plans in place to deliver but in other areas, particularly where there is a changing political landscape, we will have to remain flexible and reprioritise where appropriate. This will mean that some projects and their timescales will inevitably change. They will do so, however, within an overall resource framework which will be better defined and far better understood than ever before.

Ian Brack
Chief Executive and Registrar



Costed Corporate Plan 2020

Introduction

This document provides a summary of our Costed Corporate Plan for 2020 and should be read in conjunction with our 'Corporate Strategy 2020-2022: Right time, right place, right touch', which gives a framework for our ambitions and provides our forecasted costs to deliver on our plans.

Here, we provide details of the work planned that will contribute to each of our five strategic aims, describing what we want to achieve and how we plan to deliver this change.

Our costed corporate plan is a three-year rolling plan which will be updated annually. All the programmes listed in the current plan are for work that was ongoing at the end of 2019 or planned to begin during 2020. Programmes due to begin in 2021 and 2022 are listed at the end of the 2020 work programme. Next year's plan will give a summary of performance against what we said we would deliver in 2020 and details our programme of activities and costs for the following three years, 2021 to 2023.

Our statutory objectives

This Costed Corporate Plan 2020 details the work we will undertake to improve the current of system of regulation while continuing to fulfil our statutory objectives, to:

- Protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of the public.
- Promote and maintain public confidence in regulated dental professions.
- Promote and maintain proper professional standards and conduct.

Our vision

Our vision is for a system of regulation which:

- Supports the provision of safe, effective oral health care.
- Promotes and embeds clear standards of clinical competence and ethical conduct.
- Embodies the principles of right touch regulation: proportionality, accountability, consistency, transparency, targeted, and agility.



Our values

When working to realise our vision, the following values will guide how we operate:

- Fairness: we treat everyone we deal with fairly.
- Transparency: we are open about how we work and how we reach decisions.
- Responsiveness: we listen, and we adapt to changing circumstances.
- Respect: we treat everyone with respect.

Monitoring and reporting our progress

Our key performance indicators will be aligned to our strategic aims and objectives and monitored continuously through our balanced scorecard. These are currently being developed and will be completed in early 2020. Our balanced scorecard is reviewed at every Council meeting.

We will also develop and implement a longer term impact evaluation and research programme, in order to achieve and sustain continuous learning. This work is listed in the costed corporate plan, with work due to begin in 2020.

Work programme

Detailed below is our work programme by strategic aim. Although all programmes of work have been allocated to a single strategic aim, the results may contribute to multiple aims.

Start and finish dates are provided for all the initiatives listed. These should be used as a guide only as they are estimates based on the information available during the planning period and are subject to a changing external environment and organisational priorities.

Of course, the plan must incorporate existing initiatives which are not yet complete: the uncompleted initiatives instigated under our previous strategy are included below. These can be identified by the start dates, which are all earlier than 2020. Work due to begin in 2021, or later, can be found in section 6, below.

Strategic aim 1

To operate a regulatory system which protects patients and is fair to registrants, while being cost-effective and proportionate; which begins with education, supports career-long learning, promotes high standards of care

and professional conduct and is developed in the light of emerging evidence.

The work programme designed to meet this objective is summarised below. **The forecast expenditure for this strategic aim is £9,846,883 which is 24% of the total budget forecast for 2020.**

1.1. Provide a sustainable and effective regulatory framework which empowers dental professionals to use their professional judgement and promotes high standards of care and professional conduct:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Revise the support provided to new registrants	Q2 2018	Q1 2020
Publish guidance for the managers of dental professionals	Q3 2019	Q2 2021
Explore and understand the options for NHS complaint handling	Q3 2019	Q3 2020
Understand and model risks which result in concerns	Q1 2020	Q2 2021



1.2. Develop a career-long learning-based system and culture aimed at ensuring that patient care is at the forefront of everything dental professionals do. One which supports learning and improvement, and is developed using the latest research, data and insights:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Develop an outcome-focused model for lifelong learning	Q1 2020	Q4 2022
Implement a framework to promote professionalism	Q3 2019	Q1 2021
Develop tools to support patient-centred care	Q1 2020	Q4 2020

1.3. Use evidence to inform and further develop our quality assurance (QA) of dental education and training and work with others to deliver improvements to the structure of education and training systems in dentistry:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Develop the approach to thematic review QA	Q1 2018	Q4 2022
Implement a revised process for QA of specialty training	Q1 2019	Q4 2022
Review requirements for QA inspection activity	Q3 2019	Q3 2021
Complete review of dentists' preparedness for practice	Q1 2020	Q3 2021
Consult on learning outcomes and expectations for safe beginners	Q2 2020	Q4 2021

1.4. Ensure that those we register meet all of the relevant requirements, giving the appropriate scrutiny to applications and subsequent amendments, and acting promptly on decisions affecting an individual's registration:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Review of specialty training curricula	Q2 2019	Q3 2021
Implement a process for mediated entry to specialty lists	Q2 2019	Q4 2020
Implement a revised process for entry to specialty lists	Q2 2019	Q4 2020

1.5. Improve the quality of our communications, and build effective relationships with leaders and stakeholders to positively influence the behaviour of dental professionals:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Review standardised registration communications, phase 2	Q2 2017	Q1 2021
Student and new registrant engagement programme	Q3 2019	Q1 2020
Develop education provider engagement	Q3 2019	Q3 2022
Implement further digital improvements	Q1 2020	Q4 2020
Develop and strengthen relationships with stakeholders	Q1 2020	Q1 2022





Strategic aim 2

To work with the professions and our partners to ensure that patients and the public are able to raise concerns with the agency best placed to resolve them effectively and without unnecessary delay.

The work programme designed to meet this objective is summarised below. **The forecast expenditure for this strategic aim is £2,589,562 which is 6% of the total budget forecast for 2020.**

2.1. Develop a coherent and accessible system for resolving complaints, improving signposting for the public and routing complaints effectively and efficiently between organisations:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Develop a comprehensive complaints resolution model	Q1 2018	Q4 2020

2.2. Review the Dental Complaints Service (DCS) and ensure that its role and funding model are appropriate, allowing it to provide a high-quality and cost-effective service to its users:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Review alternative models for private dentistry complaint handling	Q2 2019	Q2 2021

2.3. Further our understanding of the impact of differing indemnity models on regulation:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Develop our understanding of the impact of indemnity models	Q4 2020	Q2 2021

2.4. We will continue to work with the members of the profession-wide complaints handling group to promote the idea that there is real value in receiving patient feedback and complaints and to support dental professionals to improve approaches to complaint handling.

2.5. Further, we will take steps to ensure that members of the public are given appropriate information about how to raise concerns and with which organisation. This will largely be delivered through online support but will also include publication of our principles of professionalism and principles for regulatory decision-making, giving a clear picture of expectations for patients and dental professionals.

Strategic aim 3

To use evidence, research and evaluation to develop, deliver and embed a cost-effective and right touch model for enforcement action.

The work programme designed to meet this objective is summarised below. **The forecast expenditure for this strategic aim is £23,681,474 which is 59% of the total budget forecast for 2020.**

Included in the forecast expenditure for this strategic aim are the resources allocated to fitness to practise investigations and casework.

3.1. Improve fitness to practise responsiveness by making best use of technology, regularly analysing performance and skills, identifying and sharing best practice, and implementing effective evaluation:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Improve case direction and progression	Q3 2020	Q1 2021
Review process for instructing experts	Q3 2020	Q3 2021
Improve cross-skilling across fitness to practise teams	Q3 2020	Q4 2021



3.2. Support the management of risk in relation to public safety and confidence by improving support and communications and sharing learning and insights from the fitness to practise process:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Review of the communications with those raising concerns	Q3 2020	Q2 2021
Share learning from fitness to practise	Q3 2020	Q3 2021
Review support provided to fitness to practise participants	Q3 2020	Q3 2021
Introduce consistency in language across healthcare regulators	Q3 2020	Q4 2021

3.3. Deploy our powers appropriately and effectively by developing a clear set of principles for regulatory intervention and decision-making. We will be focusing on the most serious issues, considering when we can deploy our powers and the evolving nature of public confidence:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Review approach to regulatory intervention	Q3 2019	Q4 2020
Deliver improvements to the Initial Assessment Decision Group	Q3 2020	Q4 2020

3.4. Explore how, and to what extent, we can deploy a broader range of resolution models:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Explore alternative models of case management	Q3 2020	Q3 2021
Investigate the possibility of bespoke concern pathways	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
Strengthen the separation of the hearings function	Q1 2020	Q3 2021

3.5. Informed by evidence, we will develop our policy framework to support a system of regulatory intervention that is proportionate, fair and transparent:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Embed human factors into fitness to practise decision-making	Q2 2020	Q4 2021
Review threshold tests	Q3 2020	Q1 2021
Review approach to allegations drafting	Q3 2020	Q4 2020

3.6. Use evidence and research to underpin to our criminal enforcement strategy:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Review of criminal enforcement strategy	Q3 2019	Q4 2020

Strategic aim 4

To maintain and develop the regulatory framework.

The work programme designed to meet this objective is summarised below. **The forecast expenditure for this strategic aim is £1,979,519 which is 5% of the total budget forecast for 2020.**

- 4.1. Identify and take opportunities to work with others to improve the legal and policy framework under which we operate and to understand the challenges arising from exiting the EU:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Influence and prepare for regulatory reform (Section 60)	Q1 2018	Q4 2022
Prepare for the implications of EU exit	Q2 2018	Q4 2020
Review regulatory approach to cosmetic procedures	Q1 2020	Q4 2021

- 4.2. Ensure that our policy framework aligns with our strategic objectives, including the effective deployment of the whole dental team, and that the information and guidance we provide is clear and accessible:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Complete implementation of fee-setting policy	Q1 2019	Q4 2020
Review internal fitness to practise guidance	Q3 2019	Q2 2021
Review scope of practice for all titles	Q1 2020	Q4 2021

- 4.3. Build our data and intelligence capacity and capability and use it to support business decision-making. We will also share our information and findings with dental professionals to inform their choices:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Build capability to complete economic analyses	Q3 2019	Q4 2020
Improve quality of data entry	Q4 2019	Q4 2020
Improve data quality for fitness to practise and upstream activity	Q4 2019	Q4 2021
Develop our approach to the use of fitness to practise data	Q4 2019	Q1 2021

- 4.4. Implement our data and intelligence strategy and long-term research plan, including development of a monitoring and evaluation programme to determine how, and to what extent, our approach to regulation is meeting our objectives:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Develop monitoring and evaluation of fitness to practise	Q4 2019	Q4 2022
Develop monitoring and evaluation of upstream activity	Q4 2019	Q4 2022



Strategic aim 5

To continue to develop an outcome-focused, high-performing and sustainable organisation.

The work programme designed to meet this objective is summarised below. **The forecast expenditure for this strategic aim is £2,328,287 which is 6% of the total budget forecast for 2020.**

- 5.1. Identify and pursue efficiencies, while providing effective management of resources, by actively seeking ways to improve the way we operate and being transparent about the cost of regulation:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Complete Estates Programme Strand 2 – Estates	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Introduce new digital audio recording system	Q1 2019	Q2 2020
Update financial processing and management systems	Q1 2019	Q3 2021
Review delegated decision-making procedures	Q3 2019	Q2 2020
Complete annual renewal projects	Q3 2019	Q2 2020
Complete estate refurbishment at Wimple Street	Q4 2019	Q2 2020
Review corporate risk register and opportunities	Q1 2020	Q4 2020
Tender for QA of clinical adviser reports	Q1 2020	Q1 2020
Implement new internal administrative software systems	Q1 2020	Q4 2020
Implement internal self-service data reporting	Q1 2020	Q1 2021

Programme name	Start	Finish
Implement new procurement and contract management process	Q1 2020	Q1 2021
Plain English review of application forms and guidance	Q2 2020	Q4 2020
Introduce a paperless office in registration	Q3 2020	Q1 2021
Introduce new telephone system	Q3 2020	Q3 2021
Implement board effectiveness recommendations	Q1 2020	Q4 2021

- 5.2. Secure our viability, ensure systems support organisational design and increase our ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to changing circumstances:

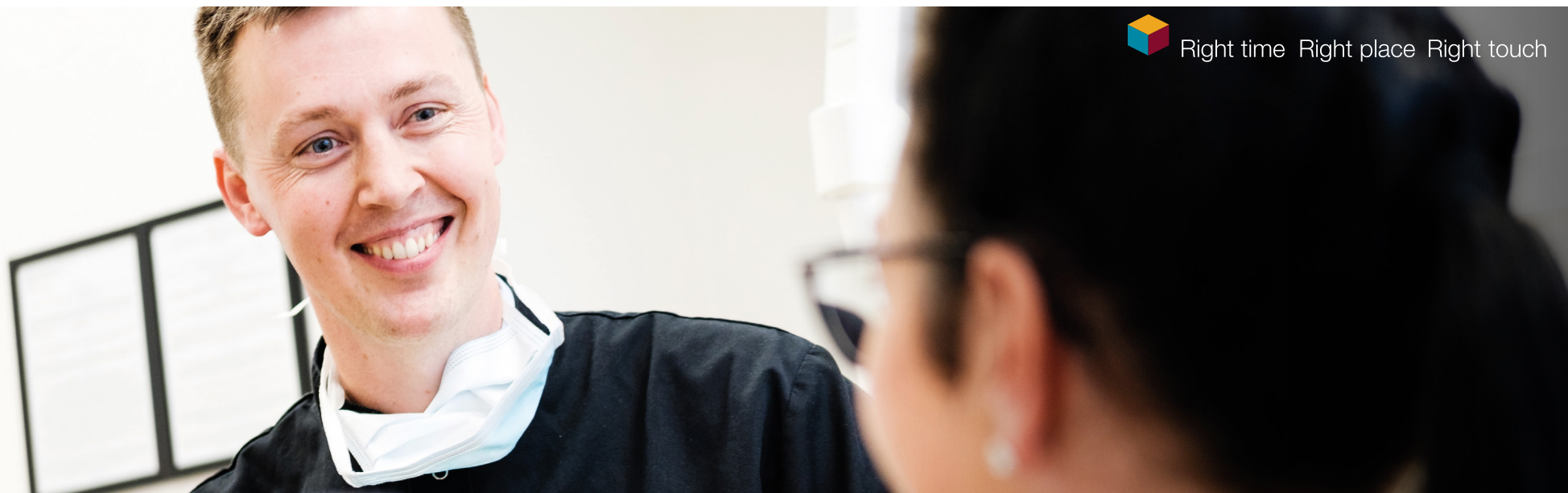
Programme name	Start	Finish
Implement corporate planning and reporting processes	Q4 2019	Q4 2022
Compensation measures (EU)	Q1 2020	Q1 2020
Share learning and best practice in project management	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
Investigate appointment of legal apprentices	Q1 2020	Q3 2021
Update qualifications and awarding body data	Q1 2020	Q3 2020
Development of data warehouse and reporting software	Q2 2020	Q4 2020

- 5.3. Maximise the potential of our workforce by building operational resilience and enabling flexible deployment of our people. We will work to ensure we have a committed and motivated workforce that is continuously developing their skills and knowledge and have succession plans in place:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Complete Estates Programme Strand 2 – People	Q1 2018	Q1 2020
Implement the Growing our Own Strategy	Q1 2020	Q4 2020
Rewarding contribution	Q1 2020	Q2 2021

- 5.4. Deliver our annual auditing and statutory reporting to fulfil our responsibilities and to ensure we are continually working toward improved accountability and transparency:

Programme name	Start	Finish
Improve the quality of data reporting	Q4 2019	Q4 2020
Deliver the Moving Upstream conference and report	Q1 2020	Q1 2022
Grow opportunities to engage with external audiences	Q1 2020	Q4 2022
Complete annual audits and reviews and publish statutory reports	Q1 2020	Q4 2022
Develop a publications framework	Q2 2020	Q4 2020



Work programmes that are forecast to begin in 2021 or beyond

The following work programmes listed in the table below are programmes that we have identified in our three-year corporate strategy that will commence in 2021 or later. Further, as this plan is a three-year rolling plan, we will also add any new programmes that we expect to begin in 2023 when we update the plan next year.

The activities listed below are due to get underway in 2021. Therefore, the costs associated with them are not included in the total sums for each strategic aim listed in Section 5 above.

Programme name	Start	Finish
Revise the standards for education	Q1 2021	Q1 2022
Review of standardised communications, phase 3	Q1 2021	Q1 2022
Identify software options for empanelment process	Q1 2021	Q1 2022
Alternative directions for hearings	Q1 2021	Q1 2022

Programme name	Start	Finish
Consider software improvements for hearings	Q1 2021	Q1 2022
Review of regulation and dental technology	Q1 2021	Q1 2023
Pilot early intervention approach	Q1 2021	Q3 2022
Explore potential efficacy of consensual disposals	Q3 2021	Q1 2022
Consistently apply proportionate and targeted sanctions	Q3 2021	Q3 2022
Retender for external legal advisers	Q3 2021	Q4 2021
Review process for preparing bundles	Q3 2021	Q3 2022
Effectiveness review of investigation and advocacy services	Q1 2022	Q3 2022

Our ways of working

Achieving these aims will require us to continue to transform our working practices by embedding these ways of working in everything we do:

- Working collaboratively: developing and maintaining effective partnerships with relevant organisations and the professions.
- Being evidence-led: using research to support and inform proportionate decision making and to focus our activity and resources.
- Making the best use of resources: constantly challenging ourselves and our operating practices to ensure value for money.
- Being inclusive: seeing the value and importance of diversity and acting to ensure that this is reflected in our work.

Forecast expenditure and income

Expenditure forecast by strategic aim for 2020

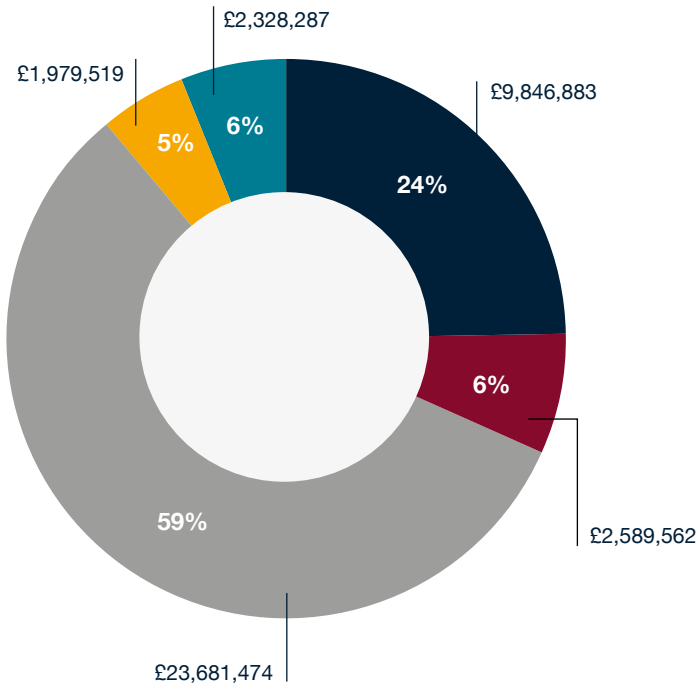
The following shows the forecast expenditure, by strategic aim, for the period 2020 only. The total forecast expenditure for 2020 is £40,425,725.

Expenditure forecast by strategic aim for 2020 to 2022

The following shows the forecast expenditure, by strategic aim, for the period 2020 to 2022. The total forecast expenditure for 2020 to 2022 is £121,593,782.

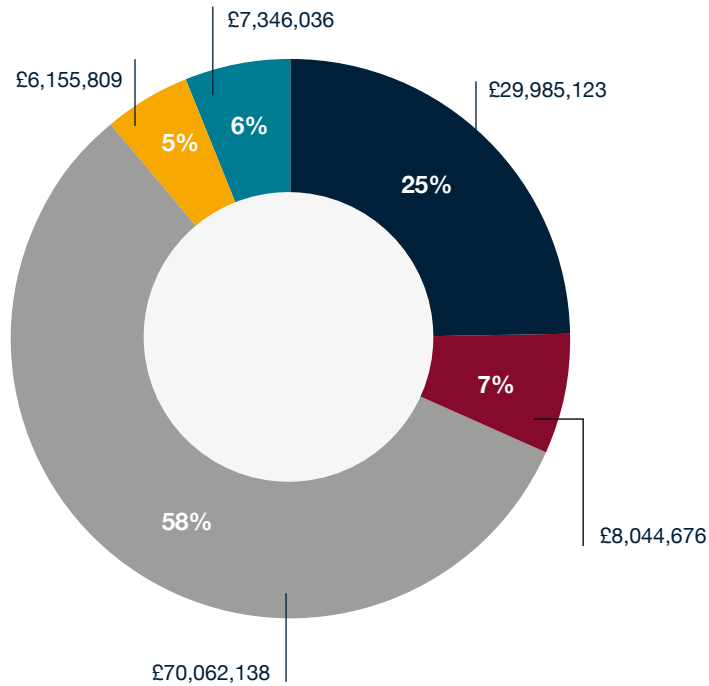
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Forecasted expenditure by strategy aim



Costed Corporate Plan 2020-2022

Forecasted expenditure by strategy aim



- Strategic aim 1
- Strategic aim 2
- Strategic aim 3
- Strategic aim 4
- Strategic aim 5

Variation in forecasted expenditure from published consultation

Our consultation on our strategic plans (opened 8 May 2019 and closed 30 July 2019) included forecast financial information relating to the cost to deliver our strategic plans. Since publication, further work has been completed and the following adjustments have been made:

- Strategic aim 1: the forecast has been reduced by £1,719,284 (-1%).
- Strategic aim 2: the forecast has been increased by £3,622,215 (3%).
- Strategic aim 3: the forecast has been reduced by £5,349,244 (-3%).
- Strategic aim 4: the forecast has been increased by £2,164,563 (2%).
- Strategic aim 5: the forecast has been reduced by £101,758 (>-1%).

The overall effect of these adjustments in a reduced total expenditure of £1,383,508 over the three-year strategic planning period.

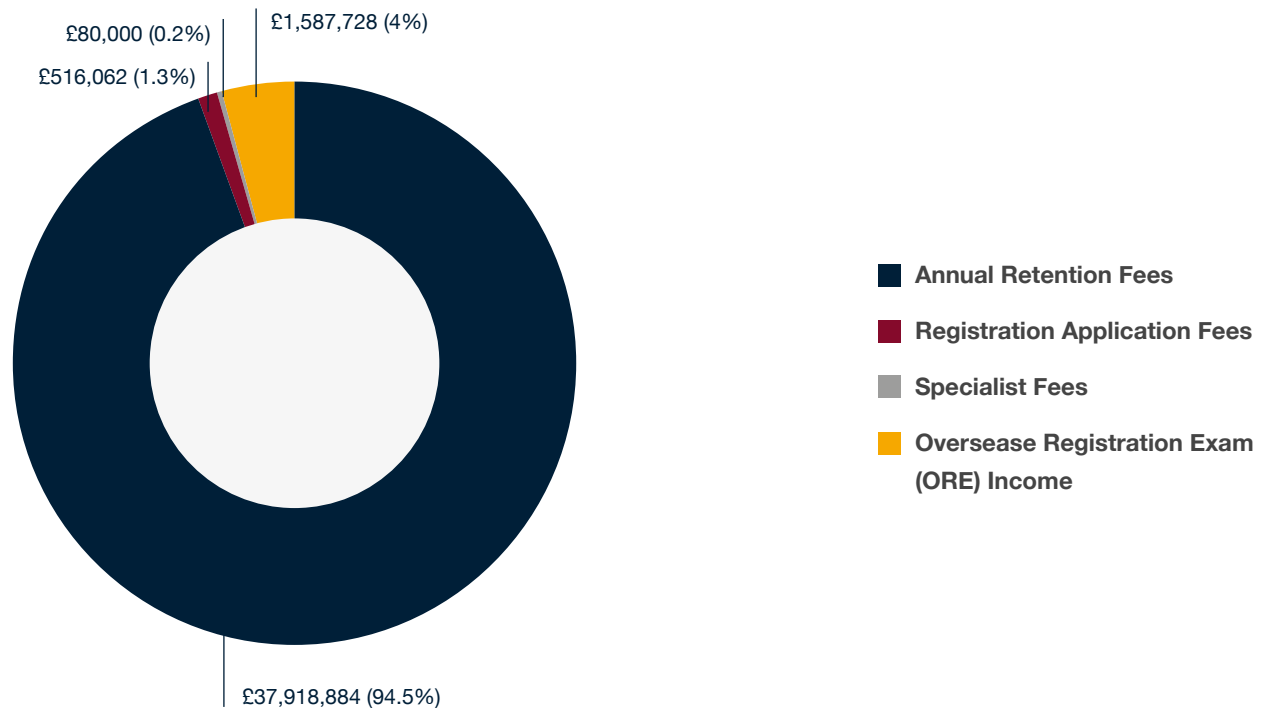
The above variations in forecast expenditure are due to removal of dormant posts, amendments in the allocation of staff resources to individual work programmes or where a programme has moved from one strategic aim to another.

Income projections

The following shows the projected income by type for the period 2020 only. The total income forecast for 2020 is £40,102,674. Please note that just under 95% of our income is generated by the ARF.

Further, considering that each income source projection could go up or down, and may balance off in total, we have profiled our income flatly over three years. This means our total three-year income projection for 2020 to 2022 is £120,308,022.

**Costed Corporate Plan 2020
Income projection by type**



Reserves policy

Our reserves policy has been designed to ensure that we retain our financial viability to maintain our statutory purpose and functions. It recognises our financial risk exposure and ensures that we have adequate levels of working capital throughout the year.

We have now aligned our budget expenditure, income and reserves target to our corporate strategy. Our reserves policy is reviewed annually by Council and was last considered in December 2019.

Our policy defines reserves as:

- free reserves
- reserves committed to fixed assets (future depreciation), and
- pension reserves.

In line with our fee-setting policy, the level of the ARF is now set to include our operating costs and to maintain free reserves at an appropriate level. This ensures we are financially resilient when exposed to financial risk, and we remain a viable organisation.

Our policy is to maintain free reserves at a minimum of three months of operating expenditure. Through the planning process, and with consideration to our level of financial risk, our analysis has indicated that the appropriate level of reserves is four and a half months of operating expenditure by the end of the planning period, 31 December 2022.

Calculation of the ARF

For the first time, the ARF level has been set to align it to our forecast of activity, expenditure and reserves over the planning period for the Corporate Strategy 2020-2022: Right time, right place, right touch. We have also worked to ensure that we have removed cross subsidy, where possible, so that the cost of regulation is borne by those most closely associated with that activity.

Our fee-setting policy established three key principles:

1. Fee levels should be primarily determined by the cost of regulating each registrant group.
2. The method of calculating fee levels should be clear.
3. Supporting certainty for registrants and the workability of the regulatory framework.

To support the calculation of the ARF, we:

- Carried out an internal process to allocate costs to each type of registrant.
- Revalidated our approach to the allocation of costs to each type of registrant ahead of our consultation on the new corporate strategy.
- Assumed that any risks materialising associated with EEA-graduates joining the register will be largely borne through a shortfall in the first registration application fee.
- Agreed that any financial risk realised will first be borne by a reduction in agreed activity and then by free reserves.
- Based the ARF calculation on most up to date forecast of expenditure for 2020 with no historical growth applied, to provide some contingency given the uncertainty associated with income.

Council has set the ARF levels for the next three years, subject to any unforeseen circumstances, at:

- Dentists £680.
- Dental care professionals £114.

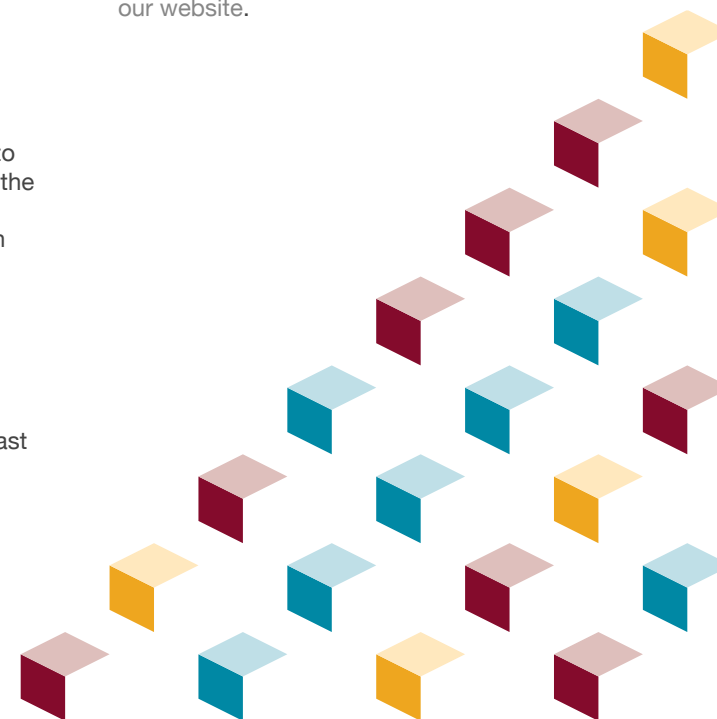
At the start of January 2020, we also introduced first registration application fees. The first registration fee is made up of two parts, a processing fee currently set at £22.95 with an additional variable rate dependent on the complexity of the application assessment.

We apply a fee for applications for entry to specialist lists, it is:

- Specialists £345 (per specialty).

There is also an annual specialty retention fee of £72 (per specialty).

Further information about fees can be found on our website.



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