

# Northern Ireland Social Care Council Annual Report and Accounts

1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020

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**The Northern Ireland Social Care Council Accounts  
for the Year ended 31 March 2020**

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly under Paragraph 12(4) of Schedule 1 to the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland on

04 August 2020

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## Glossary - Words we use to describe our work

<b>Advocacy Groups</b>	Groups and networks representing and involving people who use services and carers
<b>ALB</b>	Arms' Length Body
<b>AYE</b>	Assessed Year in Employment – the first year in assessed practice for newly qualified social workers
<b>BASW NI</b>	The professional association for social work and social workers in Northern Ireland
<b>Board</b>	This is the Board of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council who provide strategic oversight and direction, and is made up of a Chair and 12 Members.
<b>BSO</b>	Business Services Organisation – provides a range of services for Health and Social Care organisations
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>CORU</b>	The regulator for health and social care professionals in Ireland
<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development – ongoing learning and training
<b>DoH</b>	Department of Health – the government body responsible for Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland
<b>ECHO</b>	Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes - Project to build groups of people to use video conferencing to share learning and good practice
<b>FtP</b>	Fitness to Practise – a registrant's suitability to work in social work or social care
<b>FReM</b>	The Department of Finance's Financial Reporting Manual
<b>GDC</b>	General Dental Council
<b>GDPR</b>	General Data Protection Regulation – the legislation around holding and using personal information
<b>GMC</b>	General Medical Council
<b>HEI's</b>	Higher Education Institutions
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources – manages staff well-being, development and their employment
<b>HSC</b>	Health and Social Care – the people, systems and facilities that provide medical and personal care and support
<b>IAR</b>	Individual Assessment Route – an option for social workers to have their learning and practice assessed and get a Northern Ireland Social Care Council Award
<b>IASW</b>	Irish Association of Social Workers
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology –computers, networks, websites and Apps we use
<b>IFSW</b>	International Federation of Social Workers – a worldwide body representing social work
<b>IIP</b>	Investors in People – an award for good standards in staff and organisation management and development

<b>ISO</b>	Interim Suspension Order – temporary action to stop a registrant working while we make enquiries about a very serious complaint
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator – standards we use to measure how well we do our job
<b>KSF</b>	Knowledge and Skills Framework – this is the framework which staff use to ensure they are developing the right level of knowledge and skills to do their jobs well.
<b>NI</b>	Northern Ireland
<b>NICON</b>	The Northern Ireland Confederation for Health and Social Care
<b>NIGALA</b>	Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem
<b>NIPEC</b>	Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery
<b>OU</b>	Open University
<b>PIP</b>	Professional in Practice – the framework for social workers’ on-going learning and qualifications
<b>PPI</b>	Personal Public Involvement – describes the scheme through which we engage service users and carers.
<b>PRTL</b>	Post Registration Training and Learning – 90 hours of learning that all registrants must do to keep their registration up to date
<b>QI</b>	Quality Improvement is a way to identify how a service, process or system can be improved
<b>QUB</b>	Queens University Belfast
<b>Register</b>	The Social Care Council’s register is an electronic list of social workers and social care workers working in Northern Ireland (and also students studying for the Degree in Social Work in Northern Ireland)
<b>Registrant</b>	A person approved for registration on the Social Care Register – social workers, social care workers and social work students
<b>RRL</b>	Revenue Resource Limit
<b>RQIA</b>	Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority – checks Health and Social Care organisations are doing their job well
<b>SEHSCT</b>	South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
<b>Sector Skills Council</b>	The Council is part of a UK-wide Sector Skills Council set up to support employers in ensuring that people working in Early Years and children’s services and those working in social work and social care have the right skills and qualifications
<b>Social Care Council</b>	Refers to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council
<b>SLT</b>	The Senior Leadership Team in the Social Care Council
<b>Stakeholders</b>	People who are involved with our work or who are affected by what we do
<b>UCAS</b>	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>VBR</b>	Values Based Recruitment – ensuring that people entering social care and social work roles have the right qualities for the job

## Chair's Introduction

### Welcome



**We are presenting the 2019-20 Annual Report and Accounts for the Northern Ireland Social Care Council in the midst of challenging and difficult times for all of us. The impact of the current pandemic of COVID-19 has and will continue to impact on our health and social care system well into 2020-21 business year and potentially beyond. We are committed to providing practical support and guidance for registered social workers and social care workers to be able to carry out their professional duties as safely and effectively as possible as we navigate our way through the uncharted territory that is COVID-19.**

On behalf of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council Board Members and staff, I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by our 45,000 registrants who provide vital services every day in people's own homes, day centres, residential care and nursing homes across Northern Ireland, including those who came back into work to support the sector during the pandemic and students who entered the social work workforce early. The social work and social care sector are delivering high quality care to everyone in Northern Ireland at an extremely difficult time for all of us – and the value of this role could not be more important than it is today.

This report accounts for the third business year within the Social Care Council's current Corporate Plan (2017-2021). When we consulted on our Corporate Plan four years ago, we heard clear messages from our stakeholders about embedding the Standards of Conduct and Practice; developing a culture of career-long learning and development and raising the profile of the workforce. I believe this report demonstrates the difference that our work has made and confirms steady progress towards these outcomes. In addition to maintaining the Social Care Register for around 45,000 registrants, we delivered workforce development and regulation activities to ensure those on our register were supported to maintain the standards expected of them. We delivered a significant programme of engagement with, and on behalf of, our stakeholders; promoting the value and contribution of the registered workforce and strengthening leadership in the social care sector.

During the coming year, our focus will be on consolidating what we have achieved over the last three years. We also want to use this year to identify opportunities to improve our services and make use of emerging technologies to enhance future workforce development. The sudden change in working practices brought about by COVID-19 has challenged us to make use of technology to enable us to maintain and deliver our services. Although the advancement of technology was faster than planned, we are maximising the learning we have gained and will take forward these improvements when we return to normal service.

On behalf of the Social Care Council Board Members, I would like to commend the staff and senior team for their commitment to our vision of quality social care services and outcomes for everyone. I would also like to thank everyone who partnered with us throughout the year, providing the broad range of expertise and experience that is reflected in this report. There is no doubt 2020-21 will be a challenging year, but I am confident we will adapt and change together to ensure that the social work and social care workforce has appropriate numbers of people with the skills and values required to deliver quality services for the people of Northern Ireland.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Martin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Paul Martin, Chair, Northern Ireland Social Care Council**

## Section 1: Performance Report

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (the Social Care Council) is a public body, established by the Department of Health to raise the standards of practice in social work and social care. This Performance Report provides information about the Social Care Council, its vision and the strategies it must implement to deliver its business priorities safely and effectively.

The information is presented in three sections:

- 1. Overview of Performance for 2019-20** - setting out the vision and purpose of the Social Care Council; the Chief Executive's perspective on performance against objectives and the risks to the achievement of those objectives;
- 2. Personal and Public Involvement Report** – summary of the partnerships and projects involving people who use services and carers in our work; and
- 3. Performance Analysis** - providing a balanced and comprehensive analysis of performance during the year, trends identified and actions identified for the coming year.

### Our Purpose

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is responsible for:

- Maintaining a register of social workers and social care workers in Northern Ireland;
- Setting standards for social workers and social care workers for their conduct, training and practice; and
- Setting standards for and regulating social work education and training in Northern Ireland

### Our Vision - Improved standards in social work and social care

#### Our Values

There are four key values which underpin our culture that set a foundation for how we work with those around us.

**Respect**  
**Integrity**  
**Partnership**  
**Excellence**

#### **We promote Respect**

We are trusted by the sector to support good social work and social care practice. We respect the rights, dignity and inherent worth of individuals.

#### **We work with Integrity**

We work with integrity and are mindful of our responsibilities and hold ourselves and others to account. We are open, honest and respectful with all our stakeholders.

#### **We believe in Partnership**

We are a people focused organisation that is committed to doing what is right. Through genuine partnership, we work to ensure what we do makes a difference.

#### **We strive for Excellence**

We take a professional approach in putting standards at the heart of social work and social care. We proactively support the development of the social care workforce and we proactively support the development of our staff.

**Our Purpose - To protect the public and safeguard service users through the regulation and development of the social work and social care workforce**

## Strategic Themes, Objectives, Aim and Principles

As the regulator for social work and social care, our core activities are focused on Standards of Conduct and Practice, working to see that they are consistently applied across all areas of social work and social care practice, improving public protection and helping to improve quality and outcomes for people who use services.



**Our work is themed around five key areas:**

### **Theme 1 - Standards**

#### **Putting Standards at the heart of social work and social care practice, education and training**

Setting and raising standards in social work and social care practice, education and training.

### **Theme 2 - Regulation**

#### **Regulating the Workforce and Social Work Education and Training**

Ensuring the functions of Registration, Fitness to Practise and Regulation of Social Work education establish clear benchmarks for good social work and social care practice.

### **Theme 3 - Workforce Development**

#### **Developing the Social Work and Social Care Workforce**

Better outcomes for people who use social care services will be achieved by a regulated workforce that delivers safe, effective and values led care.

### **Theme 4 - Systems Leadership**

#### **Promoting a Systems Leadership Approach across the Social Care Sector**

Through collaborative partnership working, facilitating new thinking and fresh perspectives to reduce harms, minimise risks and improve quality in the delivery of social care services.

### **Theme 5 - Communication and Engagement**

#### **Communicating, Connecting and Engaging**

Creating and delivering effective and meaningful communication and engagement to support delivery of the Corporate and Business Plans.

### **Infrastructure – People, Resources, Governance, Quality and Systems**

Our five strategic themes are supported by an overarching corporate objective to 'ensure the Social Care Council has the necessary infrastructure i.e. the people, resources, governance and estate management arrangements in place to deliver its strategic objectives'.

An overview and commentary on how we performed against the objectives for these strategic themes during 2019-20 is set out in the following pages.



As Interim Chief Executive, I too would like to acknowledge the personal commitment made by our social work and social care registrants to ensure that people who need services are supported no matter what is happening in our communities. All of us in the Social Care Council are incredibly proud of the workforce and we will continue working with them and their employers, with government departments and education providers to ensure our registrants are supported to carry out their work safely and effectively and that they are recognised for the contribution they make every day on the front line of Social Work and Social Care.

This Annual Report for the period April 2019 to March 2020 reflects a strong performance against our business objectives. When we agreed these objectives with our Board and the Department of Health last year, we knew they were ambitious and many of them are building towards longer term outcomes. We will continue to work to promote the Standards of Practice and strengthen the network of social work and social care leaders. It is encouraging to see the difference that our work has made in the last year and our plans for the next few years will build on these achievements. With our partners and stakeholders, we will continue our work to support and develop the social work and social care workforce and to raise awareness of the valuable contribution they make to our community and our economy.

The Social Care Council Corporate Plan and our annual Business Plans, have been developed using an 'outcomes based approach'. The benefit of this approach is that our plans clearly describe what we are trying to achieve and the difference we want to make. Alongside recording achievement against performance targets, we used qualitative methods to find out about the difference this work is making for our stakeholders, including: surveys, emails and face to face engagement.

### Highlights for 2019-20 include:

- Financial break-even achieved, with a surplus of £8,776 against Revenue Resource Limit (RRL), which was within financial guidelines of £20k/0.25% RRL;
- Satisfactory levels of assurance identified across all Internal Audit reports;
- Social Care Register maintained for almost 45,000 registrants;
- 9,549 registration applications (new and renewal) processed, 93% within our KPI of 20 days or less;
- Emergency Register and application process created in March 2020 to facilitate HSC workforce recruitment to combat COVID-19;
- 467 concerns about registrant Fitness to Practise triaged; 96% within three working days;
- 46 Fitness to Practise Committee days held to consider 29 applications for registration and 22 Fitness to Practise Hearings;
- 327 Fitness to Practise Decisions taken including: 126 Letters of Advice/Reminders of Standards, 16 Warnings, 2 Undertakings, 1 Conditions of Practice Order, 3 Suspension Orders, 13 Removal Orders, 3 Removals by Agreement;
- Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training delivered within agreed timeframes; opportunities for improvement identified;
- Open University submission was approved to deliver a Degree in Social Work course in Northern Ireland from Autumn 2020;
- 246 Newly Qualified Social Workers graduated from Degree courses in Northern Ireland;

- 179 Social Workers achieved Professional in Practice (PiP) Awards for their CPD and 196 claimed PiP Credits for ongoing training and learning;
- Qualifications reviewed at Levels 2- 5 in Health and Social Care; Early Years; Leadership and Management;
- £126,957 of funding managed to support training for 2,314 domiciliary care workers/managers;
- 5 new online resources published and 2 existing resources refreshed on the Learning Zone;
- 1,000 users and 1800 page visits (on average) to the Learning Zone each month;
- 6 Lunchtime Seminars and 11 Social Care Echo sessions hosted to share best practice;
- 41,742 registration fee payments managed;
- 99% system availability achieved for the online registration service;
- Registration database and online guidance developed to improve user experience;
- Online registration certificate created and adapted for print/mobile download;
- Improved employer access to online registration records.

### **Assurance on the Management of Issues and Risks**

Effective governance systems are in place to support the regular review of issues and risks which could affect business delivery. This provides assurance to the Board, our sponsor department and our stakeholders on the organisation's ability to deliver its organisational objectives. The Board set the strategic risks and appetite for the organisation and this is detailed in the Risk Management Strategy. The Board has established an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee who review the Risk Register and Assurance Framework at each of their meetings. Strategic risks include risks in relation to the resourcing of the Fitness to Practise function and finance. A strategic risk in relation to the management of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was added to the Risk Register during March 2020. During the year, we monitored closely those risks which had been identified as having the potential to impact on the achievement of the Business Plan objectives.

The Social Care Council has taken a proactive approach to support social care providers to meet the pressures experienced as a result of increasing demand for services against an environment of growing financial pressures. We have worked closely with social work and social care leaders to provide a network where issues, risks and opportunities can be explored and collaboration with policy leads and service commissioners can be facilitated to provide sustainable solutions.

Further detail is included in the Performance Analysis for each Business Theme. Summary of the assurances provided by our risk management processes is detailed in the Governance Statement on page 45.

**I am satisfied that the Social Care Council has performed well against the objectives set out in the 2019-20 Business Plan. Further narrative on performance against each of the objectives is contained within the performance analysis and in the annual accounts within this report.**



Patricia Higgins, Interim Chief Executive,  
Northern Ireland Social Care Council

## Overview of Performance for 2019-20

### Strategic Theme 1 - Standards

Standards are the cornerstone of everything the Social Care Council does to strengthen the professionalism of the registered workforce across Northern Ireland. We continued to focus on providing information and support to ensure that registrants, their employers and stakeholders are aware of the standards and how they apply in daily practice.

### Standards – Objectives for 2019-20

- Deliver a programme of engagement with social care workers to raise awareness about the Standards and how to apply them in their work.
- Deliver a programme of engagement with social workers to support the use of the Standards in their work and in their professional development.
- Deliver a programme of engagement to raise awareness among people who use services, their carers and advocacy groups about registration and the Social Care Council Standards.
- Work with employers and RQIA to develop ways to monitor use of the Employer Standards.

### Standards - What we did and the difference this made

Our Workforce Engagement team delivered 50 information sessions in social care settings; talking to over 1,500 registrants, managers and students about the responsibilities of professional registration. They also engaged with people who use services and their carers to raise awareness about workforce registration and how the Standards can help improve the quality of the services they receive. Feedback has been positive, with participants welcoming the opportunity to find out more about standards and the benefits provided by

registration. Over the last three years, requests for engagement sessions and presentations has increased, and the Social Care Council recognises that alternative methods of engaging with stakeholders should be explored for 2020/21, perhaps through representative groups, or by video links.

- **90%** of registrants said they would use the learning in their social care practice
- **85%** of participants rated engagement sessions as 'Very Good to Excellent'
- **76%** overall improvement in participant knowledge levels reported

*"I would like to wear something like a pin, or have a social care logo on my work ID pass to show that I am a registered professional."*

**100%** of service users were positive that having 'Rules' for social care workers 'helped keep them safe'

*"The care folder that has all the information about the carers coming in to me has a leaflet that tells me about how to talk to the manager if I have a problem."*

2019/20 was the third year of the joint project to evaluate the impact of Government Policy to implement social care registration in Northern Ireland. Together with the DoH of Health and the Social Care Institute for Excellence, we delivered an online survey for registrants and employers to track progress towards embedding the Standards in everyday practice. 1,082 social care workers and 187 managers responded to the survey. This was followed up with focus groups and interviews which involved managers, social care workers and people who use services and their carers. Feedback from all participants was strongly positive towards registering workers and requiring them to meet agreed standards. Responses also showed that people who use services were aware that their social care worker had to meet agreed standards, but they were not familiar with the process around the individual's registration or the role of the Social Care Council. This feedback will also be addressed in the Communication and Engagement plan developed for 2020/21.



The Fitness to Practise Team met with Employers through the year to share the revised Standard of Acceptance and provide examples of the type of concerns that necessitate referral to the Social Care Council. A video about the Standard of Acceptance was produced and published across our digital channels (723 views were recorded at end of 2019/20). We also met regularly with the HSC system regulator, RQIA, to review issues affecting employer compliance with their Standards and how they are being implemented within the workforce.

Together with members of our Participation Partnership, we refreshed the design and layout of the Easy Read version of the Standards of Conduct and Practice to reflect the updated Social Care Council colour palette and layout. The Easy Read booklets are used regularly with people in social care settings to help increase their understanding of the standards they should expect of social workers and social care workers to ensure they receive the best standards of care.



Good practice and the Standards were shared with 400 Social Care Managers attending the forum events held in Antrim and Omagh in May and November. These events were established to bring managers together to learn about the latest issues affecting their practice and to develop professional networks. Topics for the 2019/20 events included a Fitness to Practise update, the Evaluation of Registration project, Manager's application of the Induction Programme for Social Care, Duty of Candour, Social Care and Social Wellbeing, as well as demonstration of the Learning Zone and the opportunity to visit the Smart Bus which was rolled out for the Experience IT roadshows.

- **100%** of participants said the event was good quality overall
- **98%** said they would recommend the Managers Forum events to colleagues
- **10%** said they would like more time to discuss the topics with colleagues at the events

**6** lunchtime seminars were hosted; aimed at supporting registrants to improve their standards of practice by sharing innovation and best practice with colleagues.

Topics included:

- Promoting diversity and tackling hate crime;
- Think Family;
- Social Work and Homelessness;
- Trauma Informed Practice;
- Equine Therapy.

A rolling programme of dates and topics is published on the Events section of our website and shared in registrant e-zines.

Video interviews and presentations from the seminars are available from our website for those who want to catch up.



- **97%** rated the Lunchtime Seminars as 'Very Good/ Excellent'
- **83%** said the seminars improved their knowledge

## **Strategic Theme 2 – Regulation**

Regulation brings together the functions of Registration, Fitness to Practise and Regulation of Social Work education to establish and maintain clear benchmarks for good social work and social care practice. Significant time and resource was invested in improving and developing our people and the systems and processes we use to deliver these functions.

This year we evaluated our work in regulation to identify whether this had supported registrants to meet their responsibilities as registered social work and social care professionals. We sought to measure the benefit of our work with employers to help them understand and engage fully in their role to support their staff in meeting their professional standards and also take action where concerns are raised about standards within their workplace. Educators and employers were engaged in the programme of quality assurance for social work training programmes to ensure that we continuously improve the taught and practical elements that make up the social work education continuum.

### **Regulation – Objectives for 2019-20**

- Support registrants and employers to meet their responsibilities in maintaining social care registration.
- Deliver an improvement programme to develop the online registration system so that it meets the needs of registrants.
- Approve and assure standards of social work education and training at qualifying and post qualifying levels.
- Work with the Degree Partnership to deliver improvements identified in the Review of the Degree in Social Work.
- Through engagement with the DoH, ensure our Fitness to Practise function has the right level of resource to effectively carry out our statutory duties.

### **Regulation of Social Work Education and Training - What we did and the difference this made**

As the Awarding Body for the Degree in Social Work and for the Awards within the Professional in Practice Framework for Social Work, we deliver an annual cycle of Quality Assurance to ensure that the education and training provided prepares new social workers for practice and supports practitioners in their career development.

Every five years a comprehensive review is undertaken to assess the quality and relevance of the Degree in Social Work in both the taught and practice elements, as well as the partnership arrangements for delivery. Following extensive consultations during 2018/19, the Review of the Degree in Social Work Report was published in June 2019.

The review found that the Degree was preparing students well for joining the workforce, with 81% of managers reporting that new social work graduates can practise competently in their role. Six development



Pictured, the Review of the Degree Project Team

actions were made to improve outcomes for the Degree in relation to: effective partnerships, future-proofing the curriculum and developing new social workers as autonomous, evidence based, critically reflective and resilient practitioners with a strong professional social work identity. The Social Care Council, Degree Partnership Members and the Strategic Advisory Group for the Degree are working together on implementation of the recommendations.



The Open University submitted an application to the Social Care Council seeking approval for an Open University Social Work Degree programme in Northern Ireland. The Approval Panel was completed via video link in March 2020 and the OU course was approved for new students to commence in Autumn 2020. This course complements existing course provision, offering access to social work training for those who are currently employed in the sector and supported by their employer to undertake the qualification.

The Annual monitoring and Quality Assurance processes provided assurance for the Professional in Practice (PiP) Framework. New Assessor training and Standardisation training was delivered to ensure consistency in assessment of IAR submissions. Workshops were held for AYE Advisers to ensure that newly qualified social workers are aware of the requirements they must meet in their practice and learning, including the completion of PiP II requirements. The revised Standards for Programme Approval were published and shared with programmes. The Social Care Council reviewed the internal processes for submission and assessment to meet the requirements of the updated database system.

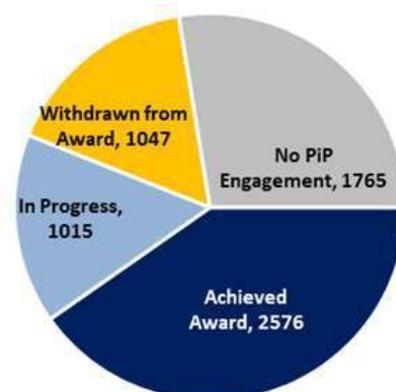
PiP assessment panels confirmed 40 submissions at the Individual Assessment Panel in May 2019. The External Assessor Report confirmed consistency across all three routes for PiP submission assessments. **179** PiP Awards were achieved across the PiP programmes and routes and social workers were recognised at the June 2019 celebration event for achieving:

- **72** Consolidation Awards
- **75** Specialist Awards
- **30** Leadership and Strategic Awards

The PiP Framework has been reviewed and developed to reflect the range of learning routes open to social workers. The pilot of the PiP Work-Based Learning Route for Signs of Safety was opened in Autumn 2019. The first submissions were received for the new Doctorate level Award with three social workers successfully meeting the requirements for the PiP Advanced Scholarship Award. These social workers and all those who achieved Awards in 2019/20 will be recognised in June 2020 in a week-long virtual celebration of PiP achievement.

Analysis of PiP engagement and achievement has shown that 56% of social workers currently registered with the Social Care Council are actively engaged with the PiP framework for their CPD. The PiP Credit Accumulation Framework was developed to enable social workers to gain recognition for ongoing learning and development they complete that is not formally linked to a PiP programme or assessment route. The Social Care Council is committed to working with social work registrants to increase uptake of the Credit Framework during 2020/21.

**PiP Profile of the registered social work workforce**

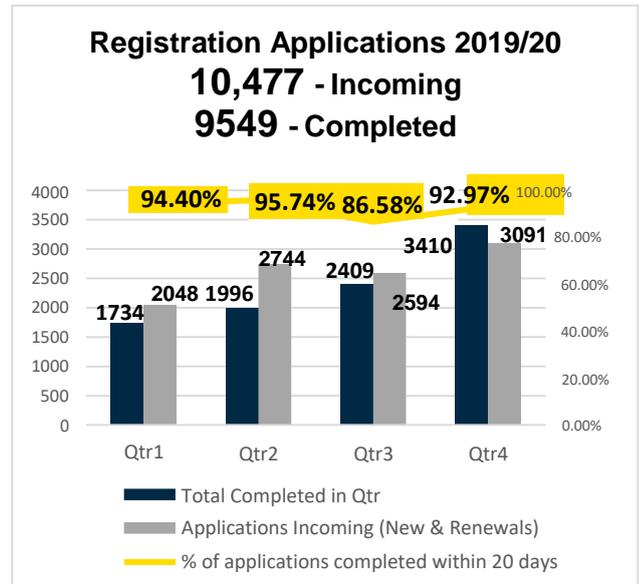


## Workforce Registration - What we did and the difference this made

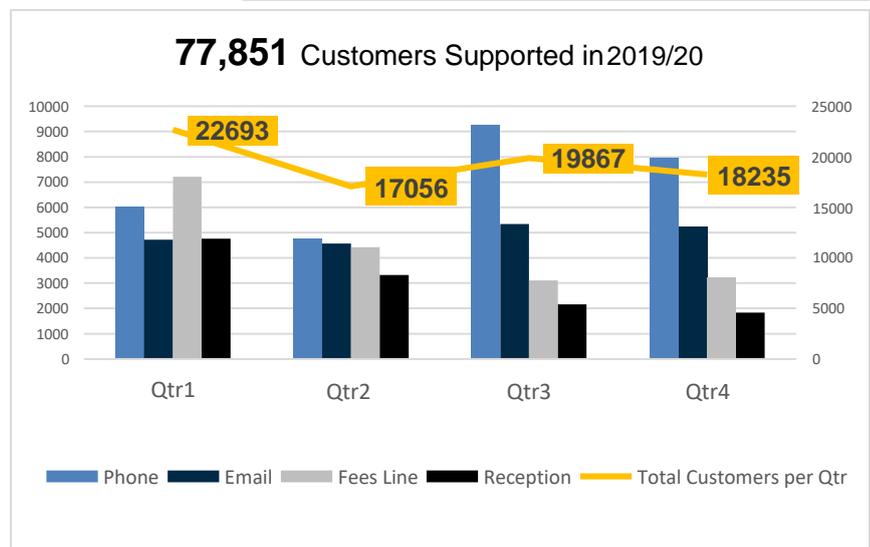


The Register continued to grow during 2019/20, reaching almost 45,000 at year end – which was an overall increase of 2,303 registrants on the previous year. The introduction of the Emergency Register Registration process for the COVID-19 workforce is expected to further increase the register and these temporary workers will have the option of remaining on the Register when the situation stabilises.

In 2019/20, 9,549 applications (new and renewals) were processed, which is 661 more than last year. The team processed 41,742 fee payments and updated 105 registrations with Fitness to Practise decisions. Performance for application processing times was marginally below target at 93% (KPI is 95%). This improvement on last year's performance of 88% was managed through streamlining of processes and ongoing staff training. Benefits have also been realised from developments to the registration database with the introduction of automated renewals and the password reset function for online user accounts.



For 2019/20, we sought to encourage more registrants to maintain their registration and go online to complete their registration using the online registration system which enables them to pay fees, update details, record PRTL and renew registration. Quality Improvement tools were used to improve user experience of the system and encourage use of the online service. This was supported by a communications campaign throughout the year to promote online as the main way to register, maintain and renew registration. At year end, online fee payments had increased to from 37% to 66%.



Development work is underway for a mobile application for 'My Social Care Council Registration' and this will continue in 2020/21.

## Workforce Fitness to Practise - What we did and the difference this made

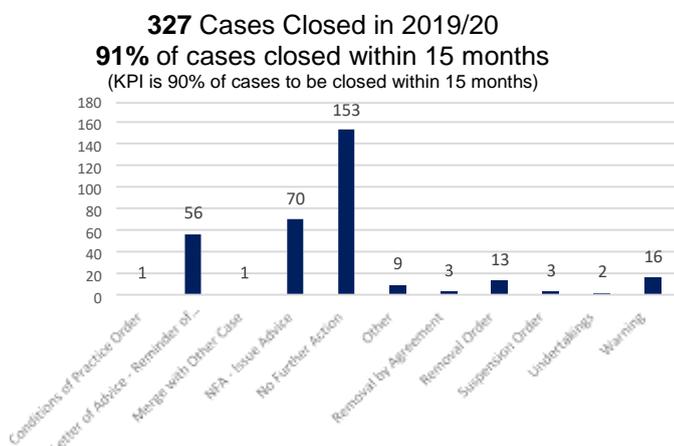
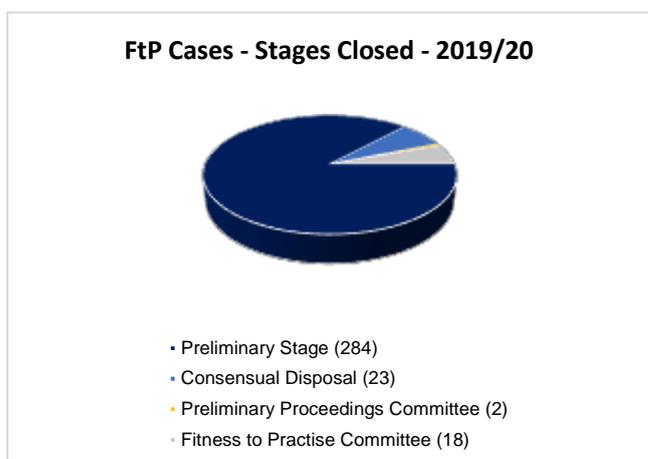
This year, we continued with our commitment to deliver a system of regulation that adapts to changes in the environment and one that promotes a culture of learning and improvement to maximise the opportunities for registrants to understand and meet their professional responsibilities. 467 concerns about registrants were reported to Fitness to Practise in 2019/20. This is a relatively low proportion of the registered workforce (approx. 1%). 78% of referrals came from employers and 9% from people who use services. 10% of all referrals received were deemed not to meet the Standard of Acceptance.

Cases continue to be quite complex and require more investigation to resolve. This impacted on the capacity to triage all referrals within the 3 day KPI target. With performance marginally below target at 96% (19 out of 467 referrals took an additional 2/3 days to triage).

Suitability Assessments of applicants for registration remained high at 281 during the year (255 registrations granted). This has been monitored throughout the year to ensure sufficient resources are available to support the Fitness to Practise team. Although a growth in the volume of assessment and referrals was anticipated with the increase in the register total, it remains higher than predicted. A detailed review was undertaken during 2019/20 to assess the resourcing required to sustain this level of activity and a business case has been submitted to the DoH requesting additional resourcing for the immediate and longer term.

The Standard of Acceptance for Fitness to Practise referrals was revised in 2018/19 and promoted to employers throughout 2019/20 to raise awareness about the thresholds for a Fitness to Practise investigation. The Model of Regulation, which includes the opportunity to consensually apply Warnings or Conditions in cases where there are less serious breaches of the standards, is now well established. Of the 327 cases which were concluded, approximately 50% were closed at a preliminary stage (either requiring No Further Action, or with a Letter of Advice). This provided resolution for complainants and registrants through a less stressful and more expedient process. 91% of cases were closed within our KPI (to close 90% of cases within 15 months).

Fitness to Practise Committee services also reported continued high volumes of work for the year. There were 46 Committee days held to consider 29 Registration cases, 23 Interim Order Reviews and 26 new Interim Orders. 22 Fitness to Practise Hearings were held across 22 days, resulting in 15 Removal Orders 4 Suspension Orders, 1 Conditions of Practice Order and 1 Impairment Not Found. (One hearing was part-heard at 31 March). Currently there are 31 Interim Orders in place, which must be regularly reviewed by Committees thereby generating a significant proportion of activity for the Fitness to Practise team.



## **Strategic Theme 3 – Workforce Development**

Better outcomes for people who use social care services will be achieved by developing and supporting a regulated workforce that delivers safe, effective and values led care. Our ambition is to become a Centre of Excellence for social work and social care, focused on supporting the workforce to improve practice that is underpinned by research and best evidence. We will work with our partners and registrants to deliver this ambition, to support best practice and add value to the careers of those employed in social work and social care.

Central to how we deliver on our workforce development objectives is our partnership working with a wide range of stakeholders to create a culture of continuous professional development for the 45,000 people actively engaged in the delivery of social work and social care services across NI. This year we evaluated workforce development activity to identify whether this provides useful support for registrants in their professional development, helping them to improve the quality of care that they provide and support their ambitions for career development.

### **Workforce Development – Objectives for 2019-20**

- Support registrants and employers to meet their responsibilities in maintaining social care registration.
- Deliver an improvement programme to develop the online registration system so that it meets the needs of registrants and their employers.
- Develop our resources for our digital learning platform to provide registrants and employers with greater access to learning and employment resources.
- Work in partnership with stakeholder organisations to deliver careers and recruitment campaigns for social work and social care.
- Implement the Transformation project for Domiciliary Care Training to improve workforce skills and standards.
- Develop proposals for consultation on a system of revalidation to link Post Registration Training and Learning requirements with the Professional in Practice Framework for the social work profession.
- Develop a learning and improvement framework for social care workers to integrate qualifications and professional development into the career structure.

### **Workforce Development - What we did and the difference this made**

The Workforce Development Team led a range of working groups and supported strategic projects focused on developing the workforce and the training needed to further their skills and knowledge. Building on the detailed review of qualifications for social care completed in 2018/19, we continued to work with partners from the Social Care and Early Years sectors, Further Education Colleges and Awarding Organisations to complete the review and development of vocational qualifications that met the needs of both sectors. In August 2019 the Social Care Council was delighted to launch the new qualifications at an event at The Assembly Rooms in Belfast.

Qualifications launched included:

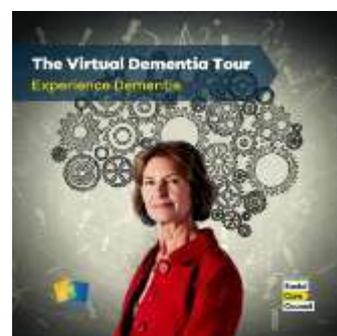
- Level 2 Diploma Health and Social Care (Northern Ireland);
- Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management Health and Social Care (Northern Ireland) (Adult Management & Residential Adult Management Pathways);
- Level 2 Diploma Child Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland);
- Level 3 Diploma Child Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland);
- Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management Child Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland).

This work highlighted the Social Care Council's approach to partnership working and this work will continue in 2020/2021 with further development lead by the Qualification and Learning & Development Panel.

The Domiciliary Care Training project co-ordinated a programme on behalf of the Health and Social Care Board to develop the skills of the workforce in priority areas. The training events and the funding available to backfill staff to attend training was welcomed by employers and staff. 2,314 staff participated in 238 training sessions and funding of £127k was provided for backfill across 23 organisations. Training delivered in 2019/20 included a wide range of topics including Dysphagia, Continence, Medicines Management, Nutrition, Human Rights, Dementia and Palliative Care. In addition to the formal training sessions, the scheme accepted claims for learning how to use Outcomes Based Approaches and time spent accessing digital learning resources (including Open Badges) on the Social Care Council Learning Zone.

During the year the Domiciliary Care Training project was recognised by the European Social Network and shortlisted as finalist for their 2019 Collaborative Practice Award.

The project also funded the Dementia Bus to visit sites in each of the five Health and Social Care Trusts, giving 118 social care workers and managers the opportunity to experience living with dementia. Feedback from the participants indicated that this provided a very real experience giving a unique insight into living with dementia. During the year, the Social Care Council had the opportunity to collaborate with Ulster University to bring the Smart Bus to some of the training events to showcase new assistive technologies and promote the Social Care Council digital Learning Zone.



Additional transformation funding was allocated to deliver training on Resilience and Social Isolation in March 2020, but these events were postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Domiciliary Care Training project was scheduled to finish in March 2020, with time made available to complete all funding claims and prepare the project evaluation. A proposal has been submitted to the HSCB to extend the Domiciliary Care Training Programme and is subject to funding from the Department of Health.

Technology was also used to connect social care manager into virtual networks through the Social Care Echo. This project aimed to provide support to domiciliary care managers across Northern Ireland through sharing of knowledge and experience across video conferencing.

*"I have been able to discuss some of the topics with my team and with other managers at our managerial meetings"*

39 'spokes' (individuals or groups) were connected to the network in the year.

11 ECHO sessions were delivered

15 participants (on average) engaged for each event.

*"The networks have initiated understanding of what areas of learning are important to Domiciliary Care Providers"*

- 83% agreed participation enhanced their understanding of 'good practice' in domiciliary care
- 44% agreed the network facilitated development of relationships between domiciliary care managers
- 56% agreed participation has influenced strategic direction of their team
- 67% agreed they have implemented learning from ECHO sessions into practice
- 67% agreed participation helped them feel more supported in their role
- 100% would recommend ECHO as a useful learning tool to others

The ECHO project is continuing into 2020/21 business year and has proven to be a valuable support for managers with a schedule of sessions planned for those involved in delivering domiciliary care services through COVID-19.

The Social Care Council is also a Sector Skills Council, a member of the UK alliance Skills for Care and Development. As a Sector Skills Council, we work with employers and education providers to address issues affecting recruitment and workforce development within the sector. Promoting careers in social work and social care was a large part of our activity this year. Social work and social care careers were promoted in schools and colleges. Our Careers Ambassadors attended 24 careers events; information stands were provided at 3 regional careers events and 8 local Council Skills Academy events. The Social Care Council also deployed a team of staff to work over 2 days in the HSC Careers Zone at the Skills NI regional careers event at Titanic Belfast. This event was attended by approximately 7000 young people from schools across NI. The stand engaged people in the Social Care Council's newly developed digital Careers Resources to raise awareness about careers in the sector. Social workers, social care workers and service users contributed to the videos and scenarios for the Careers Resources. The promotion of careers in social work and social care was supported by campaigns across social media.

Scoping work was undertaken in 2018/19 for the development of a recognised career structure in social care. The Department of Health workforce strategy sets out clearly the need for skilled staff across social care. Work will continue on the development of a Learning and Improvement strategy for social care during 2020/21.

Although entry to the social work profession for 2019 was strong, with 246 new social workers graduating in June 2019 and 247 students beginning their Degree course in September 2019, there are concerns that there are lower numbers of people applying to social work courses across the UK. In response to this, the Department of Health commissioned the Social Care Council to deliver a campaign of radio and digital communications to encourage people to #sayyestocialwork. The campaign was delivered November 2019 – January 2020 to support UCAS application period. Initial feedback from university Admissions Departments indicate a 16% increase in UCAS applications for Autumn 2020 intake.

Promotion of the Professional in Practice CPD Framework for social workers continued during the year, with 100 social workers engaged in PiP information sessions and presentations. Initial consultations were completed to review options to link social worker CPD to the PiP Framework, making PiP an integral part of lifelong learning in social work. Work will continue in 2020/21 to engage the profession in the developments required to implement this new approach to CPD.



We extended the range of online resources available on the Learning Zone in 2019/20, publishing five new learning products and updating two existing resources. The site averaged 700 users per month up to February 2020. In March 2020, resources were developed to support workforce recruitment and training in preparation for COVID-19. Activity on the Learning Zone increased dramatically, with the Good Infection Control resource reaching 14,000 users in the first weeks of Go-Live. The updates from the Induction Programme resource have been viewed by 4,000 users

and is assisting managers to introduce new staff to the workforce using remote learning. Further requests for resources on topics such as Social Isolation, Bereavement and Resilience have been identified for development to assist social workers and social care staff living and working with COVID-19.

The Learning Zone Social Care Induction Programme was promoted online and at the Social Care Managers Forum events during 2019. Uptake was relatively low earlier in the year, with on average, 500 people accessing the programme each month. To boost engagement with the online Induction Programme, we invited registrants and employers to share their views and experiences of the resource in an online survey. Responses showed that 70% of managers and 15% of staff were using the new programme. Of concern was the feedback from 31% of managers who said they had 'never used' the programme. Campaigns to raise awareness of the flexible ways in which the programme can be used to complement existing induction systems will continue in 2020/21.

## **Strategic Theme 4 – Systems Leadership**

Our work towards establishing collective leadership for social work and social care involves collaborative partnership working, facilitating new thinking and fresh perspectives to reduce harms, minimise risks and improve quality in the delivery of social care services. Through our partnership work we have promoted and supported a collective leadership approach within the social work and social care sector with the aim of improving quality in practice. We have and will continue to support the ambition of the HSC Leadership Strategy and support social work leadership programmes within the Professional in Practice framework.

We have remodelled how we provide systems leadership for the social care sector and have established a Leaders in Social Care Partnership which aims to put a sustainable framework in place to support, among many things, the value of social care in delivering services to the citizens of Northern Ireland. At the same time, we are also continuing to play our part in working with others to ensure a systems leadership approach is in place in relation to social work. We are keen to take a lead role in this regard and to support our partners to raise the standing and profile of social workers.

As the workforce regulator, the information and intelligence we hold about the social work and social care workforce is unique. Our continued ambition remains to use our workforce intelligence to support the leadership challenges in social work and social care. We are uniquely placed to collect and use this information to help inform strategic decisions to support the sector.

### **Systems Leadership – Objectives for 2019-20**

- Work with Government Departments, Community Planning Leads and employers to inform strategic workforce planning and policy development.
- Strengthen engagement with our partnerships to inform strategic workforce planning and development.
- Work with social work and social care leaders to build collaborative partnerships to support transformation outcomes.
- Develop our capacity and capability to analyse and report on our datasets for workforce demographics, qualifications, training and learning.

### **Systems Leadership - What we did and the difference this made**

We have worked with sector leaders, government bodies and representative organisations to influence the development and transformation of the system as well as being a connector and facilitator for many parts of the system that do not always have a prominent position.

We have invested resources over the last two years to connect the senior leaders who now make up the membership of the Leaders in Social Care Partnership. The Partnership has been formally established; bringing together 30 senior social care leaders from the statutory, independent and 3rd sectors to establish a strategic framework for the transformation and development of the social care workforce in Northern Ireland that will ensure the sustainability of a skilled, competent and fit for purpose workforce. Work also continues with the Leaders in Social Work, a more established network which is collaborating on current and future needs for the profession in NI.

The Social Work Leadership Network has been established under the auspices of the DoH Social Work Strategy and comprises leaders from the statutory, voluntary, education and justice sectors. This year our Interim Chief Executive chaired the Leadership Network and the focus of work has been to build a communication strategy to raise the profile of social work in all sectors, and to work towards a collaborative approach to developing the social work workforce into the future.

2019/20 was the final year of the Domiciliary Care Training project on behalf of the HSCB to support HSC workforce transformation programme. Regular reporting has been provided to the HSCB on

the skills needs and priorities for these workers. The project was scheduled to end in March 2020 and a proposal has been submitted to the HSCB highlighting the need for a longer-term solution to workforce training,

Social Care Council staff, Board Members and Partnership Members have contributed to DoH transformation and Brexit projects and work streams, providing expert knowledge to facilitate social work and social care workforce development.

These include:

- **Reform of Adult Social Care** – participating in the DoH Reference Group and supporting wider HSC transformation agenda;
- **Development of a Multi-Professional Delegation Framework** - Joint project with NIPEC;
- **Duty of Candour Recommendations** - Joint working with BASW NI and social work leadership network;
- **EU Exit Planning** – reviewing departure arrangements; participating in DoH Contingency Planning Team to ensure transition is managed effectively;
- **Deprivation of Liberty/Mental Capacity** – Planning for implementation of new legislation;
- **Evaluation of Registration Policy** – engagement to deliver annual online survey and focus groups to gather workforce information;
- **HSC Workforce Strategy** – Provision of workforce data and contribution to workshops;
- **Social Work Workforce Review** - Project Group membership and analysis of Degree in Social Work applications data.



We have contributed our unique knowledge of the registered workforce to local, national and international contacts to promote best practice and innovation. These include:

- **Skills for Care** - Board and Directors meetings;
- **UK social work and social care regulators** - benchmarking standards and sharing learning
- **CORU, GMC, GDC** – sharing learning and identifying opportunities for collaboration;
- **Local Council Community Planning – Engagement with Planning Leads** in Fermanagh and Omagh to ensure social care provision is included in community planning;
- **Social Work England** – sharing knowledge and best practice to support development of Standards of Conduct and Education for social workers registered in England;
- **Future Social Services (Australia)** – Invitation to meet social work and social care leaders, sharing experiences of introducing regulation for the social care;
- **Support for strategic meetings and networks** - presentations/information stands at:
  - NICON, NIGALA and BASW Conferences (Belfast)
  - IASW Social Work Research Conference (Dublin), GMC Conference (London)
  - QUB Social Work Leadership Programme - Engaged with senior social workers in a workshop to explore 'Collective and Compassionate Leadership'
  - Voices Project – Joint regional workshops with BASW and QUB
  - Professional Standards Authority annual research conference (London).

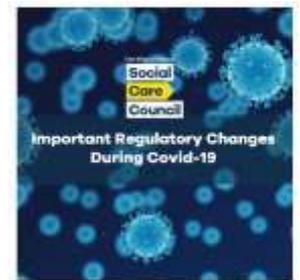
## Technology for Social Work and Social Care

- **Digitalisation in Social Work and Social Care -** Roundtable discussion hosted;
- **Technology Survey** – Social care digital skills/aptitude survey. Phase one report completed and Phase 2 survey delivered, (jointly with Ulster University). Shared with HSCB Primary Care Team.



## Support for COVID-19 Strategic Projects

- DoH Workforce Recruitment Campaign - workforce intelligence and resources provided for employers and Departmental colleagues to connect with potential social work recruits;
- Joint working with Universities and employers to support the early qualification of final year social work students;
- Employers and courses engaged to manage the safe withdrawal of students from Degree practice placements;
- Joint working with exam bodies and course providers to develop alternative course delivery and assessment options for VQ courses;
- Social Care Council 'named contacts' list promoted to social work/social care leaders to provide resources and support;
- Suite of learning resources developed to support registrants responding to COVID-19.



## **Strategic Theme 5 – Communication and Engagement**

Since our establishment in 2001, communication and engagement has remained a key theme, recognising that to deliver our statutory functions we need to effectively communicate with our registrants and stakeholders to successfully deliver our business. Over the last three years of our current Corporate Plan, we have invested time promoting social work and social care, developing our social media presence and creating engagement forums such as the Social Care Managers Forum to strengthen our connections with the sector.

### **Communication and Engagement – Objectives for 2019-20**

- Deliver an awareness campaign to promote the role and value of social work and social care as a regulated workforce upholding standards.
- Deliver a programme of engagement with registrants to support them in their practice.
- Develop our digital resources to improve our connections with registrants, employers and our stakeholders.
- Demonstrate how the views of people who use services, carers, registrants, employers and other stakeholders are informing our business and making a difference.

### **Communication and Engagement - What we did and the difference this made**

Our focus for 2019/20 has been to establish an integrated approach to communications across all platforms, co-ordinating campaigns to ensure key messages are delivered to the target groups. We have taken time to develop quality artwork, images and videos that are clearly identifiable as the Social Care Council brand and message. A systematic approach has been applied to all our communications and promotional materials to introduce the refreshed Social Care Council logo and colour palette.

Communications planning and scheduling has been introduced to ensure that the team can deliver campaigns effectively. This strategic integrated approach has been particularly effective when using Email campaigns together with social media (especially Twitter). Development of e-zines tailored to specific groups has increased 'open-rates' to 50/60%. Our campaigns have been supported and shared by DoH and our HSC partners, helping to extend our reach to those interested in social work and social care.

### **Social Care Council Campaigns delivered in 2019/20**

- Careers in Social Work and Social Care – promotion of the new Learning Zone resources;
- Domiciliary Care Training – Event invites shared online and bookings managed;
- Registration – series of messages including 'pay your fee online', 'update your details';
- Standards of Conduct and Practice – reminder for registrants and employers;
- Professional in Practice – call to social workers to use the Credit Framework for recording CPD;
- PiP Awards – profiling of successful candidates from June 2019 event;
- COVID Support for Social Care – Mailchimp campaign for Workforce Development contacts;
- Degree in Social Work Courses – radio and online campaigns to boost UCAS applications;
- Experience IT – Ulster University Smart Bus Tour;
- Virtual Dementia Tour – Week-long dementia events at sites across all 5 HSC Trusts;
- Lunchtime Seminar Series – events promotion across a range of topics.

### **Partner Campaigns delivered in 2019/20**

- Social Work Awards – videos were edited to build up momentum on social media pre/post event;
- DoH COVID-19 – workforce recruitment for social work and social care;
- Voices Workshops- regional social worker seminars delivered jointly with BASW and QUB;
- Leonard Cheshire – recognition event for staff learning achievements.

## Direct Mail and E-Zines published in 2019/20

- Regular e-zines published for social work and social care registrants to keep them in touch with our work and services/resources available for them;
- Leaders in Social Work/Social Care – e-zine updates from meetings;
- 6 Direct Email campaigns developed and delivered for Workforce Development ‘COVID-19 Named Contacts Service’, Endorsers Information and circulation of Frequently Asked Questions resource.

## Internal Communications

- Intranet - updated each week with useful resources and staff news;
- Media clippings – news items and alerts shared with staff to connect them with political and sector news.

## Highlights for 2019/20 – some of the posts that made a difference for our stakeholders

- UCAS closing dates reminder – final call to action for Degree in Social Work applications;
- Digital Registration Certificate – adding the HSC logo enabled social care staff to access NHS priority services, free public transport and discounts;
- ‘Good Infection Control’ leaning resource – which generated 14,000 - clicks to the Learning Zone resource;
- Video of PiP candidate Simon Darby - demonstrating the strength of personal stories in this media type.



## Design/Creative work completed / live

- Design and images for Learning Zone re-skin to match colour palette;
- Registration guide for Emergency Applications;
- COVID FAQs and advice on regulatory changes.
- Artwork and images prepared for 9 new/refreshed Learning Zone resources.
- Voice Over recorded for Bereavement ‘Hope - how to’ resource;
- Digital registration certificate – mobile friendly download with HSC logo included.

## Stakeholder engagement and support for social care networks

### Working groups, meetings and online engagement

- Social Care Roundtable Discussion – leadership piece in Agenda NI;
- Regular scanning of external media to identify gaps in communications for the social work and social care workforce;
- Patient and Client Council - Learning Disability Network;
- Leaders in Social Care Partnership – support for quarterly meetings and communications workstream;
- UK Homecare Association meeting.



## **Infrastructure and Leadership**

Objectives across the Infrastructure and Leadership theme were linked to the areas of People, Resources, Systems, Governance and Quality.

The Social Care Council is an IIP (Silver) accredited employer and retains the IIP Good Practice Award for Health and Wellbeing. Staff are engaged in a range of activities, supporting the overall delivery of the Social Care Council's Business Plan. The Senior Leadership Team, chaired by the Interim Chief Executive, has worked with staff to ensure the staffing resource is deployed to support business priorities.

During the year, staff participated in the HSC Regional Survey and there were many positive indicators regarding how all staff demonstrate their leadership in working together, and some areas where more needs to be done. Staff participate in a number of groups to improve the working environment, including looking at areas such as culture, quality and internal communications.

A planned programme of interactive engagement meetings with staff now takes place on a regular basis in addition to the day to day and team meetings that take place across the organisation. A culture of 'you said' and 'we did' is now firmly in place and the staff Intranet is an important tool in sharing information in real time with all staff, in addition to face to face communication and meetings. Looking for ways to do things smarter and improving our systems will continue to be a priority during 2020/21, including making best use of the technology that is available.

### **Infrastructure – Objectives for 2019-20**

- People - Deliver the actions identified for 2019/20 business year arising from the Investors in People Report.
- Resources - Manage our resources to maximum effect and within regulatory and statutory guidelines and legislation.
- Governance - Deliver effective governance including risk and information management in line with relevant legislation and guidance.
- Quality - Deliver on our Quality 2020 commitments for 2019/20 as set out in the Annual Quality Action Plan.
- Systems - Deliver our 2019/20 ICT Improvement Plan to further enhance the user experience of our registration and regulation system.

### **Infrastructure - What we did and the difference this made**

We supported staff to manage their health and wellbeing and our staff absence rate reduced this year to 2.65% (below the KPI of 3.5%)

- Internal communications strengthened and staff connection with the business objectives improved through quarterly staff business events;
- Intranet updated weekly with news and links to useful resources including self-care;
- News and updates for staff via e-zines and CEO email bulletins;
- Regular all staff engagement events.

- Training delivered including leadership, change management, whistleblowing, deaf awareness, risk and fraud;
- Health and Wellbeing Committee programme of exercise, social support, fund raising and events to recognise staff contributions;
- Review of appraisals carried out and new appraisal system designed in consultation with staff;
- Resources - managed our resources to maximum effect and within regulatory and statutory guidelines and legislation to achieve breakeven;
- Resources managed to ensure finances met breakeven target with a yearend £8k surplus;
- Business case submitted to sponsor branch in response to 2019/20 financial pressures and to request assistance with growth in Fitness to Practise activity;
- Prompt payments managed for 30 day and 10 day payments – 96.5% were paid within 30 days and 78.2% were paid within 10 days;
- Savings delivered in relation to travel and hospitality.



**Richard McNeill** (centre), who was successful in applying for a place on the Young Persons Programme 2020

**Laura McCullough** (centre), who qualified as a mediator for the HSC.

**Governance** – Business was delivered in line with legislation and Good Governance guidelines

- Business was planned for 2019/20 with objectives and KPIs approved by the leadership team;
- Participated in the Belfast Optimisation Project to relocate to James House and secured an extension on the current lease in Millennium House until the relocation takes place;
- Business reporting was stepped up to produce weekly reports to provide assurance on the delivery of business and monitoring of staff welfare during remote working for COVID-19;
- Accountability meeting with Sponsor department – positive feedback from Health Minister on Social Care Council achievements against business and strategic objectives;
- Risk management processes and Risk Registers updated - providing assurance on the good governance of our business;
- Audit and Risk Committee met quarterly to review assurance reports and risks that were reported;
- Audit schedule was completed and satisfactory assessments were received across all audits.

**Quality** – We delivered on our Quality 2020 commitments for 2019/20 as set out in the Annual Quality Action Plan.

- Staff were engaged in activities to promote and deliver good practice in equality and diversity including a series of information sessions on disability and mental health awareness, ensuring we are compliant with good governance and equality legislation;
- All staff have been trained and supported to take an active role in quality improvement for their own work and for the team;
- Quality Improvement projects for improving engagement with the customer service survey and to increase uptake of the online registration service have involved staff from across all teams;
- Feedback from QI projects was displayed on posters and white boards in the office.

**Systems** – Deliver the 2019/20 ICT Improvement Plan to further enhance the user experience of our registration and regulation system.

- Registration and Regulation ICT system continually developed to improve user experience;
- SOCRATES Change Board reviewing system development and improvement;
- Online Registration Services available 99% of the time (on average, 29,000 portal sessions logged each month);
- All staff enabled to work remotely.

## **Performance in Relation to Environmental Matters**

The Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development applicable to public authorities is set out at section 25 of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 and applies to all Northern Ireland Departments and District Councils.

The six priority areas are:

- Building a dynamic, innovative economy that delivers the prosperity required to tackle disadvantage and to lift communities out of poverty;
- Strengthening society so that it is more tolerant, inclusive and stable and permits positive progress in quality of life for everyone;
- Driving sustainable, long-term investment in key infrastructure to support economic and social development;
- Striking an appropriate balance between the responsible use and protection of natural resources in support of a better quality of life and a better quality environment;
- Ensuring a reliable, affordable and sustainable energy provision and reducing our carbon footprint;
- Ensuring the existence of a policy environment which supports the overall advancement of sustainable development in and beyond Government.

The Social Care Council remains committed to making an active contribution to those areas which it can influence. Prominence is therefore given to the way in which we conduct our work to minimise, where relevant, a negative impact on these duties, but more importantly to make sustainable improvements wherever possible.

A number of positive actions have been implemented:

- The Social Care Council secured an extension on its lease while it participates in the Belfast Optimisation Project to move to James House (currently scheduled for 2022) alongside a number of other ALB's and organisations;
- Agile working is now in place with staff working remotely from home (as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic) and this has reduced the need for travel to the workplace and meetings are taking place using video-conferencing software;
- As a result of agile working the production of printing and photocopying has reduced as staff use ICT support including One Note;
- The Social Care Council's Board also moved to digital working and use Decision Time software to manage their Board and other meetings;
- E-Resources – investment in the Learning Zone as an alternative to printed learning resources.

This has included clear procedures on the minimisation of waste, colour photocopying and paper production. The continued promotion of the online Portal has also led to almost negligible use of printed materials for registration application paperwork. A copy of the Social Care Council's Sustainable Development Report and Plan can be found on the website, [www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info)

**The Social Care Council is committed to working closely with people who use services and their carers to ensure they are supported in contributing their views and experiences to improve our business. The contribution of people who use social care services and carers is a valued and integral part of planning, implementing and reviewing all areas of work and projects across the organisation.**

Over the past year, we have continued working in Partnership with the Participation Forum to help us deliver on our participation agenda. The Participation Forum's role is to challenge, influence and advise the work of the Social Care Council, ensuring that people who use social care services and their carers are involved and have an opportunity to shape and contribute to all of our work.

The Participation Forum is chaired by a Board member and comprises people who use social care services and their carers. The group is supported by the Director of Registration and Corporate Services, together with a small group of other staff. These staff ensure that the Forum is supported in all areas of its work and its priorities. The Participation Forum meet quarterly. They agree their own agenda and all meetings are minuted. The Social Care Council recognises the significant amount of personal time and expertise contributed by the Forum members, which provides assurance that all activities are focused on the needs and experiences of those who use social care services.

Internal Audit carried out an organisation-wide Audit of 'Service user and Care Participation and Engagement'. Forum members contributed to the design of the Audit and were interviewed as part of the Audit process. The recommendations from the Audit will provide a framework for building on and improving the work which the Social Care Council does in this area. Recommendations included a User involvement and Engagement Strategy to enable staff within the Social Care Council to proactively engage with people who use services and their carers across all areas of our work.

The Participation Forum has played an active role in challenging, influencing and advising the work of the Social Care Council, and some of the highlights and outcomes from 2019/20 are explained below.

### **Events, Workshops and Projects**

- Social Work Awards – Members gave a significant amount of personal time to prepare for and take part in the Awards judging panels. They also took part in the presentation of Awards at the Gala Event in November 2019.
- Involve Fest Conference – the Forum developed postcards to describe their role in participation which was submitted to the conference.
- Social Work and Homelessness Seminar – Members presented their experience of homelessness as part of the Belfast Metropolitan College seminar at the Social Care Council. The event was also featured on NTV and promoted across social media.
- “Future Planning” workshop – Members and staff hosted an information stand at this event for people with learning disability and their carers. The event was led by Gerard in his role as Engagement Officer with the Patient Client Council.
- Disability Action DRILL Project – Members and staff had worked on this research by Disability Action to develop a survey to assess social care workers perceptions and attitudes towards

disabled people. The survey has been completed and the findings are being analysed. Support will be needed from the Participation members in 2020/21 to advise on the implementing the recommendations arising from the report.

### **Business Planning, Delivery and Reporting**

- Business Plan for 2020/21 – Participation Forum members fed back their views on the draft Business Plan and shared views about how the new Corporate Strategy could be developed to engage people who use services and their carers.
- Degree in Social Work – A Board member with carer expertise as well as social work experience worked with the Social Care Council staff to review and approve the Open University submission to deliver a Social Work Degree in NI.
- Degree in Social Work – Involvement in preparing the report from the 2018/19 Review of the Degree and membership of the implementation team. Service Users and Carers are involved in workshops which are delivered with social work students in their course.
- “Impact of use of Language by Professionals” – the Forum provided feedback on the document and the Forum’s key role in assisting others with the use of language in Social Care Council documents was taken on board.
- The Forum took charge of a review of glossary terms and the use of Plain English and these were shared on our website and on social media.

### **Communications and Working with Others**

During the year, the Forum looked at ways to improve communication and keep connected between the meetings. Actions taken included publishing an Ezine within 48 hours of each Participation Partnership meeting, publishing an action plan for each meeting and for the Chair to send out an informal update to members halfway between meetings – just to keep everyone up to date.

**Nursing Delegation Framework** - Members contributed to the morning seminar hosted by the Social Care Council and NI Practice and Education Council (Nursing) to develop standards and guidance for delegating nursing duties to social care staff. The report will be published later in 2020.

### **Training and Development**

“Finding Your Voice” – A member completed the Level 3 Award for the “Finding Your Voice” programme. External verifiers were impressed with his presentation as it was prepared in a very accessible format. Two other members subsequently engaged with the programme.

Quality Improvement and How to measure improvement – Level 3 and Level 5 training delivered by SHSCT for Service Users and Carers who participate in service improvement. This course would enable Participation Members to gain qualifications for the work that they already do. Training will be sourced when this course is made available later in the year.

## Performance Analysis – Objectives and Key Performance Indicators

2019-20 Business Plan was delivered against 27 objectives and 12 KPIs. Progress was monitored by the Operational Leadership Team throughout the year. Monthly performance reports for the Senior Leadership Team and Quarterly reports for the Social Care Council Board included successes, opportunities for improvement and details of mitigating action undertaken for areas that were at risk of not meeting required outcomes.

On 19 March 2020, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council transferred all business operations to be delivered via remote working as a response to provide a safe and effective service during the COVID-19 lockdown period. Business continuity was co-ordinated by the Command and Control Team, with achievement of critical business objectives, including staff well-being, being monitored and reported at online meetings and in weekly highlight reports.

Monitoring of Business Plan KPIs was pended during COVID-19 operations, therefore cumulative KPIs reported for end of month 12 are based on statistics recorded up to end of February 2020 (month 11). The Command and Control Team is satisfied that delivery of the 27 objectives and performance against the 11 KPIs set out in the 2019/20 Business Plan meet the standards required to confirm achievement of year end outcomes in line with the 2017-21 Corporate Plan.

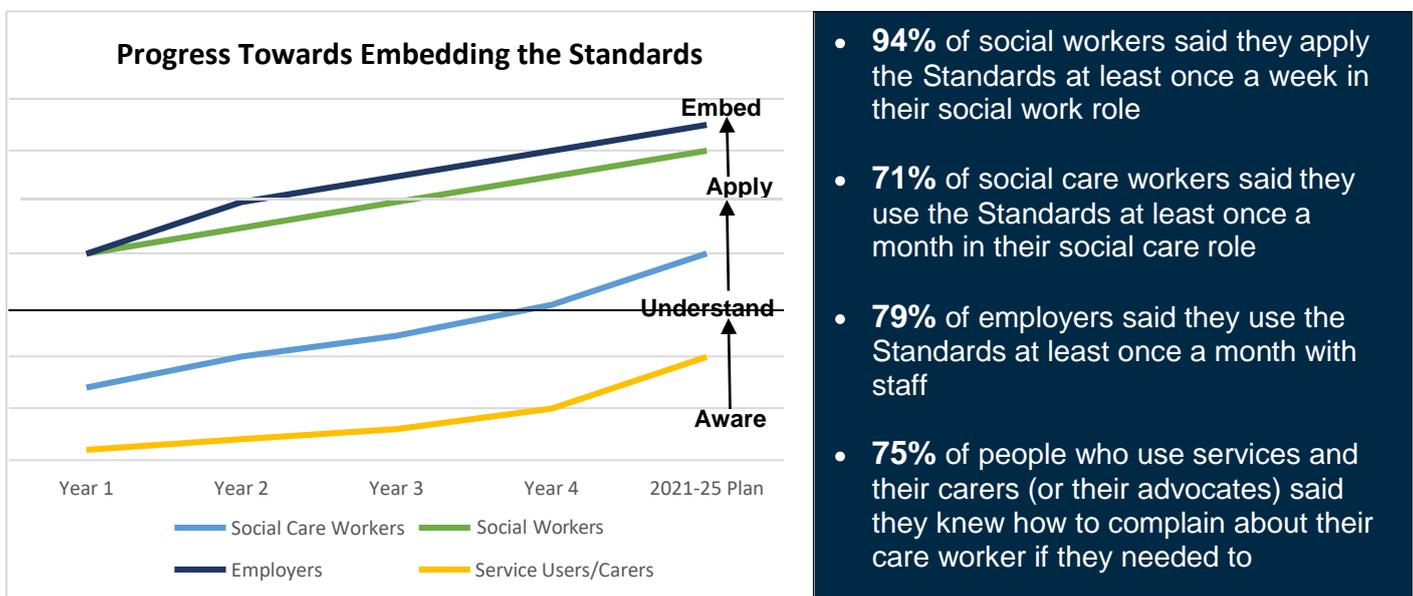
Business Area	KPI Measures of Success	Cumulative Performance
Registration	<b>Process 100% of completed applications/renewals within 20 working days of submission.</b> Performance was marginally below KPI.	<b>93%</b> (9549 applications completed in-year)
	<b>Update the register for all Fitness to Practise decisions within 2 working days of receipt of the information</b>	<b>100%</b> (105 registration decisions updated)
Fitness to Practise	<b>Triage all referrals to the Fitness to Practise Team within 3 working days.</b> Performance was marginally below KPI, with 17 referrals requiring additional 1-3 days to complete. None were high risk.	<b>96%</b> (467 referrals triaged)
	<b>Conclude 100% of ISO hearings within 4 weeks of referral.</b> Performance was marginally below KPI, with ISOs requiring an additional 3-5 days to complete.	<b>88%</b> (26 new ISOs imposed)
	<b>Conclude 90% of Fitness to Practise cases within 15 months of opening the case</b> Number and complexity of cases continues to increase.	<b>91%</b> (327cases closed)
Social Work Education	<b>Complete 100% of Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training within timeframes agreed with providers and identify recommendations for improvement</b>	<b>100%</b> (Degree, Practice Learning, PiP monitored)
People	<b>Ensure our staff absence levels do not exceed 3.5%</b>	<b>2.65%</b>
Finance	<b>Achieve the minimum standard of paying 95% of undisputed invoices within 30 days</b>	<b>96.5%</b> (1,879 invoices paid)
	<b>Achieve the minimum standard of paying 75% of undisputed invoices within the 10 day prompt payment target.</b>	<b>78.2%</b>
	<b>Manage our finances to achieve financial breakeven target of 0.25% or £20k (whichever is greater).</b>	<b>£8.8k (0.29 RRL)</b>
Systems	<b>Ensure the Online Registration Portal is available at least 98% of time during the year.</b>	<b>99%</b> (350k sessions hosted)

## Performance Analysis – Looking Forward

Through our work and the work of our partners, we expect to see the registered workforce becoming more confident and skilled in using new technology, applying new ways of working that focus on personalised and compassionate care. To support the workforce in achieving these outcomes the Social Care Council applies a regular cycle of evaluation and reflection; learning from experiences and adapting to changing workforce needs to shape how our work is developed and delivered. This 'Look Forward' section shares the learning gained from 2019/20 business year and gives an overview of how this will be taken forward in 2020/21.

### Theme 1 Standards – Learning and Outcomes

During the year, we used our Evaluation Framework, to identify the incremental improvements in the use and application of the Standards for registrants and Employers. Levels of awareness, understanding and use of the Standards is improving across the stakeholder groups of social workers, social care workers, employers and service users. There is gradual movement towards regular use of the standards and for these to become part of everyday practice.



As shown in the timeline above, stakeholders told us that they are at varying stages both in their learning about the standards and in how they are being used to improve quality in social care. For most of them, this fits with the length of time their area of practice, or they have personal experience of social work and social care registration and regulation.

It is recognised that the engagement programme so far has had a stronger focus on the workforce, seeking to ensure that registrants and employers understood their responsibilities towards professional registration and standards. It is equally important that people who use services and those who care for them are aware of the standards they can expect from a registered worker and can feel confident in the individual's conduct and practice. Therefore, during 2020/21, work will be undertaken to identify the information needs of these stakeholders and develop communication and engagement plans to address these effectively.

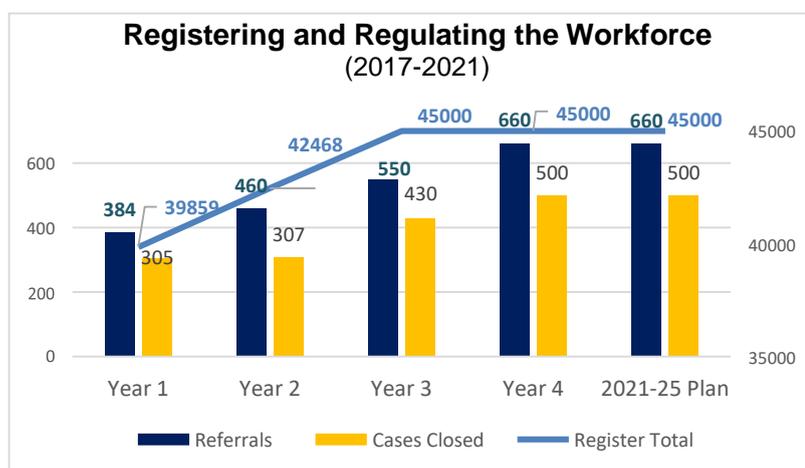
### What we plan to do in 2020-21 and beyond

- Continue with the programme of engagement to raise awareness of the Standards and the benefits of workforce registration and regulation.
- Establish a benchmark of awareness of the role of the Social Care Council and confidence in the social care sector with people who use services and their carers.

## Theme 2 Regulation – Learning and Outcomes

There are 45,000 people registered with the Social Care Council, providing high quality care and support to the community in Northern Ireland. The register has grown significantly in the last three years and it is important that we have the resources and systems in place to support the needs and expectations of that workforce. The ongoing development of the registration database and integration of new technologies for online registration services is essential to enable registrants and employers to manage registration effectively.

Although only a small number of the workforce are referred to us to review their fitness to practise, the significant increase in the size of the register has resulted in an increase in the number of allegations we receive about a registrant's fitness to practise. In 2019-20, a Business Case was submitted to the Department of Health requesting support to sustain the Fitness to Practise function to meet the increase in volume and complexity of referrals and cases identified over the previous three years. Work is ongoing with the DoH to agree sustainable solutions going forward. The matter has been recorded on the risk register and reflected in the Governance Statement. It is therefore important that we continue to manage our processes efficiently and ensure we have the skills, systems and technology to deliver this function well.



- **95%** of registrants maintained registration
- **91%** of FtP cases closed in 15 months
- **100%** of the workforce sampled for PRTL met the requirements
- **81%** of managers reported new social work graduates can practise competently
- **56%** of social workers engaged with the PiP framework for CPD

By setting and monitoring standards for social work education and training at both qualifying and post qualifying levels we support safe and effective practice across the career spectrum. Regular and consistent review of the Degree in Social Work and Professional in Practice programmes has ensured we can identify opportunities to improve and develop the programmes.

There have been significant developments to the PiP Framework in the last three years; increasing the range of learning routes and providing an opportunity for social workers to use ongoing learning to build credits towards requirements for PiP Awards. Further work is required to raise awareness of the PiP opportunities and to engage social workers in logging their CPD through the Credit Accumulation Framework.

### What we plan to do in 2020-21 and beyond

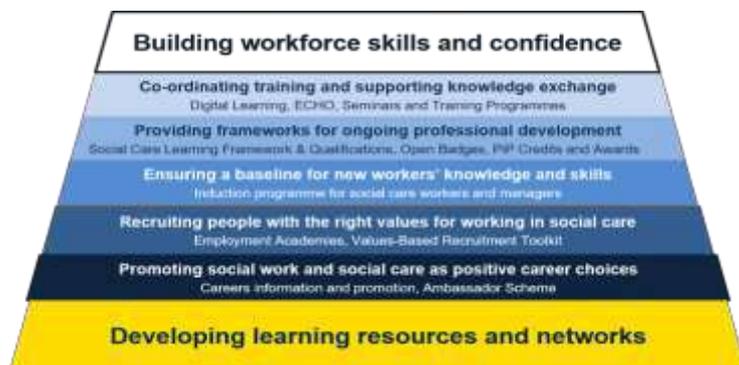
In addition to providing the engagement and support required for social workers and social care workers to maintain their registration:

- We need to meet increasing demands on the registration and Fitness to Practise functions which will require a review of systems and application of ICT
- We need to implement recommendations from the Review of the Degree which support the development of new social workers
- We need to engage front line social workers and their managers to increase use of the PiP Credit system and Framework

## Theme 3 Workforce Development – Learning and Outcomes

During 2019-20, the Social Care Council supported and delivered programmes to help recruit, develop and retain social workers and social care workers. The learning and development needs of these workforces are significantly different and we will continue to deploy our resources to support the specific needs and priorities of each workforce. Development of a formal learning framework for social care will support career progression and recognise commitment to learning and development. Engagement in the local Social Care Skills Academies and interest shown in careers and employment events demonstrate the benefits of raising awareness about social care and social work.

The Domiciliary Care Training programme highlighted the benefits of a blended approach to workforce training. 3,568 staff participated in over 400 sessions, receiving hands-on training on priority topics to support transformation. Feedback from managers and staff has been very positive, reporting increases in knowledge base and staff confidence.



The training sessions also included demonstrations of the digital resources available on the Social Care Council Learning Zone. Spikes in Learning Zone activity was evident following these sessions and users averaged 700 per month throughout the year.

Digital learning continues to be a key element in the drive to widen access to workforce development and training. Responses to our survey of registrant's digital skills were

positive and reflects a motivated workforce who have a genuine interest in learning and development. Most of the respondents felt that they had the required skills to use digital technology and appreciated the potential benefits of technology to facilitate learning.

There is a small but significant portion of the population (10%) who have expressed difficulty with certain digital skills. Technology roadshows had begun during 2019-20 to encourage the workforce to engage with digital learning. Alternative options to promote digital learning will be and development will be explored in 2020-21. Also, with 39% of respondents indicating they had not previously been aware of the Learning Zone resources, further communications will be delivered during 2020-21 to update registrants and employers on the resources available for them.

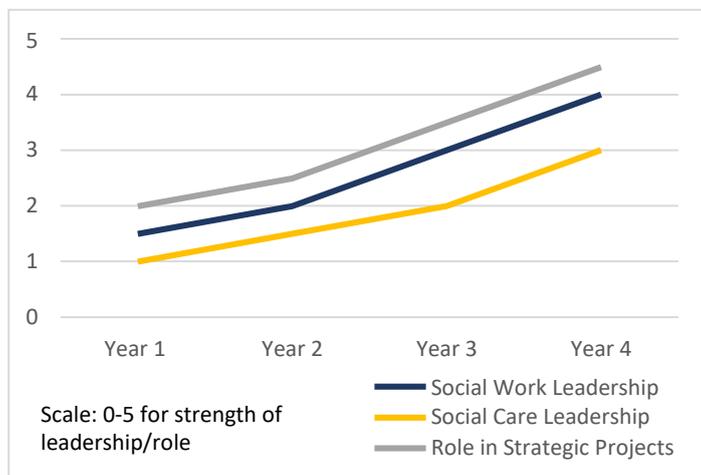
### What we plan to do in 2020-21 and beyond

- Work with partners to develop a Learning Framework for Social Care and a recognised career structure to attract more people to the workforce
- Promote domiciliary care training to support upskilling of the workforce
- Link Social Work PRTL to PiP Credits to enable social workers to gain recognition for their learning & development within the PiP Framework
- Consolidate the Learning Zone online resources and evaluate the use of existing products.
- Deliver information and awareness sessions to help build digital confidence and improve digital skills in the workforce
- Develop virtual learning networks to support social care managers to share learning and develop innovative approaches to service delivery

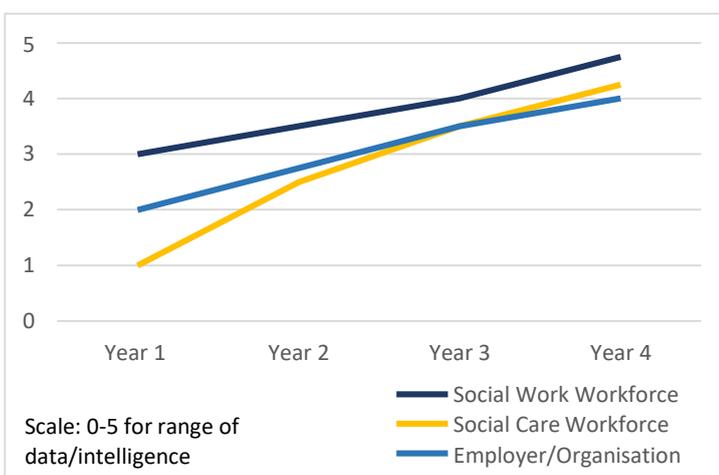
## Theme 4 Systems Leadership– Learning and Outcomes

Systems Leadership activity has brought together key interests from the sector to establish networks of people who can collaborate on development and improvement. It also focused on building our own skills and capacity to analyse the information we gather about our registered workforce and share trends and knowledge with our partners to help develop the workforce.

**Systems Leadership 2017-21**



**Collective Intelligence 2017-21**



Analysis and forecasting based on Social Care Council performance reporting and Evaluation Framework 2017-2020

Our work to connect social work and social care leaders is helping to shape social work and social care as Health & Social Care Transformation moves forward. Now, more than ever, insight from sector leaders is needed to inform strategic workforce planning and development. We have a range of social work and social care leaders and managers engaging regularly through the Social Work and Social Care Leaders Partnerships. Social Care Managers are committed to engaging twice a year through the manager's forums and the Social Care ECHO members, who had been connecting monthly are currently engaging on a weekly basis to share knowledge and experience of management during COVID-19.

Our Staff and Board Members have contributed to project boards and initiatives to ensure social care is reflected in strategic development within and outside the HSC system, including the Social Work Workforce Strategy, the Reform of Adult Social Care, Connected Health, Community Planning and Brexit.

Live information about the workforce is essential for the Social Care Council and our sector partners for forecasting and planning. We have been building database reports to generate live information about the profile of our registered workforce and using analytics tools to map our data according to where people work and where services are required. We will continue to seek investment to enhance our capacity and capability to analyse and report on our unique workforce information.

### What we plan to do in 2020-21 and beyond

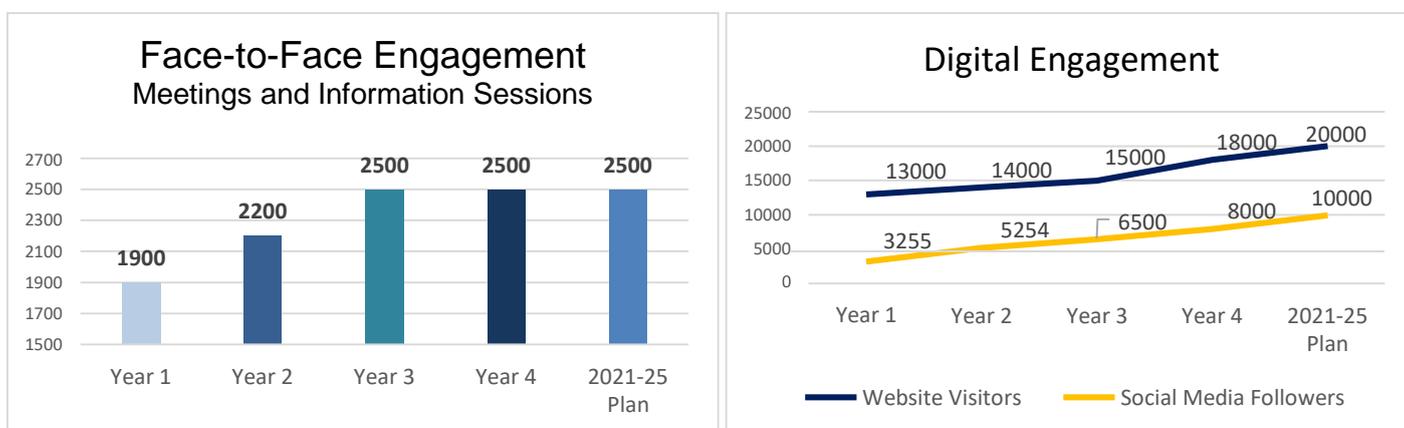
- Work with the DoH and other Government Departments, Community Planning Leads and employers to inform strategic workforce planning and policy development.
- Continue to chair and participate in the Social Work Leadership Network to support the development of a collective leadership approach for social work.
- Through the Leaders in Social Care Partnership, support the transformation and development of the social care workforce in Northern Ireland.
- Continue to develop our capacity and capability to analyse and report on our data for workforce demographics, qualifications, training and learning.

## Theme 5 Communications and Engagement – Learning and Outcomes

Communication and Engagement covers three wide-ranging outcomes: public perception of the workforce, confidence in workforce regulation and involving stakeholders in our business. In response to growing customer preference for visual communications, the team has invested in developing videos and artwork to engage and inform stakeholders. The website and social media channels have been refreshed to reflect the Social Care Council new colour palette. Campaigns have been delivered across our digital platforms to engage stakeholders in news and information about social work and social care.

The Communications Team and the Workforce Engagement Officers have worked closely to deliver an extensive programme of engagement with stakeholders to promote the standards and increase understanding about social work and social care. People who use services and their carers have participated in our information sessions and worked alongside our staff at regional events to encourage participation and involvement across social care. This face-to-face engagement has been maximised through campaigns on our social media, website, direct e-mails and online seminars.

Feedback from participants has been strongly positive that the engagement has been beneficial, but there are 45,000 people on the register and we have many other stakeholders including employers, people who use services and their carers and the interested public. As it is only possible to deliver face-to-face engagement with a small number of stakeholders each year, we are reviewing our communication and engagement activity to identify how to maximise our reach to those who need to meet or connect with us. We will also be exploring how we work with the range of organisations and networks who are connected with our stakeholders across Northern Ireland. By being smarter about how we connect what we are doing with the feedback we receive from stakeholders, we aim to be talking about the 'right things' to the 'right people', at the 'right time'.



### What we plan to do in 2020-21 and beyond

- Develop a Communication and Engagement Strategy that will support and co-ordinate our key efforts and messages.
- Deliver communications that are clear and easy to understand.
- Continue with work to solidify communication and engagement with our immediate stakeholders – registrants, employers, people who use services and their carers
- Maximise use of online resources to reach such a large and disparate stakeholder group
- Evidence the involvement of people who use services and their carers in our work and share the outcomes with other stakeholders
- Recognise that and work towards improving public perception as a long term outcome

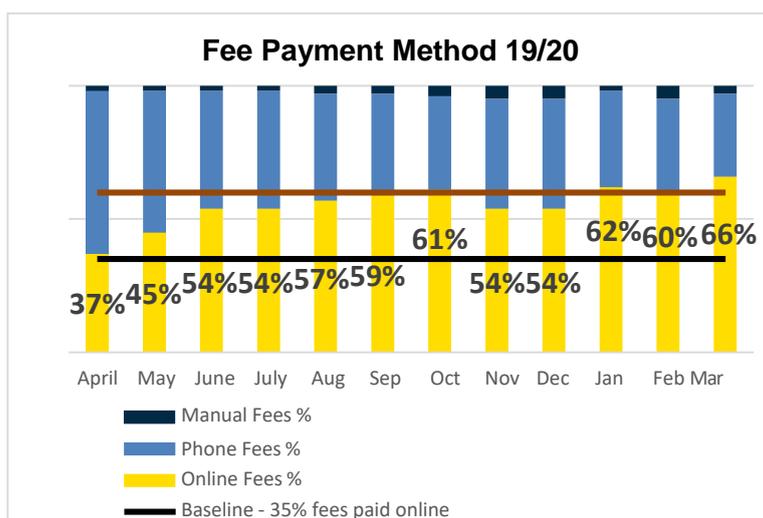
## Infrastructure – Learning and Outcomes

Infrastructure is about the people, systems and processes that guide and deliver our work. Our KPI's in relation to absences, appraisals, and finance were successfully achieved.

The Social Care Council is committed to engaging staff in regular events for all staff to learn more about the business. Based on feedback from the staff survey and in-house events, we learned that some staff felt we could do more to improve connections within the organisation. The Leadership Team has developed a monthly Townhall meeting for updates and for teams to take turns to present to colleagues on what their work involves. The Social Care Council is committed to continuing with this programme during remote working. Staff also indicated that more could be done to improve the appraisal system with a greater focus on the conversation rather than the paperwork. A fresh approach to appraisals has been developed, following consultation with staff, and the new system called quarterly 'Check-Ins' will begin later this year.

The Social Care Council's Health and Wellbeing Committee developed a yearly calendar of health and wellbeing events to support all staff in their physical and mental health wellbeing, encouraging people to participate in book groups, walking clubs and charity fundraisers. Feedback from the 2019-20 programme was very positive and the team invited staff to share suggestions for the 2020-21 programme.

We have learnt that a QI approach to reviewing systems/functions can produce positive outcomes and generate service improvements. Staff were involved in a QI project to improve customer uptake of the Online Fee Payment Service, This project generated a number of interventions which saw uptake increase to over 60% at year end. This approach is continuing into 2020-21 with the project to increase customer engagement in the satisfaction survey.



### What we plan to do in 2020-21 and beyond

- People - Deliver the actions arising from the Investors in People Report, including developing a system for Reward and Recognition.
- Resources - Manage our resources to maximum effect and within regulatory and statutory guidelines and legislation.
- Governance - Deliver effective governance including risk and information management in line with relevant legislation and guidance.
- Quality - Deliver on our Quality 2020 commitments for 2020/21 as set out in the Annual Quality Action Plan.
- Systems - Deliver our 2020/21 ICT Improvement Plan to further enhance the user experience of our registration and regulation system.

## Positioning

Based on these performance reports, I can confirm that the Social Care Council is well placed to deliver a strong and reliable performance during the next business year. We recognised that there may be some adaptations needed as we prioritise and deliver our business in response to the demands and constraints placed on operations by the COVID-19 emergency. The organisation has a highly skilled workforce, who are strongly motivated to deliver quality services and who are well supported to enable them to work flexibly to meet business needs.

We are committed to supporting front line workers in social work and social care. We will continue to develop online learning and supports and ensure that those coming back to work in social work or social care can be registered quickly and safely.

The Leadership Teams will continue to review the needs and demands for our services and will ensure that feedback from stakeholders will shape our perspective on our priorities and ambitions.

I will make sure the Social Care Council listens to those priorities and ambitions to make sure we continue to work with and for our stakeholders.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

Patricia Higgins,  
Interim Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 01 July 2020

## Section 2: Accountability Report

### Corporate Governance Report - Director's Report

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council was established in October 2001 under the Health and Personal Social Services Act (NI) 2001. It is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department of Health.

The Social Care Council is helping to raise standards in social care through the registration of the social work and social care workforce and setting standards for their conduct, training and practice. In doing so, the Social Care Council engages with a variety of stakeholders, including those who use social care services, carers, the social care workforce, employers, training providers and government agencies. The Social Care Council also works collaboratively with its counterparts in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

The Social Care Council is a partner in Skills for Care and Development (SfCD), a Sector Skills Council responsible for social care and children's services throughout the UK. Sector Skills Councils are independent, UK-wide organisations licensed by the Department for Education and Skills to support employers in the training and development of the workforce.

The Social Care Council is led by a Board which comprises a Chair and 12 non-Executive Members who have responsibility for ensuring the Board's strategic policies as agreed with the DoH are successfully delivered. Details of the Boards' structure and its membership can be found at Appendix 1 of this Annual Report.

The organisational structure is headed by a Chief Executive who is also the designated Accounting Officer (this position is currently held on an interim appointment). She is supported by two Directors – the Director of Registration and Corporate Services, and the Director of Regulation and Standards. The organisational structure can be found at Appendix 2.

The Social Care Council delivers its services from Millennium House, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 25 Great Victoria Street, in Belfast.

**The overall vision for the Social Care Council focuses on improving standards in social work and social care. This vision will be achieved through the delivery of our core values of:**

- Promoting respect;
- Working with integrity;
- Partnership working; and
- Excellence.

#### **Equality**

The Social Care Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all. Details of good practice and training initiatives, including those relating to disability issues are outlined in the Annual Equality Progress Report which can be found on its website at [www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info). The Social Care Council has an Equal Opportunity Policy in place that covers all aspects of equality within employment, including the obligations of the organisation under disability discrimination legislation and protecting the rights and interests of Section 75 groups.

#### **Staff Communication**

A range of methods are used to communicate with staff. These include monthly team meetings which enable the sharing of corporate information together with updates on business and team

performance, and team development. Monthly staff 'Townhall' meetings were introduced in December 2019 to encourage staff teams to share information about the work that they do.

The staff intranet is updated each week to help staff to access useful information such as policies and procedures in one place, together with an interactive calendar and group forums.

The Social Care Council also holds information sessions every quarter to openly discuss matters which impact the organisation such as funding pressures, business delivery and strategic policy directions. An internal e-newsletter is also published on a regular basis which keeps staff informed about business matters and other events.

### **Public Sector Payment Policy – Measure of Compliance**

Details of compliance with better payments practice are set out in the Annual Accounts.

### **Information Governance**

BSO provides services to the Social Care Council to assist with fulfilling responsibilities for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All staff have completed e-learning to ensure they are aware of their role in fulfilling GDPR requirements. There were no data breaches during the year.

### **Health and Safety at Work**

The Social Care Council has an approved Health and Safety at Work Policy. The organisation complies with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and all other relevant health and safety legislation and codes of practice. We are committed to ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare of employees and of others who may be affected by our operations. Expert advice and support on health and safety legislation and codes of practice is provided through a Service Level Agreement with the Business Services Organisation.

The Health, and Wellbeing Committee, which reports to the Senior Leadership Team has a responsibility to promote measures which ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff at work. The Committee has representation from all teams and meets quarterly to plan and deliver Health and Wellbeing activities. The Social Care Council has access to the HSC Occupational Health Service. In addition, a programme of employee assistance and confidential counselling is made available through the Inspire Workplace organisation.

### **Complaints**

The Social Care Council received three written complaints about its services during 2019-20. Of these three complaints each of these were upheld. Feedback from the complaints received was used to improve the way in which registrants could renew and pay their fee. None of the complaints received were escalated to the next internal stage for review. While no complaints were received from the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman, the Ombudsman did refer a case back to the Social Care Council as the individual had not exhausted the internal process for managing complaints and was encouraged to do so in the first instance.

### **Audit Information**

The Directors can confirm that there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are aware. The Directors can also confirm that they have taken steps to ensure that they are aware of relevant audit information and to establish that the HSC body's auditors are aware of the information.

### **Long Term Expenditure**

The Social Care Council receives its financial allocation on a year to year basis from the Department of Health (DoH) and any long term expenditure pressures identified by the Social Care Council are managed through the DoH.

## Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for ensuring all of the Social Care Council's business areas meet corporate, governance and legislative requirements for public accountability and value for money.



**Patricia Higgins**  
Interim Chief Executive



**Declan McAllister**  
Director of Registration  
& Corporate Services



**Marian O'Rourke**  
Interim Director of Regulation  
& Standards

**Patricia Higgins** (Interim Chief Executive) has overall responsibility for the Social Care Council. She works with the Chair of the Social Care Council's Board and the Board Members in the delivery of the Social Care Council's strategic direction, leadership and accountability.

**Declan McAllister** (Director of Registration and Corporate Services) has responsibility for the Registration function and for Corporate Services, which includes Finance, HR, IT Development, Procurement, Estates and Governance.

**Marian O'Rourke** (Interim Director of Regulation and Standards) has responsibility for regulation of social work education and training at qualifying level and the Professional in Practice CPD framework for social workers, development of the social work and social care workforces.

Board Membership reflects three broad interest groups:

**Lay People:** People who have direct experience as a user of social care services, as a carer, or of unpaid work in the voluntary or community sector.

**Registrants:** People who are social care workers, eligible for inclusion in the Social Care Register.

**Stakeholders:** People who must be directly involved in the commissioning or delivery of social care services, the delivery of education and training in social care or as a representative of a trade union, professional or other regulatory body concerned with health and social care, or be a member of the legal profession.

All Members are appointed in a personal capacity because of the skills and experience they possess.

**The Board is chaired by Mr Paul Martin and he is supported by 12 Board Members –**

**Noelle Barton  
Neil Bodger  
Sarah Browne  
Roslyn Dougherty  
Gerard Guckian  
David Hayes**

**Christine Hunter  
Brenda Maitland  
Jacqueline McGarvey  
Catherine McPhillips  
Anne O'Reilly  
Lee Wilson**

Mr Paul Martin, was appointed as Chair of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council on 1 April 2018 following a public appointments exercise which was managed by the Public Appointments Unit. Board Members are listed at Appendix 1.

The Board meets four times a year to consider issues of strategy and accountability. The meetings of the Board are held in open session and are advertised on our website. The agenda and minutes of Board meetings are published on the Social Care Council's website [www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info) The Board also have strategic days during the year to focus on key areas of work and strategy, for example when developing the Corporate Plan.

The Board carried out a 'Board Self-Assessment' during 2019-20 to ensure itself that it demonstrates good practice in all areas of governance and accountability and developed an action plan to strengthen and improve its governance arrangements. This is reported in the Governance Statement contained within this Annual Report and Accounts for 2019-20.

The Social Care Council holds a Register of Directors' Interests which contains the declared interests of both Executive and Non-Executive Directors. This is available by contacting the Chief Executive's Office at the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Millennium House, 25 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, BT2 7AQ, Tel 028 9536 2600

## Northern Ireland Social Care Council Committees

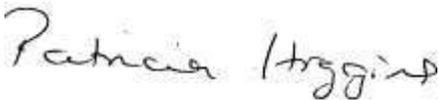
The Board has established two Committees to support it in the delivery of its strategic functions, each of which is chaired by a Board Member:

- **The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee** (chaired by Gerry Guckian) assists the Board in the discharge of its functions by providing independent and objective review of the Social Care Council's control systems, financial information to the Board, risk management and information governance processes, compliance with the law, guidance and Standards of Conduct and Practice, and governance processes. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Report which forms part of this Annual Report can be found on page 57.
- **The Remuneration Committee** (chaired by Mr Paul Martin) advises the Board about appropriate remuneration and terms of service for the Chief Executive. It meets twice a year.

## Northern Ireland Social Care Council Partnerships

The Board has established a number of Partnerships to inform and deliver its wide range of business and to provide structured arrangements for stakeholder engagement and involvement:

- **Participation Forum** consists of people who use social care services and carers, and its role is to challenge, influence and advise the work of the Social Care Council.
- **Registrants Forum** consists of registrants and workforce representatives and its role is to ensure effective engagement with and by Registrants in the work of the Social Care Council.
- **Leaders in Social Care Partnership** (previously called the Workforce Development Partnership) was reformed during the year with a focus on supporting the transformation and development of the social care workforce in Northern Ireland.
- **Professional in Practice (PiP) Partnership** consists of social work employers and Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) who are key to the delivery of the PiP Framework.



Patricia Higgins,  
Interim Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 01 July 2020

## Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

Under the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, the Department of Health has directed the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (the Social Care Council) to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction. The financial statements are prepared on an accruals basis and must provide a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Social Care Council, of its income and expenditure, changes in taxpayers equity and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the financial statements the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and in particular to :

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Department of Health including relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis.
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis.
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in FReM have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements.
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the HSC body will continue in operation.
- keep proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the HSC Body.
- pursue and demonstrate value for money in the services the HSC Body provides and in its use of public assets and the resources it controls.

The Permanent Secretary of the Department of Health as Principal Accounting Officer for Health and Social Care Resources in Northern Ireland has designated Patricia Higgins of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council as the Interim Accounting Officer for the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the regularity and propriety of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Social Care Council's assets, are set out in the formal letter of appointment of the Accounting Officer issued by the Department of Health, Chapter 3 of Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) and the HM Treasury Handbook: Regularity and Propriety.

### Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

I certify that the annual accounts set out in the financial statements and notes to the accounts (pages 77 -103) which I am required to prepare on behalf of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council have been compiled from and are in accordance with the accounts and financial records maintained by the Social Care Council and with the accounting standards and policies for HSC bodies approved by the DoH.



Patricia Higgins,  
Interim Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 01 July 2020

I certify that the annual accounts set out in the financial statements and notes to the accounts (pages 77 – 103) as prepared in accordance with the above requirements have been submitted to and duly approved by the Board.



Paul Martin,  
Chair, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 01 July 2020

### 1. Introduction / Scope of Responsibility

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (Social Care Council) is accountable for internal control. As Accounting Officer and Interim Chief Executive of the Social Care Council, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal governance that supports the achievement of the organisation's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which I am responsible in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me by the Department of Health (DoH).

The Social Care Council is an Arm's-Length Body, sponsored by the DoH and works in partnership with all the Health and Social Care (HSC) organisations including the other Regional Organisations sponsored by the DoH.

In particular the Social Care Council has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) to enable it to properly fulfil its role as a regulator of the social care workforce, and information sharing protocols are in place with the other Social Care Councils in England, Wales and Scotland. The Social Care Council also works closely with CORU, the Social Work and Social Care regulator in the Republic of Ireland, to share best practice in regulation and registration of social workers and social care workers.

The Social Care Council has a Management Statement and Financial Memorandum in place which sets out the strategic control framework within which the Social Care Council is required to operate, and the conditions under which government funds are provided as detailed in Government Accounting Northern Ireland. The Accounting Officer and Chair of the Social Care Council apprise the DoH at the highest level of engagement through twice-yearly Accountability Meetings, and at the same time the Social Care Council works in partnership with the DOH Government Liaison Officer to ensure operational and strategic issues are raised appropriately with the DoH throughout the year. It is noted that due to COVID-19 impact the DOH have stood down the year end accountability meeting for 2019/20.

### Financial Challenges

The Assembly passed the Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2020 in March 2020 which authorised the cash and use of resources for all departments and their Arms' Length Bodies for the 2019-20 year, based on the Executive's final expenditure plans for the year. The Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2020 also authorised a Vote on Account to authorise departments' access to cash and use of resources for the early months of the 2020-21 financial year. While it would be normal for this to be followed by the 2020-21 Main Estimates and the associated Budget (No. 2) Bill before the summer recess, the COVID-19 emergency and the unprecedented level of allocations which the Executive has agreed in response, has necessitated that the Budget (No. 2) Bill is instead authorising a further Vote on Account to ensure departments and their Arms' Length Bodies have access to the cash and resources through to the end of October 2020, when the Main Estimates will be brought to the Assembly and the public expenditure position is more stable.

The Social Care Council is expected to face significant financial challenges and therefore extensive budget planning work to support the 2020-21 financial plan is ongoing between the Social Care Council and the DoH. In addition, the Social Care Council has identified specific resource pressures for its Fitness to Practise statutory function, which are highlighted in its Internal Control Issues as part of this Governance Statement. The Social Care Council has submitted a business case to the DoH which has been approved however funding has not yet been received which has resulted in a

strategic risk for the organisation. Overall, however, and in line with other financial years the Social Care Council remains committed to achieving financial break-even.

The Social Care Council, alongside other organisations, is also managing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its business and ensuring essential/front line services are supported during this difficult time including planning for the resumption of normal business during the new business year. An appropriate financial governance process has been put in place to manage COVID-19 expenditure such as additional IT hardware and software to support remote working.

## 2. Compliance with Corporate Governance Best Practice

The Board applies the principles of good practice in Corporate Governance and continues to further strengthen its governance arrangements. The Board does this by undertaking continuous assessment of its compliance with Corporate Governance best practice by the Board's completion of an annual Board self-assessment. The Board completed its self-assessment for year ended 31 March 2020 and developed a new Action Plan which it will continue to review on a quarterly basis to ensure continual improvement in governance and best practice.

The Board agreed that –

- 15 indicators were assessed as Green (all good practices are in place);
- 2 indicators were assessed as Amber/Green;
- 0 indicators were assessed as Red.

The summary for the Board's self-assessment is set out below.

Indicator		Board's Assessment	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Board Composition and Commitment</b>		
1.1	Board positions and size	Green	
1.2	Balance and calibre of Board members	Amber	Green
1.3	Role of the Board	Green	
1.4	Committees of the Board	Green	
1.5	Board member commitment	Green	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Board Evaluation, Development and Learning</b>		
2.1	Effective Board level evaluation	Green	
2.2	Whole Board development programme	Green	
2.3	Board induction, succession and contingency planning	Amber	Green
2.4	Board member appraisal and personal development	Green	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Board Insight and Foresight</b>		
3.1	Board performance reporting	Green	
3.2	Efficiency and Productivity	Green	
3.3	Environmental and strategic focus	Green	
3.4	Quality of Board papers and timeliness of information	Green	
3.5	Assurance and risk management	Green	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Board Engagement and Involvement</b>		
4.1	External stakeholders	Green	
4.2	Internal stakeholders	Green	
4.3	Board profile and visibility	Green	

The two areas assessed as Amber/Green were in relation to –

- The number of Board Members with technical experience – in the Social Care Council only one Board Member has financial experience and this has been raised with the Department of Health and the Public Appointments Unit; and
- The induction of Board Members – while induction of Board Members takes place this is being reviewed to improve the induction experience for all new Board Members.

### 3. Governance Framework

The Board provides strategic leadership to the Social Care Council and comprises a Chair and 12 Members who are a combination of registrants, lay members and others who are key stakeholders in social care services. Operational responsibilities are delivered by the Chief Executive. The duties and functions of the Chair and Board Members are set out in the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum and also in the Social Care Council’s Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation and Standing Financial Instructions.

The Board reviewed the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) in conjunction with the DOH during 2017. Meetings of the Board were held in open session four times during the year and records are maintained of the Board attendance. In addition, the Board held four Strategic Planning Sessions. During 2019/20 the Board attendance for the open sessions were:

<b>Chair/ Member</b>	<b>Attendance at Board During 2019/20 (%)</b>
Paul Martin, Chair	75%
Noelle Barton, Member	75%
Neil Bodger, Member	100%
Sarah Browne, Member	100%
Roslyn Dougherty, Member	100%
Gerry Guckian, Member	75%
David Hayes, Member	75%
Christine Hunter, Member	100%
Brenda Maitland, Member	100%
Jacqueline McGarvey, Member	100%
Catherine McPhillips, Member	100%
Anne O’Reilly, Member	75%
Lee Wilson, Member	100%

Attendance at Board Strategic Days, Committees and Partnerships during 2019/20 is set out below:

	Board Strategic	Audit & Risk Assurance Committee	Remuneration Committee	Participation Forum	Leaders in Social Care Partnership	Professional in Practice Partnership	Registrants' Forum
<b>FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS IN 2019/20</b>	4	4	1	3	4	4	2
P Martin	100%	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N Barton	75%	N/A	N/A	66.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
N Bodger	50%	N/A	0%	N/A	75%	N/A	N/A
S Browne	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A
R Dougherty	75%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A
G Guckian	75%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
D Hayes	100%	N/A	N/A	66.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
C Hunter	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	100%
B Maitland	50%	100%	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A
J McGarvey	75%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%
C McPhillips	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	75%	N/A
A O'Reilly	75%	N/A	N/A	N/A	75%	N/A	N/A
Lee Wilson	75%	100%	100%	66.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A

The Board's performance is reviewed as part of the annual Board Self-Assessment and the performance appraisal system.

The Board has established two statutory Committees to support it in the delivery of its strategic functions:

- The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is chaired by a Member of the Board of the Social Care Council and assists the Board in the discharge of its functions by providing independent and objective review of the Social Care Council's control systems, financial information to the Board, risk management processes, compliance with law, guidance and Codes of Conduct, and governance processes; and
- The Remuneration Committee is chaired by the Chair of the Social Care Council and advises the Board about appropriate remuneration and terms of service for the Chief Executive.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee carries out an annual self-assessment and develops an action plan to address any areas where performance could be improved or enhanced.

#### **4. Business Planning, Risk Management and Fraud**

Business planning and risk management are at the heart of governance arrangements to ensure that statutory obligations and ministerial priorities are properly reflected in the management of business at all levels within the organisation.

## **Business Planning**

The Social Care Council developed a four year Corporate Plan following engagement with staff and stakeholders including, in particular, people who use social care services and carers as is described in the Social Care Council's Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Consultation Scheme. The Corporate Plan takes account of recent developments in social care strategy including the Minister of Health's strategy 'Health and Wellbeing 2026'. The Corporate Plan describes at a strategic level how the Social Care Council will deliver on its overarching aim and strategic outcomes as a regulator of the social care workforce and the outcomes which it expects as a result. The Corporate Plan is available on the Social Care Council's website.

At the same time, the Social Care Council develops an annual Business Plan which provides further detail on how the Social Care Council will deliver its Corporate Plan, focusing on the outcomes of delivering its objectives. The same process of engagement and consultation is applied as with the development of the Corporate Plan. The Business Plan is approved by the Board and ultimately by the DoH before being circulated and published. The Corporate Plan and Business Plan are compliant with the requirements set out in the Social Care Council's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum. The corporate planning process is led by the Director of Registration and Corporate Services while the Chief Executive has overall responsibility for delivering the Corporate and Business Plans, and is supported by her Directors and operational team.

To give effect to the Corporate and Business Plans, the Social Care Council develops an Operational Plan and Key Performance Indicators. This ensures that all staff can clearly understand their role in delivering the Social Care Council's objectives, and ensures that their own personal and team objectives and learning plans are aligned to the Social Care Council's business objectives. The Operational Plan and Business Plan are reviewed on a quarterly basis by Senior Managers which informs reporting to the Senior Leadership Team and ultimately to the Board.

A Business Performance Management Report is presented to the Board for scrutiny at each of their meetings detailing how the Social Care Council is performing against its annual Business Plan. This includes further assurance reports such as an evaluation of the Social Care Council's delivery of its strategic outcomes; financial monitoring reports; and reports associated with workforce registration and regulation.

The Board agrees its work programme for the year to make best use of both its open sessions and strategic planning sessions.

The Chair and the Chief Executive also have accountability meetings with the Department of Health's Permanent Secretary.

Ultimately, the Social Care Council accounts for its business performance through the production of its Annual Report and Accounts which are laid before the NI Assembly and published on the Social Care Council's website. It also reports how it delivers against Quality 2020 in a separate Annual Quality Progress Report which is again available on the website.

## **Risk Management**

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility to the Board for risk management. Leadership on risk is provided through the Board with delegated authority to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee which is chaired by a Board Member and is supported by the Director of Registration and Corporate Services. The Risk Management process seeks to identify risks in accordance with best practice as well as providing a system for embedding risk management throughout the Social Care Council. The Board set the strategic risks and risk appetite for the organisation which are set out in the Social

Care Council's Risk Management Strategy. The Board also approve and have oversight of the Social Care Council's Assurance Framework.

All staff receive training on risk management and are required to complete an e-learning module on risk management awareness and are also provided with detailed Risk Management Procedures. In addition risk management training forms part of induction for all new staff.

The Social Care Council has been able to effectively manage its risk profile throughout the year by identifying the risk appetite relevant to the risk and its associated mitigating actions which are set out in its Risk Register and Assurance Framework.

### Risk Management Framework

The Social Care Council ensures effective risk management is embedded as part of its culture and throughout the organisation. It has a Risk Management Strategy which describes how risks (and near misses) should be managed, elevated, and controlled, including evaluating the value of inherent and residual risks. The Social Care Council has also developed detailed Risk Management Procedures which break down how to report and manage risks for all staff.

The Social Care Council details its risks through a Risk Register and Assurance Framework which are formally reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Risk Management Committee (chaired by the Director of Registration and Corporate Services), which in turn reports to the Senior Leadership Team, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and ultimately to the Board as part of a quarterly Risk Progress Report. The risk register is maintained on a regular basis and updated through risk management software which assigns risk owners, controls and actions. The risks can be tracked through the software to establish how risks are being managed and mitigated.

The Risk Management Committee is also responsible for ensuring the overarching Risk Management Strategy is reviewed on a regular basis so that it reflects all aspects of risk, governance and control. The Risk Management Strategy was reviewed during the year to take account of the strategic direction being set by the Board in relation to strategic risks and risk appetite.

The Social Care Council works with Internal Audit to provide assurances and validation of its compliance in relation to risk management, and has a Business Continuity Strategy and Plan in place which is tested on an annual basis, with lessons learned being fed back into the overarching Risk Management Strategy.

### **Business Continuity**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Social Care Council activated its Command and Control Team as set out in its Business Continuity Plan. The Social Care Council also developed a Supplementary (or Surge) Plan to specifically support how it delivered front line support to the social care sector. The Command and Control Team established meetings three times a week together with weekly business reports to monitor how it supports the sector, manages its business and performance, and supports its staff. A COVID-19 risk was also added to the risk register to regularly review the controls and actions in place to manage the business through the pandemic.

### **Fraud**

The Social Care Council has a zero tolerance approach to fraud in order to protect and support our key public services. It has put in place a Fraud Policy Statement and Fraud Response Plan to outline the approach to tackling fraud, define staff responsibilities and the actions to be taken in the event of suspected or perpetrated fraud, whether originating internally or externally to the organisation. The Social Care Council has a Fraud Liaison Officer (FLO) whose role is to promote fraud

awareness, coordinate investigations in conjunction with the Business Services Organisation (BSO) Counter Fraud and Probity Services team and provide advice to staff on fraud reporting arrangements. During the year one fraud investigation took place which, following a full investigation, confirmed that fraud had not occurred. The findings were reported to the Counter Fraud and Probity Service together with the Social Care Council's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

All staff are provided with mandatory fraud awareness training in support of the Fraud Policy Statement and Fraud Response Plan, and during the year all managers received face to face Fraud Awareness Training provided by the Counter Fraud and Probity Service. In addition, staff attended Whistleblowing Awareness training provided by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

## **Bribery**

The Social Care Council is committed to the prevention, deterrence and detection of bribery. Bribery risks and compliance is maintained as part of our Risk Management process. The Bribery Policy was reviewed in 2019/20. This policy applies to all employees of the Social Care Council, regardless of position held, as well as ICT partners, contractors, and /or any other parties who have a business relationship with the organisation, or carry out any service on its behalf. The updated policy was shared with all employees and forms part of the induction process for new staff.

The key objective of the Bribery policy is to provide the framework for achieving:

- increased awareness about the risk of bribery and its unacceptability;
- a climate of openness and a culture and environment where staff feel able to raise concerns sensibly and responsibly;
- communicating the Social Care Council's responsibilities in terms of deterrence, prevention, detection and investigation of bribery and corruption.

## **5. Information Risk**

Information Risk Management is an essential part of good governance. The Social Care Council ensures that information risk management is considered in its procedures and policies. Information Risk Management is managed within the context of the Social Care Council's Risk Management Strategy and Information Governance Strategy.

The Social Care Council holds a range of personal data in respect of registrants (c.46,000) and confidential data in respect of complaints against registrants. It also holds a range of personal data in respect of staff and information which supports the running of the business. The Social Care Council maintains an Information Asset Register and Disposals Schedule which are reviewed regularly and any areas of non-compliance are brought to the attention of the Senior Information Risk Owner and Personal Data Guardian.

Specific roles in the Social Care Council have been identified to support it in managing risks to the organisation in respect of the information it may hold. These roles include:

- Personal Data Guardian
- Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)
- Information Governance and Records Management Officer (IGRMO)
- Information Asset Owners (IAOs)

The Information Governance function is well embedded in the organisation and forms part of the remit of the Risk Management Committee as reflected in the Committee's Terms of Reference. The Director of Registration and Corporate Services chairs the Risk Management Committee and is also the Social Care Council's SIRO and Data Guardian. Due to the size and structure of the organisation

the members of the Risk Management Committee (risk co-ordinators) are also the organisation's Information Asset Owners.

The Social Care Council receives its Records Management and Information Governance support through a Service Level Agreement with Information Governance Shared Services in the BSO. This includes the appointment of a Data Protection Officer to support the Social Care Council in its compliance with Information Access Requests and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

The Social Care Council has a number of policies and strategies in place that support its overall risk management agenda. These are:

- Information Governance Strategy
- Records Management Strategy
- Records Management Procedures
- Access to Information Policy
- Privacy Policy and Privacy Statement
- Disclosure Policy
- Clear Desk and Screen Policy
- Data Security Breach Management Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Quality Policy
- ICT Policy

While there were no data breaches during 2019/20, a data breach did occur on 1 June 2020 and this was reported to the Information Commissioners Office and an investigation initiated to fully establish how the data breach occurred, what lessons can be learnt and actions identified. All of those affected were contacted regarding the data breach, and the outcome will be reported in the mid-year assurance statement for 2020/21. We will implement the actions identified to mitigate against any further breach.

## **6. Public Stakeholder Involvement**

The Social Care Council's engagement with people who use services and their carers, and other stakeholders has been enshrined in its structure since its inception in 2001. In addition, the Social Care Council has a strategic objective to 'raise awareness and knowledge of the work of the Social Care Council and ensure its work is informed and influenced by people who use services and their carers, registrants, employers and other stakeholders'.

The Social Care Council published a Personal and Public Involvement Consultation Scheme which was developed by people who use social care services and carers, and was approved by the Board. Additionally it produced Principles of Participation, again in partnership with service users and carers.

The Social Care Council has established a number of Partnerships to ensure inclusivity and involvement from the broadest range of people and stakeholders. These are:

- Participation Forum (comprising people who use social care services and carers)
- Registrants Forum (comprising registrants)
- Leaders in Social Care Partnership (previously called the Workforce Development Partnership) (comprising employers of the social care workforce)
- The Professional in Practice Partnership (comprising employers of social workers and the Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) who are key to the delivery of the PiP Framework).

These Partnerships meet regularly throughout the year and are kept informed of the Social Care Council business developments and issues raised at these meetings are brought to the attention of the Board who review the minutes of the meetings of the Partnerships. This holistic approach to engagement ensures that any risks identified by stakeholders are brought to the attention of the Board.

The Social Care Council ensures all papers presented to its Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and to the Board include a cover sheet which explains to what extent stakeholders have been engaged in the development of the paper/proposal and, where appropriate, how they influenced the outcome. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Board can therefore clearly challenge the Social Care Council in how it has engaged people who use services and their carers, and other stakeholders in the development of policy and other initiatives.

The Board is committed to helping people prepare to become members of Boards in the Public and Third Sectors. The Social Care Council supports the voluntary scheme facilitated by 'Strictly Boardroom' which enables people to be part of the Boardroom Apprenticeship Scheme. Kate Harrison was the Boardroom apprentice for 2019/20. The apprentice meets regularly with the Chair, Board Members and key staff to find out more about how the Board operates and they attend Board and Sub-Committee meetings to experience how business is delivered and decisions are made. Further information about the scheme and how to apply is available from <https://strictlyboardroom.com/apprentice/>

## **7. Assurance**

As part of its Governance arrangements, the Social Care Council considers the contents of both its Assurance Framework and Risk Register when identifying possible control issues.

The Social Care Council's Standing Orders require the setting up of an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, as directed by HSS (PDD) 8/94 to reassure the Board that financial stewardship and corporate governance standards are being met. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee maintains and reviews the effectiveness of the system of internal control for the Social Care Council. Full details of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, its role, terms of reference, and responsibilities can be found in the Standing Orders. The Board reviewed its Standing Orders during 2019/20.

The Internal Audit Service for the Social Care Council is provided by the BSO. Internal Audit carries out its role by systematic review and evaluation of risk management, control and governance which comprises the policies, procedures and operations in place to:

- establish and monitor the achievement of the Social Care Council's objectives;
- identify, assess and manage the risks to achieving the Social Care Council's objectives;
- ensure the economical, effective and efficient use of resources;
- ensure compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulations; and
- safeguard the Social Care Council's assets and interests from losses of all kinds, including those arising from fraud, irregularity, bribery or corruption

The Board receives a wide range of papers for information and decision making purposes presented by Social Care Council's officers. This includes a Business Performance Management Report. The papers are of suitable quality to enable the Board to make informed decisions.

The Board is satisfied with the quality of the information received during the year and is satisfied that the information was sufficient to enable the Board to fulfil its obligations.

## **End of Year Assurance**

The Social Care Council provides an end of year assurance report to its Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and its Board on all of its areas of governance and control, using a RAG system to identify any areas where gaps in assurance and/or action is required. Any actions identified are managed through the Social Care Council's Risk Register and Risk Assurance Framework. This annual system replaced the previous Controls Assurance Standards which operated up to 2018.

## **8. Sources of Independent Assurance**

The Social Care Council obtains Independent Assurance from the following sources:

- Internal Audit (as provided under a Service Level Agreement with BSO); and
- External Audit by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO).
- Other Independent Assurances

## **Internal Audit**

The Social Care Council utilises an internal audit function which operates to defined standards and whose work is informed by an analysis of risk to which the body is exposed and annual audit plans are based on this analysis. Internal Audit has three assessment levels of assurance; Satisfactory, Limited and Unacceptable.

In 2019/20 Internal Audit reviewed the following systems:

- Fitness to Practise, providing a satisfactory assurance
- Financial Review, providing a satisfactory assurance
- Risk Management and Complaints, providing satisfactory assurance
- Participation and User Engagement providing satisfactory assurance

In her annual report, the Internal Auditor reported that the Social Care Council's system of internal control was adequate and effective. There were no priority 1 weaknesses in control identified, however a number of priority 2 weaknesses were identified and action plans are in place to resolve all matters.

The priority 2 recommendation arising from the Fitness to Practise Review was in relation to performance against Key Performance Indicators. The pressures on the Fitness to Practise team have been highlighted and a business case seeking additional resources has been submitted to the Department of Health.

The priority 2 recommendations arising from the Financial Review were in relation to the review of the Standing Orders and the arrangements to manage procurement. These recommendations were actioned during the year. The priority 2 recommendations in relation to the Risk Management and Complaints review were regarding the training for staff (which is being taken forward) and the Complaints Policy on the website (which has been updated).

The priority 2 recommendations in relation to the Participation and User Engagement Review were regarding the development of a service user and carer engagement strategy to support this activity. The Social Care Council has an action plan in place to deliver on each of the internal audit recommendations.

## **External Audit**

The Financial Statements of the Social Care Council are audited by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) and the results of their audit are set out in their Annual Report to those Charged with Governance. A representative from the Northern Ireland Audit Office attends the Social Care Council's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Meetings. The External Auditor is required to certify, examine and report on each of the Statements comprising the Financial Statements of the organisation.

## **Other Independent Assurances**

The DOH commissioned a Landscape review during 2019/20 conducted by an Associate of the Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE). The report is due for completion in early 2020/21.

## **9. Review of Effectiveness of the System of Internal Governance**

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for the review of effectiveness of the system of internal governance. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal governance is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers within the Social Care Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports. I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Social Care Council, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and the Risk Management Committee, and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement to the system is in place.

## **10. Internal Governance Divergences**

### **Internal Control Issues now Resolved 2018/19**

The Recruitment Shared Services audits are now providing a satisfactory assurance with recommendations implemented.

### **Internal Control Issues 2019/20**

Financial pressures for the Social Council remains a concern, with increased activity for the Fitness to Practise team and a need to consolidate its funding pressures both in-year and beyond. A business case seeking revenue funding to reduce the impact of the risk in relation to Fitness to Practise activity has been approved by the Department of Health however the funding has not yet been released. This places a significant risk on the viability of the Social Care Council to operate its Fitness to Practise function against increasing levels of referrals and other Fitness to Practise activity. This situation is likely to be further exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19 due to an increase in the number of people now working in the sector and pressures on funding across the HSC. The Social Care Council has escalated this risk to the Department of Health and remains in contact to progress a sustainable solution.

In addition the Social Care Council is facing potential funding pressures arising from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional costs have been incurred to facilitate the rapid transfer to remote working for all staff, including the purchase of portable computers, mobile phones and communications software. Registration fee income has been temporarily frozen following the decision by the DoH to relieve financial pressures on registrants through deferral of social work and social care registration fees between April and September 2020. The overall financial impact is not yet known as savings are likely to be realised through reduction in staff travel costs and money

recouped from cancelled workforce engagement activity. The financial position is reviewed regularly by the Board and with the DoH. In the interim, the Social Care Council is delivering front line registration and fitness to practise services through remote working and is identifying activities to support the sector, including the use of online and digital technology to support workforce learning and development.

Following the resignation of the Chief Executive during 2018/19, arrangements were put in place to fill this position through the appointment of an Interim Chief Executive, pending the outcome of a Landscape Review which was commissioned by the DoH. These interim arrangements remain in place. The Landscape Review was due to report by March 2020, however due to the impact of COVID-19 on the prioritisation of front line services the outcome of this Review is now anticipated in the first quarter of the financial year 2020/21.

In response to COVID-19 the DOH have taken the decision to defer all registration fees until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The Social Care Council will be managing this change and putting in place additional controls to ensure the recoupment of all fees due.

A number of audits (summarised below) have been conducted in BSO Shared Services, as part of the BSO Internal Audit Plan. The recommendations in these Shared Service audit reports are the responsibility of BSO Management to take forward and the reports have been presented to BSO Governance & Audit Committee. Given that the Social Care Council is a customer of BSO Shared Services, the final reports have been shared with Social Care Council's Management and a summary of the reports are presented to the Social Care Council's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

	<u>Assurance Level</u>
• Payroll Service Centre, Follow up Review, September 2019	Limited
• Payroll Service Centre – Year End March 2020 (Elementary Payroll)	Satisfactory
• Payroll Service Centre – Year End March 2020 (Timesheets/Overpayments)	Limited
• Recruitment Shared Service Centre (Recruitment Processes)	Satisfactory
• Recruitment Shared Service Centre (E-Recruit Functionality)	Satisfactory
• Accounts Receivable	Satisfactory
• Accounts Payable	Satisfactory

The Social Care Council acknowledges that there are still limited assurances in some of the areas in payroll and recruitment. These limitations will not prevent the Social Care Council from delivering on its business.

With regard to the wider control environment, the Social Care Council has in place a range of organisational controls commensurate with the current assessment of risk which is designed to ensure the efficient and effective discharge of its business in accordance with the law and Departmental direction. Every effort is made to ensure that the objectives of the Social Care Council are pursued in accordance with the recognised and accepted standards of public administration.

## **11. EU Exit**

On 29 March 2017, the UK Government submitted its notification to leave the EU in accordance with Article 50. On 31 January 2020, the Withdrawal Agreement between the UK and the EU became legally binding and the UK left the EU. The future relationship between the EU and the UK will be determined by negotiations taking place during the transition period ending 31 December 2020. As uncertainty still exists regarding the Northern Ireland Protocol, this is under review in conjunction with key stakeholders. The Social Care Council will continue to work collaboratively with colleagues during 2020-21 across the Department, HSC and wider to ensure we are appropriately prepared for the end of the transition period and the new dispensation.

## 12. COVID-19

The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the outbreak of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) a global pandemic on 11 March 2020. Following which the Department and its ALBs immediately enacted emergency response plans across the NI Health sector. There is UK-wide coordinated approach guided by the scientific and medical advice from respective Chief Medical Officers and Chief Scientific Advisers informed by the emergent evidence nationally and internationally. Evidence-based UK-wide policies and guidelines continue to be carefully followed in conjunction with the PHA issuing local guidelines and ensuring readily accessible and continually updated advice.

The pandemic has had extensive impact on the health of the population, all health services and the way business is conducted across the public sector. Protecting the population, particularly the most vulnerable, ensuring that health and social care service were not overwhelmed, saving lives through mitigating the impact of the pandemic and patient and staff safety has remained at the forefront throughout health's emergency response. This has required a number of measures to urgently repurpose and temporarily reconfigure the provision of services, and to identify additional capacity including the need to ensure availability of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment. Financial measures have been put in place by the NI Executive to enable NI to tackle the response to COVID-19 and Health has obtained essential financial support from this package of measures to assist in the ongoing fight against COVID-19.

Contingency arrangements have been in operation including the establishment of an Emergency Operations Centre within the Department to support HSC colleagues' frontline response to the pandemic. Given the wide ranging impact and the need to react immediately to changing healthcare needs, this has had an effect on the ability to conduct routine health business with a need to curtail non-urgent healthcare activity in order to re-direct resources to deal with the pandemic. There have been substantial resourcing impacts across the Department and ALBs to scale up the response to ensure adequate staff resourcing to meet increasing demands which included calling on volunteers, retired medical staff and medical students to rally together to strive to enable an optimum response to the pandemic.

Social distancing measures were implemented in line with The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020 and the health sector played an important part in ensuring the NI population were aware of the need to adhere to the measures to reduce risk of transmission. The actions of the health sector throughout the continued response to the pandemic are based on the ongoing assessment of three key criteria: the most up-to-date scientific evidence; the ability of the health service to cope; and the wider impacts on our health, society and the economy.

Across healthcare, leading on the testing of COVID-19 in NI has and continues to be a key priority with testing centres being set up across the country including mobile testing. The Department's Expert Advisory Group has overseen the strategic approach to testing in NI. The Minister of Health is a member of the Ministerial Testing Taskforce, chaired by the Secretary of State for Health, and so NI is fully engaged with the strategy for testing at a national level. NI testing capacity has also been increased through Health's facilitation of the UK Coronavirus National Testing Programme. Northern Ireland Contact Tracing Service began contact tracing all confirmed cases of COVID-19 on 18 May 2020. Volunteers have been recruited and redeployed across the health sector and the team is being scaled up to strive to ensure that every conceivable effort is made to continue to limit transmission as lockdown measures across the region are eased. The Department has prepared a COVID-19 Test, Trace and Protect Strategy which sets out the public health approach to minimising COVID-19 transmission in the community in Northern Ireland. The Chief Medical Officer has established a Strategic Oversight Board for the NI COVID-19 strategy which will bring all of the key elements together – namely testing, contact tracing, information and advice, and support - working together with colleagues across the HSC to endeavour to maintain community transmission at a low

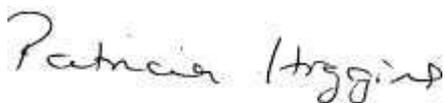
level and respond to clusters of infection localised in NI. The early outcome is more favourable than the modelling of the reasonable worst case scenario and the Department and HSC are no longer in emergency response mode, some areas have been able to be stood down in recent times although there is a need to continue to remain vigilant and in a state of operational readiness to react should a resurgence occur.

Alongside the ongoing and changing needs of response to COVID-19 there is an urgent need to seek to rebuild wider healthcare services and confidence in the community. Officials have over recent weeks carried out an urgent project to assess the impact of COVID-19 on HSC services delivery. On 9 June 2020 a new Strategic Framework was launched aimed at rebuilding health and social care services. The key aim will be to incrementally increase HSC service capacity as quickly as possible across all programmes of care, within the prevailing COVID-19 conditions. A new Management Board for Rebuilding HSC Services has also been created. This will broadly consist of senior Department of Health officials, Trust Chief Executives and other HSC leaders. COVID-19 has had a profound impact on the delivery of health and social care services and across the HSC plans are incrementally being enacted to begin recovery whilst planning for a potential second wave. The Department is continuing to work closely across the HSC to support and define the requirements and opportunities to meet continuing and rapidly changing pressures in these unprecedented and challenging times.

### **13. Conclusion**

The Social Care Council has a rigorous system of accountability which I can rely on as Accounting Officer to form an opinion on the probity and use of public funds, as detailed in Managing Public Money NI (MPMNI).

Further to considering the accountability framework within the Social Care Council and in conjunction with assurances given to me by the Head of Internal Audit, I am content that the Social Care Council has operated a sound system of internal governance during the period 2019/20.



**Patricia Higgins**  
Interim Chief Executive  
Northern Ireland Social Care Council

01 July 2020

## Corporate Governance Report - Audit & Risk Assurance Committee Report

The Social Care Council's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is made up of Board Members. The Committee met on the following dates during 2019-20:

- 15 May 2019
- 19 June 2019
- 2 October 2019
- 22 January 2020

During the 2019/20 financial year, membership of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee was as follows:

<b>APRIL 2019 – MARCH 2020</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE AT AUDIT &amp; RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE (%)</b>
Mr Gerry Guickan	100%
Mrs Brenda Maitland	100%
Ms Jacqui McGarvey	100%
Mr Lee Wilson	100%

Internal Audit, External Audit and representatives from the Business Services Organisation (BSO) attend the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The Interim Chief Executive of the Social Care Council, Patricia Higgins, also attends when required along with the Director of Registration and Corporate Services, Declan McAllister and the Director of Regulation and Standards, Marian O'Rourke. Mr McAllister is the Executive Officer in attendance and is responsible for servicing the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The Government Liaison Officer (GLO) from the DoH also attends.

Membership of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is consistent with the Social Care Council's Standing Orders.

During the 2019/20 financial year, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee undertook the following tasks:

- Agreed an Internal Audit Plan;
- Considered an External Audit Strategy;
- Implemented a review of risk management including identifying the strategic risks and risk appetite for the organisation;
- Reviewed the Social Care Council's Assurance Framework;
- Reviewed the Risk Management Strategy;
- Reviewed the Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation;
- Reviewed the Social Care Council's Business Continuity Plan and Strategy and noted the findings of the organisation's business continuity exercise;
- Ensured the production of the Social Care Council's Final Accounts were in accordance with relevant statutory regulations;
- Considered the Social Care Council's mid-year Assurance Statement and Governance Statement;
- Reviewed a number of Internal Audit Reviews of key aspects of the Social Care Council's business during 2019/20;
- Considered the Report to Those Charged with Governance;

- Reviewed the Social Care Council's Travel Policy;
- Reviewed the Social Care Council's Procurement Report, including the Contract Register and Direct Award Contract Report for 2019/20
- Reviewed the Social Care Council's End of Year Assurance Report.

As part of its remit the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee can confirm, on reviewing the processes and related documents in relation to finance, risk, risk registers, governance and audit reports, that it is able to provide assurances to the Board and to the Interim Accounting Officer in relation to key statutory and accountability obligations.

Furthermore, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee can provide assurance to the Board and the Interim Accounting Officer on key issues relating to the Governance Statement. This is based on the information provided to the Committee from Internal Audit, External Audit and from the Executive Team. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee endorses the Assurance Framework which captures all risks, controls and gaps in controls and mitigating actions and this is presented to the Board by the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee can further confirm that, on an annual basis, Internal Audit provide written confirmation to the Committee that all reviews performed are in accordance with applicable auditing standards. In doing so, the Chair and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee present the final Accounts to the Board and the Interim Accounting Officer for approval. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, facilitated by the Head of Internal Audit, completed the National Audit Office Audit Committee Self-Assessment Checklist, which is carried-out on an annual basis. As a result, the Council's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee confirmed its compliance with the good practice principles.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee was satisfied that during 2019/20, based on the information available to it, that:

- The assurances provided to it were comprehensive and reliable, and were of a sufficient standard to inform the decision making of the Board and of the Interim Accounting Officer;
- The assurances provided to it were suitably reflected in the Social Care Council's Risk Management process as necessary;
- It was suitably informed of any material issues that were pertinent to the Governance Statement;
- Appropriate financial reporting and information was in place;
- The work of Internal and External Audit was of a suitable quality and their approach to their responsibilities was appropriate.

## Remuneration Report for year ended 31 March 2020 (Audited)

### SCOPE OF THE REPORT

The Remuneration Report summarises the Remuneration Policy of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and particularly its application in connection with senior managers. The Report also describes how the Northern Ireland Social Care Council applies the principles of good corporate governance in relation to senior executives' remuneration in accordance with HSS(SM) 3/2001 and subsequent supplements issued by the DoH.

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits in kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

### REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council's Board, as set out in its Standing Orders, has delegated certain functions to the Remuneration Committee, including assessing the performance of Senior Executives and, where permitted by the DoH, agreeing the discretionary level of performance related pay. The Remuneration Committee is chaired by the Chair, Mr Paul Martin. The Remuneration Committee is entirely comprised of Non-Executive Directors, namely, Neil Bodger and Lee Wilson. The Remuneration Committee met in this form in June 2019.

### REMUNERATION POLICY

The salary, pension entitlement and the value of any taxable benefits in kind paid to both Executive and Non-Executive Directors is set out within this Report. None of the Executive or Non-Executive Directors of the Social Care Council received any other bonus or performance related pay in 2019/20.

Non-Executive Directors are appointed by the DoH under the Public Appointments process and the duration of such contracts is normally for a term of four years.

The overall objective of the Senior Executive remuneration arrangements is to achieve a fair, transparent, affordable and defensible pay and grading system for all Senior Executives employed across the HSC.

The main components of the arrangements are:

- pay and terms and conditions of service for the Chief Executive are determined by the DoH;
- the Chief Executive post is subject to evaluation by the DoH Evaluation Panel which is responsible for the management, maintenance and integrity of the evaluation process;
- pay ranges will be reviewed annually and the effective date for any extension of the pay ranges following review of the ranges by the Minister will be 1st April in the year of the review;
- there will be progression through the pay range subject to fully acceptable performance.

### SERVICE CONTRACTS

HSC appointments are made on the basis of the merit principle in fair and open competition and in accordance with all relevant legislation and Circular HSS (SM) 3/2001. Unless otherwise stated, the employee/s covered by this Report are appointed on a permanent basis, subject to satisfactory performance.

Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at [www.nicscommissioners.org](http://www.nicscommissioners.org)

The date of appointment for the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's Executive and Non-Executive Directors, and the Chair are set out below:

#### CHAIR

NAME	POSITION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT
Paul Martin	Chair	1 April 2018

#### NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

NAME	POSITION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT
Neil Bodger	Council Member	18 July 2011
Noelle Barton	Council Member	1 April 2018
Sarah Browne	Council Member	1 April 2018
Roslyn Dougherty	Council Member	1 April 2018
David Hayes	Council Member	1 April 2018
Christine Hunter	Council Member	1 April 2018
Gerard Guckian	Council Member	1 May 2018
Brenda Maitland	Council Member	1 October 2014
Jacqueline McGarvey	Council Member	1 April 2018
Catherine McPhillips	Council Member	3 November 2014
Anne O'Reilly	Council Member	1 December 2014
Lee Wilson	Council Member	1 September 2014

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

NAME	POSITION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT
Mrs Patricia Higgins	Interim Chief Executive	From 3 September 2018 ( <i>substantive position Director of Regulation and Standards from 1 June 2002</i> )
Mr Declan McAllister	Director of Registration and Corporate Services	17 July 2017
Mrs Marian O'Rourke	Interim Director of Regulation and Standards	From 8 October 2018 ( <i>substantive position Head of Workforce Development since 1 April 2014</i> )

#### NOTICE PERIODS

Three months' notice is to be provided by either party except in the event of summary dismissal. There is nothing to prevent either party waiving the right to notice or from accepting payment in lieu of notice.

#### RETIREMENT AGE

Currently, employees are required to retire at age 65 years and occupational pensions are normally effective from age 60 years. With effect from 1 October 2006, with the introduction of the Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006, employees are able to request to work beyond age 65 years.

#### COMPENSATION FOR PREMATURE RETIREMENT

In accordance with the DoH circular HSS (S) 11/83 and subsequent supplements, there is provision within the HSC Superannuation Scheme for premature retirement with immediate payment of superannuation benefits and compensation for eligible employees on the grounds of:

- Efficiency of the service
- Redundancy
- Organisational change

Section 16 of the Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions Handbook (issued on 14 February 2007 under cover of the Department's Guidance Circular HSS (AfC) (4) 2007) sets out the arrangements for early retirement on the grounds of redundancy and in the interest of the service. Further Circulars were issued by the Department HSS (AfC) (6) 2007 and HSS (AfC) (5) 2008 setting out changes to the timescale for the operation of the transitional protection under these arrangements.

Under the terms of Section 16 of the Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions Handbook individuals who were members of the HSC Superannuation Scheme prior to 1 October 2006, are over 50 years of age and have at least 5 years membership of the HSC Superannuation Scheme qualify for transitional protection. Staff who qualify for transitional protection are entitled to receive what they would have received by way of pension and redundancy payment had they taken redundancy retirement on 30 September 2006. This includes enhancement of up to 10 years additional service (reduced by the number of years between September 2006 and the actual date of retirement) and a lump sum redundancy payment of up to 30 weeks pay (reduced by 30% for each year of additional service over  $6\frac{2}{3}$  years)

Alternatively, staff made redundant who are members of the HSC Pension Scheme, have at least two years "continuous service" and two years "qualifying membership" and have reached the minimum pension age currently 50 years can opt to retire early without a reduction in their pension as an alternative to a lump sum redundancy payment of up to 24 months. In this case the cost of the early payment of the pension is paid from the lump sum redundancy payment. However if the redundancy payment is not sufficient to meet the early payment of pension cost, the employer is required to meet the additional cost.

## **REPORTING OF EARLY RETIREMENT AND OTHER COMPENSATION SCHEME - EXIT PACKAGES**

There were no exit packages during 2019-20 or 2018-19.

### **Staff Benefits**

Refer to pages 68-69 of the accounts.

## REMUNERATION REPORT

### Senior Employees' Remuneration (Audited)

The salary, pension entitlements and the value of any taxable benefits in kind of the most senior members of the Social Care Council were as follows:

Name	2019-20					2018-19				
	Salary £000s	Bonus / Performance Pay £000s	Benefits in kind (rounded to nearest £100)	Pension Benefits (rounded to nearest £1,000)	Total £000s	Salary £000s	Bonus / Performance Pay £000s	Benefits in kind (rounded to nearest £100)	Pension Benefits (rounded to nearest £1,000)	Total £000s
<b>Non-Executive Members</b>										
Paul Martin	15-20	-	-	-	15-20	15-20	-	-	-	15-20
Neil Bodger	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Lee Wilson	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Brenda Maitland	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Catherine McPhillips	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Anne O'Reilly	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Jacqueline McGarvey	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
David Hayes	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Sarah Browne	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Gerard Guckian	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Noelle Barton	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Roslyn Dougherty	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Christine Hunter	5-10	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	5-10
Ruth Lavery**	0-5	-	-	-	0-5	0-5	-	-	-	0-5
Julie Erskine**	0-5	-	-	-	0-5	0-5	-	-	-	0-5
Geraldine Campbell**	0-5	-	-	-	0-5	0-5	-	-	-	0-5
James Perry **	0-5	-	-	-	0-5	0-5	-	-	-	0-5
Trevor Spratt ***	-	-	-	-	-	0-5	-	-	-	0-5
Maire McMahon ***	-	-	-	-	-	0-5	-	-	-	0-5
Miriam Karp ***	-	-	-	-	-	0-5	-	-	-	0-5
Joseph Blake ***	-	-	-	-	-	0-5	-	-	-	0-5

Name	2019-20					2018-19				
	Salary £000s	Bonus / Performance Pay £000s	Benefits in kind (rounded to nearest £100)	Pension Benefits (rounded to nearest £1,000)	Total £000s	Salary £000s	Bonus / Performance Pay £000s	Benefits in kind (rounded to nearest £100)	Pension Benefits (rounded to nearest £1,000)	Total £000s
<b>Executive Members</b>										
Colum Conway*	-	-	-	-	-	30-35 (Full Year Equivalent 70-75)	-	100	(19)	10-15
Patricia Higgins	75-80	-	100	14	85-90	70-75 (Full Year Equivalent 75-80)	-	100	37	110-115
Declan McAllister	65-70	-	100	27	90-95	60-65	-	100	17	75-80
Marian O'Rourke	60-65	-	100	16	75-80	60-65 (Full Year Equivalent 60-65)	-	-	15	75-80

\* Colum Conway's last day of service was 31/08/18

\*\*These Non-Executives received a back-dated pay award re. 2018/19 and they are not presently working as part of the Social Care Council's Board function

\*\*\*These Non-Executives received a back-dated pay award re. 2017/18 and they are not presently working as part of the Social Care Council's Board function

## BONUSES

Bonuses are based on performance levels attained and are made as part of the appraisal process. Bonuses relate to the performance in the year in which they become payable to the individual. No bonuses were paid in 2019/20 or in 2018/19.

## PENSIONS OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT (AUDITED)

Name	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/3/20 and related lump sum £000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age £000	CETV at 31/03/20 £000	CETV at 31/03/19 £000	Real increase in CETV £000
Colum Conway	-	-	-	87	N/A
Patricia Higgins	25-30 plus lump sum of 75-80	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 2.5-5	621	581	40
Declan McAllister	20-25 plus lump sum of 40-45	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 0-2.5	385	340	26
Marian O'Rourke	10-15 plus lump sum of 0-2.5	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 0-2.5	223	195*	18

\*The 2018 figures have been restated in the note above, for employee Marian O'Rourke by £130,000 due to the omission of the 2008 CETV balance.

As Non-Executive members do not receive pensionable remuneration, there will be no entries in respect of pensions for Non-Executive members.

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capital value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme, or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which the disclosure applies. The CETV figures and the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefits in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the HPSS pension scheme. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost.

CETVs are calculated within the guidelines prescribed by the institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

Real Increase in CETV - This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

### Fair Pay Statement

The Hutton Fair Pay Review recommended that, from 2011-12, all public service organisations publish their top to median pay multiples each year. The DoH issued Circular HSC (F) 23/2012 and subsequently issued Circular HSC (F) 23/2013, setting out a requirement to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the most highly paid director in the organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce. Following application of the guidance contained in Circular (F) 23/2013, the following can be reported:

Disclosure (Audited)	2019-20	2018-19
Band of the Highest Paid Director's Total Remuneration	75-80	75-80
Median Total Remuneration	23,131	23,131
Ratio	3.29	3.29

## Remuneration and Staff Report – Staff Report

Staff recruitment, employment, terms and conditions are managed through a service-level agreement with the Business Services Organisation. Appointments are made on the HSC 'Agenda for Change' paybands. Changes to staff policies, terms or conditions are consulted on and developed in collaboration with staff-side organisations and unions (Joint Negotiating Forum).

### Training and Development

The Social Care Council values its staff and is committed to enhancing their skills and improving their contribution to the organisation's goals. Individuals are encouraged to complete a Personal Development Plan (PDP) as part of the appraisal process. Overall, needs are very much focused on service delivery with outcomes that relate to performance against team and organisational objectives.

### Staff Report for year ended 31 March 2020

The cumulative sickness and absenteeism rate for the Social Care Council for 2019-20 was 2.42% which was below the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's corporate target to maintain absences at a maximum of 3.5%.

### Staff Composition

The Social Care Council has 67 WTE staff plus 5 agency staff. 15% of staff work part-time or a form of compressed hours. The composition of the workforce is set out below –

#### Staff composition by pay band:

<b>Pay Band</b>	<b>% of Workforce</b>
Band 3	26%
Band's 4/6	49%
Band's 7/8	20%
SLT	5%

#### Staff composition by function:

<b>Function</b>	<b>% of Workforce</b>
Registration	26%
Workforce Development (includes PiP)	25%
Fitness to Practise	18%
Business Support	9.5%
Database	6.5%
Communications	5%
Committee	5%
SLT	5%

#### Staff composition by gender:

<b>Pay Band</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Band 3	50%	50%
Band's 4/6	30%	70%
Band's 7/8	50%	50%
SLT	33.5%	66.5%
<b>Overall Workforce</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>64%</b>

## Staff Numbers and Related Costs (Audited)

	2020			2019
	Permanently employed			
Staff costs comprise:	<b>staff</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Wages and salaries	1,838,686	211,181	2,049,867	1,931,061
Social security costs	164,662	-	164,662	148,974
Other pension costs	334,723	-	334,723	218,182
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>2,338,071</b>	<b>211,181</b>	<b>2,549,252</b>	<b>2,298,217</b>
Capitalised staff costs	-	-	-	-
<b>Total staff costs reported in Statement of Comprehensive Expenditure</b>			<b>2,549,252</b>	<b>2,298,217</b>
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments			-	-
<b>Total net costs</b>			<b>2,549,252</b>	<b>2,298,217</b>

The Social Care Council participates in the HSC Superannuation Scheme. Under this multi-employer defined benefit scheme both the Social Care Council and employees pay specified percentages of pay into the scheme and the liability to pay benefit falls to the DoH. The Social Care Council is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities in the scheme on a consistent and reliable basis.

As per the requirements of IAS 19, full actuarial valuations by a professionally qualified actuary are required at intervals not exceeding four years. The actuary reviews the most recent actuarial valuation at the statement of financial position date and updates it to reflect current conditions. The 2016 valuation for the HSC Pension scheme updated to reflect current financial conditions (and a change in financial assumption methodology) will be used in 2019-20 accounts.

### Average number of persons employed (Audited)

The average number of whole time equivalent persons employed during the year was as follows:

	2020			2019
	Permanently employed staff No.	Others No.	Total No.	Total No.
Administrative and clerical	56	5	61	61
Social Services	11	-	11	9
<b>Total average number of persons employed</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>70</b>
Less average staff number relating to capitalised staff costs			-	-
Less average staff number in respect of outward secondments			-	-
<b>Total net average number of persons employed</b>			<b>72</b>	<b>70</b>

The staff numbers disclosed as Others in 2019-20 relate to temporary members of staff.

## Reporting of early retirement and other compensation scheme – exit packages (Audited)

Exit package cost band	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of other departures agreed		Total number of packages by cost band	
	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019
<£10,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£10,000-£25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£25,000-£50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£50,000-£100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£100,000-£150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£150,000-£200,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
>£200,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total number of exit packages by type</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Total resource cost</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-

Redundancy and other departure costs have been paid in accordance with the provisions of the HSC Pension Scheme Regulations and the Compensation for Premature Retirement Regulations, statutory provisions made under the Superannuation (Northern Ireland) Order 1972.

The table above shows the total exit cost of exit packages agreed and accounted for in 2019-20 and 2018-19. £nil exit costs were paid in 2019-20, the year of departure (2018-19 £nil). Where the Social Care Council has agreed early retirements, the additional costs are met by the Social Care Council and not by the HSC pension scheme. Ill health retirement costs are met by the pension scheme and are not included in the table.

### Consultancy

The Social Care Council has not engaged any consultants over the period.

### Off Payroll engagements

There were no off payroll engagements during the year 2019-20.



Patricia Higgins,  
Interim Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council  
Date: 01 July 2020

## **Section 3: Accountability and Audit Report**

### **Northern Ireland Social Care Council Annual Accounts for Year Ended 31 March 2020**

#### **Foreword**

These accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020 have been prepared in accordance with Schedule 1, paragraph 12 of the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, in a form directed by the Department of Health.

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not make any charitable donations during the year and there were no personal data related incidents requiring disclosure.

In 2019/20 mechanisms were maintained in order to assure the Department of Health and the public of the effective performance of the Council in delivering its functions.

## Accountability Report - Assembly Accountability Disclosure Notes

### Assembly Accountability Disclosure Notes

#### i. Losses and Special Payments (Audited)

##### Losses Statement

Losses statement	2019-20		2018-19
	Number of Cases	£000	£000
Total number of losses	-	-	-
Total value of losses	-	-	-

Individual losses over £250,000	2019-20		2018-19
	Number of Cases	£	£
Cash losses	-	-	-
Claims abandoned	-	-	-
Administrative write-offs	-	-	-
Fruitless payments	-	-	-
Stores losses	-	-	-

Special payments	2019-20		2018-19
	Number of Cases	£000	£000
Total number of special payments	-	-	-
Total value of special payments	-	-	-

Special Payments over £250,000	2019-20		2018-19
	Number of Cases	£	£
Compensation payments			
- Clinical Negligence	-	-	-
- Public Liability	-	-	-
- Employers Liability	-	-	-
- Other	-	-	-
Ex-gratia payments	-	-	-
Extra contractual	-	-	-
Special severance payments	-	-	-
<b>Total special payments</b>	-	-	-

#### Special Payments (Audited)

There were no other special payments or gifts made during the year.

#### Other Payments and Estimates (Audited)

There were no other payments made during the year.

#### Losses and Special Payments over £250,000 (Audited)

The Council had no losses or made no special payments over £250,000.

#### ii) Fees and Charges (Audited)

There were no other fees and charges during the year.

#### iii) Remote Contingent Liabilities (Audited)

In addition to contingent liabilities reported within the meaning of IAS 37, the Social Care Council also reports liabilities for which the likelihood of a transfer of economic benefit in settlement is too remote to

meet the definition of contingent liability. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no remote contingent liabilities.

#### **iv) Discount Rate**

The Department of Justice has power to set the personal injury discount rate for Northern Ireland in consultation with the Government Actuary and the Department of Finance. The rate is currently 2.5% however, the Department has consulted the statutory consultees on a proposed change to the rate to - 1.75%. Once their responses are received, the Minister will consider these and make a final decision. As a final decision on this consultation remains outstanding at this time significant uncertainty remains around the timing and the financial effect therefore it is not currently possible to quantify the potential impact on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council of any change in discount rate.

In Northern Ireland the discount rate currently has to be set in accordance with legal principles set out by the House of Lords in *Wells v Wells*. However, the Department also proposes to take forward a consultation on changing how the rate is set. Both England and Wales and Scotland have already made primary legislation which changed how their discount rates are set and have reviewed their rates under these new legislative frameworks.

#### **v) Court of Appeal Judgement Backdated Holiday Pay**

On 17 June 2019 the Court of Appeal ruled in respect of Northern Ireland Industrial Tribunal's November 2018 decision on cases taken against the PSNI on backdated Holiday Pay. The Supreme Court is currently considering whether to hear an appeal of this decision. This is an extremely rare and complex case with a significant number of issues that still need to be worked through and HSC implications determined and resolved, including further legal advice with regards to the impact of the judgement; the scope; timescales; process of appeals and engagement with Trade Unions. The legal issues arising from this judgment and the implications for the HSC sector will need further extensive consideration. Until there is further clarity on the specifics, based on the inherent uncertainties in the final decision that will be made from an HSC perspective, and the fact that there is currently neither legally nor constructively an obligation for the HSC, a possible obligation exists and a reliable estimate cannot be provided at this time, until the HSC implications are fully explored and concluded.

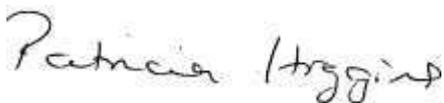
#### **vi) The Working Time (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020**

The Working Time (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 came into operation on 24 April 2020 and allows those workers who are unable to take annual leave as result of the pandemic to carry over up to four weeks' annual leave into the next two leave years. Any exemption will apply only to circumstances where workers are unable to take their leave as a result of the outbreak, and carryover of annual leave will be limited to the next two leave years. The change in regulations is likely to lead to an increase in the value of accrued annual leave carried over in the next two years by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. It is not possible for the Social Care Council to give a reasonable estimate of the impact at this time.

#### Regularity

The Accounting Officer provides assurance that all income and expenditure is in line with the principles of propriety and regularity as set out in *Managing Public Money* published by HM Treasury and that expenditure plans are in line with capital and revenue funding rules and regulations.

The Accounting Officer confirms that the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair balanced and understandable and that she takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.



Patricia Higgins,  
Interim Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 01 July 2020

# Northern Ireland Social Care Council Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020

## STATEMENT OF NET COMPREHENSIVE EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

This account summarises the expenditure and income generated and consumed on an accruals basis. It also includes other comprehensive income and expenditure, which includes changes to the values of non-current assets and other financial instruments that cannot yet be recognised as income or expenditure.

	NOTE	2020 £	2019 £
Revenue from contracts with customers	4.1	1,982,274	1,836,989
Other Income (Excluding interest)	4.2	-	-
Deferred income	4.3	-	-
<b>Total operating income</b>		<b>1,982,274</b>	<b>1,836,989</b>
Expenditure			
Staff costs	3	(2,549,252)	(2,298,217)
Purchase of goods and services	3	(40,428)	(51,293)
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment charges	3	(125,916)	(172,232)
Provision expense	3		
Other expenditure	3	(2,280,612)	(2,084,728)
<b>Total operating expenditure</b>		<b>(4,996,208)</b>	<b>(4,606,470)</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>		<b>(3,013,934)</b>	<b>(2,769,481)</b>
Finance income	4.2	-	-
Finance expense	3	-	-
<b>Net expenditure for the year</b>		<b>(3,013,934)</b>	<b>(2,769,481)</b>
Revenue Resource Limit (RRL) received from DoH	23.1	3,022,710	2,777,551
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) against RRL</b>		<b>8,776</b>	<b>8,070</b>

## OTHER COMPREHENSIVE EXPENDITURE

	NOTE	2020 £	2019 £
<b>Items that will not be reclassified to net operating costs:</b>			
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of property, plant & equipment	5.1/8/5 .2/9	-	-
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of intangibles	6.1/8/6 .2/9	860	3,551
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of financial instruments	7/9	-	-
<b>Items that may be reclassified to net operating costs:</b>			
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments		-	-
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE EXPENDITURE for the year ended 31 March 2020</b>		<b>(3,013,074)</b>	<b>(2,765,930)</b>

The notes on pages 77 -103 form part of these accounts

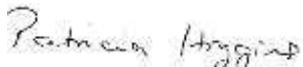
# Northern Ireland Social Care Council Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020

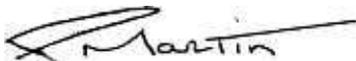
## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 31 MARCH 2020

This statement presents the financial position of the Social Care Council. It comprises three main components: assets owned or controlled; liabilities owed to other bodies; and equity, the remaining value of the entity.

	NOTE	2020 £	£	2019 £	£
<b>Non Current Assets</b>					
Property, plant and equipment	5.1/5.2	86,835		48,748	
Intangible assets	6.1/6.2	419,127		424,489	
Financial assets	7	-		-	
Trade and other receivables	13	-		-	
Other current assets	13	-		-	
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>			505,962		473,237
<b>Current Assets</b>					
Assets classified as held for sale	10	-		-	
Inventories	11	-		-	
Trade and other receivables	13	33,755		292,753	
Other current assets	13	47,158		60,715	
Intangible current assets	13	-		-	
Financial assets	7	-		-	
Cash and cash equivalents	12	270,011		74,103	
<b>Total Current Assets</b>			350,924		427,571
<b>Total Assets</b>			<b>856,886</b>		<b>900,808</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>					
Trade and other payables	14	(873,987)		(819,734)	
Other liabilities	14	-		-	
Intangible current liabilities	14	-		-	
Financial liabilities	7	-		-	
Provisions	15	-		-	
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>			(873,987)		(819,734)
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<b>(17,101)</b>		<b>81,074</b>
<b>Non Current Liabilities</b>					
Provisions	15	-		-	
Other payables > 1 yr	14	-		-	
Financial liabilities	7	-		-	
<b>Total Non Current Liabilities</b>			-		-
<b>Total assets less total liabilities</b>			<b>(17,101)</b>		<b>81,074</b>
<b>Taxpayers' Equity and other reserves</b>					
Revaluation Reserve		36,575		35,715	
SoCNE Reserve		(53,676)		45,359	
<b>Total equity</b>			<b>(17,101)</b>		<b>81,074</b>

The financial statements on pages 73-76 were approved by the Board on 24 June 2020 and were signed on its behalf by:

Signed:  (Interim Chief Executive) Date: 01 July 2020

Signed:  (Chairman) Date: 01 July 2020

# Northern Ireland Social Care Council Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

The Statement of Cash Flows shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Northern Ireland Social Care Council generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of service costs and the extent to which these operations are funded by way of income from the recipients of services provided by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash inflows and outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's future public service delivery.

	NOTE	2020 £	2019 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net surplus after interest/Net operating expenditure		(3,013,934)	(2,769,481)
Adjustments for non cash costs	3	141,816	187,572
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables		272,555	(272,598)
<i>Less movements in receivables relating to items not passing through the NEA</i>			
Movements in receivables relating to the sale of property, plant & equipment		-	-
Movements in receivables relating to the sale of intangibles		-	-
Movements in receivables relating to finance leases		-	-
Movements in receivables relating to PFI and other service concession arrangement contracts		-	-
(Increase)/decrease in inventories		-	-
Increase/(decrease) in trade payables		54,253	(276,910)
<i>Less movements in payables relating to items not passing through the NEA</i>			
Movements in payables relating to the purchase of property, plant & equipment		(17,425)	-
Movements in payables relating to the purchase of intangibles		10,000	372,060
Movements in payables relating to finance leases		-	-
Movements on payables relating to PFI and other service concession arrangement contracts		-	-
Use of provisions	15	-	-
<b>Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities</b>		<u>(2,552,735)</u>	<u>(2,759,357)</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
(Purchase of property, plant & equipment)	5	(43,507)	(22,997)
(Purchase of intangible assets)	6	(106,849)	(390,015)
Proceeds of disposal of property, plant & equipment		-	-
Proceeds on disposal of intangibles		-	-
Proceeds on disposal of assets held for resale		-	-
<b>Net cash outflow from investing activities</b>		<u>(150,356)</u>	<u>(413,012)</u>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Grant in aid		2,898,999	3,195,830
Cap element of payments - finance leases and on balance sheet (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements		-	-
<b>Net financing</b>		<u>2,898,999</u>	<u>3,195,830</u>
<b>Net increase (decrease) in cash &amp; cash equivalents in the period</b>		195,908	23,461
<b>Cash &amp; cash equivalents at the beginning of the period</b>	12	<u>74,103</u>	<u>50,642</u>
<b>Cash &amp; cash equivalents at the end of the period</b>	12	<u>270,011</u>	<u>74,103</u>

The notes on pages 77 - 103 form part of these accounts

## Northern Ireland Social Care Council Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020

### STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN TAXPAYERS EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, analysed into 'Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve' (i.e. those reserves that reflect a contribution from the Department of Health). The Revaluation Reserve reflects the change in asset values that have not been recognised as income or expenditure. The SoCNE Reserve represents the total assets less liabilities of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, to the extent that the total is not represented by other reserves and financing items.

	NOTE	SoCNE Reserve £	Revaluation Reserve £	Taxpayer's Equity Total £
<b>Balance at 31 March 2018</b>		(395,990)	32,164	(363,826)
<b>Changes in Taxpayers Equity 2018-19</b>				
Grant from DoH		3,195,830	-	3,195,830
Other reserves movements including transfers		-	-	-
(Comprehensive expenditure for the year)		(2,769,481)	3,551	(2,765,930)
Transfer of asset ownership		-	-	-
Non cash charges auditors remuneration	3	15,000	-	15,000
<b>Balance at 31 March 2019</b>		<b>45,359</b>	<b>35,715</b>	<b>81,074</b>
<b>Changes in Taxpayers Equity 2019-20</b>				
Grant from DoH		2,898,999	-	2,898,999
Other reserves movements including transfers		-	-	-
(Comprehensive expenditure for the year)		(3,013,934)	860	(3,013,074)
Transfer of asset ownership		-	-	-
Non cash charges auditors remuneration	3	15,900	-	15,900
<b>Balance at 31 March 2020</b>		<b>(53,676)</b>	<b>36,575</b>	<b>(17,101)</b>

# Northern Ireland Social Care Council Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### 1. Authority

These accounts have been prepared in a form determined by the Department of Health based on guidance from the Department of Finance's Financial Reporting manual (FReM) and in accordance with the requirements of Article 90(2) (a) of the Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 No 1265 (NI 14) as amended by Article 6 of the Audit and Accountability (Northern Ireland) Order 2003.

The accounting policies follow IFRS to the extent that it is meaningful and appropriate to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. Where a choice of accounting policy is permitted, the accounting policy which has been judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council's accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items considered material in relation to the accounts, unless otherwise stated.

#### 1.1 Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment, intangible assets and inventories.

#### 1.2 Currency and Rounding

These accounts are presented in £ sterling and rounded in thousands.

#### 1.3 Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment assets comprise Land, Buildings, Dwellings, Transport Equipment, Plant & Machinery, Information Technology, Furniture & Fittings, and Assets under Construction.

#### Recognition

Property, plant and equipment *must* be capitalised if:

- it is held for use in delivering services or for administrative purposes;
- it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to, or service potential will be supplied to, the entity;
- it is expected to be used for more than one financial year;
- the cost of the item can be measured reliably; *and*
- the item has a cost of at least £5,000 *or*
- Collectively, a number of items have a cost of at least £5,000 and individually have a cost of more than £1,000, where the assets are functionally interdependent, they had broadly simultaneous purchase dates, are anticipated to have simultaneous disposal dates and are under single managerial control; *or*
- Items form part of the initial equipping and setting-up cost of a new building, ward or unit, irrespective of their individual or collective cost.

On initial recognition property, plant and equipment are measured at cost including any expenditure such as installation, directly attributable to bringing them into working condition. Items classified as "under construction" are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position to the extent that money has been paid or a liability has been incurred.

## **Valuation of Land and Buildings**

Land and buildings are carried at the last professional valuation, in accordance with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Global Standards & UK National Supplement in so far as these are consistent with the specific needs of the HSC.

The last valuation was carried out on 31 January 2016 by Land and Property Services (LPS) which is an independent executive body within the Department of Finance. The valuers are qualified to meet the 'Member of Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' (MRICS) standard.

Professional revaluations of land and buildings are undertaken at least once in every five year period and are revalued annually, between professional valuations, using indices provided by LPS.

Land and buildings used for the Northern Ireland Social Care Council services or for administrative purposes are stated in the statement of financial position at their revalued amounts, being the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Fair values are determined as follows:

- Land and non-specialised buildings – open market value for existing use;
- Specialised buildings – depreciated replacement cost; *and*
- Properties surplus to requirements – the lower of open market value less any material directly attributable selling costs, or book value at date of moving to non-current assets.

## **Modern Equivalent Asset**

DoF has adopted a standard approach to depreciated replacement cost valuations based on modern equivalent assets and, where it would meet the location requirements of the service being provided, an alternative site can be valued. Land and Property Services (LPS) have included this requirement within the latest valuation.

## **Assets Under Construction (AUC)**

Properties in the course of construction for service or administration purposes are carried at cost, less any impairment loss. Assets are revalued and depreciation commences when they are brought into use.

## **Short Life Assets**

Short life assets are not indexed. Short life is defined as a useful life of up to and including 5 years. Short life assets are carried at depreciated historic cost as this is not considered to be materially different from fair value and are depreciated over their useful life.

Where estimated life of fixtures and equipment exceed 5 years, suitable indices will be applied each year and depreciation will be based on indexed amount.

## **Revaluation Reserve**

An increase arising on revaluation is taken to the revaluation reserve except when it reverses an impairment for the same asset previously recognised in expenditure, in which case it is credited to expenditure to the extent of the decrease previously charged there. A revaluation decrease is recognised as an impairment charged to the revaluation reserve to the extent that there is a balance on the reserve for the asset and, thereafter, to expenditure.

## **1.4 Depreciation**

No depreciation is provided on freehold land since land has unlimited or a very long established useful life. Items under construction are not depreciated until they are commissioned. Properties that are surplus to requirements and which meet the definition of "non-current assets held for sale" are also not depreciated.

Otherwise, depreciation is charged to write off the costs or valuation of property, plant and equipment and similarly, amortisation is applied to intangible non-current assets, less any residual value, over

their estimated useful lives, in a manner that reflects the consumption of economic benefits or service potential of the assets. Assets held under finance leases are also depreciated over the lower of their estimated useful lives and the terms of the lease. The estimated useful life of an asset is the period over which the Northern Ireland Social Care Council expects to obtain economic benefits or service potential from the asset. Estimated useful lives and residual values are reviewed each year end, with the effect of any changes recognised on a prospective basis. The following asset lives have been used.

<b>Asset Type</b>	<b>Asset Life</b>
Freehold Buildings	25 – 60 years
Leasehold property	Remaining period of lease
IT assets	3 – 10 years
Intangible assets	3 – 10 years
Other Equipment	3 – 15 years

### **1.5 Impairment loss**

If there has been an impairment loss due to a general change in prices, the asset is written down to its recoverable amount, with the loss charged to the revaluation reserve to the extent that there is a balance on the reserve for the asset and, thereafter, to expenditure within the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. If the impairment is due to the consumption of economic benefits the full amount of the impairment is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure and an amount up to the value of the impairment in the revaluation reserve is transferred to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve. Where an impairment loss subsequently reverses, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of the recoverable amount but capped at the amount that would have been determined had there been no initial impairment loss. The reversal of the impairment loss is credited firstly to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure to the extent of the decrease previously charged there and thereafter to the revaluation reserve.

### **1.6 Subsequent expenditure**

Where subsequent expenditure enhances an asset beyond its original specification, the directly attributable cost is capitalised. Where subsequent expenditure which meets the definition of capital restores the asset to its original specification, the expenditure is capitalised and any existing carrying value of the item replaced is written-out and charged to operating expenses.

The overall useful life of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's building takes account of the fact that different components of buildings have different useful lives. This ensures that depreciation is charged on those assets at the same rate as if separate components had been identified and depreciated at different rates.

### **1.7 Intangible assets**

Intangible assets includes any of the following held - software, licences, trademarks, websites, development expenditure, Patents, Goodwill and intangible assets under construction. Software that is integral to the operating of hardware, for example an operating system is capitalised as part of the relevant item of property, plant and equipment. Software that is not integral to the operation of hardware, for example application software, is capitalised as an intangible asset. Internally-generated assets are recognised if, and only if, all of the following have been demonstrated:

- the technical feasibility of completing the intangible asset so that it will be available for use;
- the intention to complete the intangible asset and use it;
- the ability to sell or use the intangible asset;
- how the intangible asset will generate probable future economic benefits or service potential;
- the availability of adequate technical, financial and other resources to complete the intangible asset and sell or use it; *and*
- the ability to measure reliably the expenditure attributable to the intangible asset during its development.

## **Recognition**

Intangible assets are non-monetary assets without physical substance, which are capable of sale separately from the rest of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's business, or which arise from contractual or other legal rights. Intangible assets are considered to have a finite life. They are recognised only when it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to, or service potential be provided to, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council; where the cost of the asset can be measured reliably. All single items over £5,000 in value must be capitalised while intangible assets which fall within the grouped asset definition must be capitalised if their individual value is at least £1,000 each and the group is at least £5,000 in value. The amount recognised for internally-generated intangible assets is the sum of the expenditure incurred from the date of commencement of the intangible asset, until it is complete and ready for use.

Intangible assets acquired separately are initially recognised at fair value.

Following initial recognition, intangible assets are carried at fair value by reference to an active market, and as no active market currently exists depreciated replacement cost has been used as fair value.

### **1.8 Non-current assets held for sale**

Non-current assets are classified as held for sale if their carrying amount will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through continuing use. In order to meet this definition IFRS 5 requires that the asset must be immediately available for sale in its current condition and that the sale is highly probable. A sale is regarded as highly probable where an active plan is in place to find a buyer for the asset and the sale is considered likely to be concluded within one year. Non-current assets held for sale are measured at the lower of their previous carrying amount and fair value, less any material directly attributable selling costs. Fair value is open market value, where one is available, including alternative uses.

Assets classified as held for sale are not depreciated.

The profit or loss arising on disposal of an asset is the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying amount. The profit from sale of land which is a non-depreciating asset is recognised within income. The profit from sale of a depreciating asset is shown as a reduced expense. The loss from sale of land or from any depreciating assets is shown within operating expenses. On disposal, the balance for the asset on the revaluation reserve is transferred to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure reserve.

Property, plant or equipment that is to be scrapped or demolished does not qualify for recognition as held for sale. Instead, it is retained as an operational asset and its economic life is adjusted. The asset is de-recognised when it is scrapped or demolished.

### **1.9 Inventories**

Inventories are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. This is considered to be a reasonable approximation to fair value due to the high turnover of stocks.

### **1.10 Income**

Income is classified between Revenue from Contracts and Other Operating Income as assessed necessary in line with organisational activity, under the requirements of IFRS 15 and as applicable to the public sector. Judgement is exercised in order to determine whether the 5 essential criteria within the scope of IFRS 15 are met in order to define income as a contract. Income relates directly to the activities of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and is recognised when, and to the extent that a performance obligation is satisfied in a manner that depicts the transfer to the customer of the goods or services promised. Where the criteria to determine whether a contract is in existence is not met, income is classified as Other Operating Income within the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure and is recognised when the right to receive payment is established.

In year of initial application, the introduction of IFRS 15 has not impacted on the timing of satisfying performance obligations of contracts in existence therefore the transaction price determined has not changed as a result of its introduction. The current impact of its introduction has resulted in

reclassification of income based on consideration of whether there is a written, oral or implied contract in existence. Note 4 Income provides initial application disclosures in line with HM Treasury application guidance on transition to IFRS 15.

### **Grant in aid**

Funding received from other entities, including the Department and the Health and Social Care Board, are accounted for as grant in aid and are reflected through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve.

### **1.11 Investments**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council does not have any investments.

### **1.12 Other expenses**

Other operating expenses for goods or services are recognised when, and to the extent that, they have been received. They are measured at the fair value of the consideration payable.

### **1.13 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash is cash in hand and deposits with any financial institution repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are investments that mature in 3 months or less from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

### **1.14 Leases**

IFRS 16 Leases replaces IAS 17 Leases and is effective with EU adoption from 1 January 2020. In line with the requirements of the FReM, IFRS 16 will be implemented, as interpreted and adapted for the public sector, with effect from 1 April 2020.

Leases are classified as finance leases when substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership are transferred to the lessee. All other leases are classified as operating leases.

#### **The Northern Ireland Social Care Council as lessee**

Property, plant and equipment held under finance leases are initially recognised, at the inception of the lease, at fair value or, if lower, at the present value of the minimum lease payments, with a matching liability for the lease obligation to the lessor. Lease payments are apportioned between finance charges and reduction of the lease obligation so as to achieve a constant rate on interest on the remaining balance of the liability. Finance charges are recognised in calculating the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's surplus/deficit.

Operating lease payments are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term. Lease incentives are recognised initially as a liability and subsequently as a reduction of rentals on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Contingent rentals are recognised as an expense in the period in which they are incurred.

Where a lease is for land and buildings, the land and building components are separated. Leased land may be either an operating lease or a finance lease depending on the conditions in the lease agreement and following the general guidance set out in IAS 17. Leased buildings are assessed as to whether they are operating or finance leases.

#### **The Northern Ireland Social Care Council as lessor**

Amounts due from lessees under finance leases are recorded as receivables at the amount of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's net investment in the leases. Finance lease income is allocated to accounting periods so as to reflect a constant periodic rate of return on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's net investment outstanding in respect of the leases.

Rental income from operating leases is recognised on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease. Initial direct costs incurred in negotiating and arranging an operating lease are added to the carrying amount of the leased asset and recognised on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

### 1.15 Private Finance Initiative (PFI) transactions

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council has had no PFI transactions during the year.

### 1.16 Financial instruments

- Financial assets

Financial assets are recognised on the Statement of Financial Position when the Northern Ireland Social Care Council becomes party to the financial instrument contract or, in the case of trade receivables, when the goods or services have been delivered. Financial assets are de-recognised when the contractual rights have expired or the asset has been transferred.

Financial assets are initially recognised at fair value. IFRS 9 requires consideration of the expected credit loss model on financial assets. The measurement of the loss allowance depends upon the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's assessment at the end of each reporting period as to whether the financial instrument's credit risk has increased significantly since initial recognition, based on reasonable and supportable information that is available, without undue cost or effort to obtain. The amount of expected credit loss recognised is measured on the basis of the probability weighted present value of anticipated cash shortfalls over the life of the instrument.

- Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the balance sheet when the Northern Ireland Social Care Council becomes party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument or, in the case of trade payables, when the goods or services have been received. Financial liabilities are de-recognised when the liability has been discharged, that is, the liability has been paid or has expired.

Financial liabilities are initially recognised at fair value.

- Financial risk management

IFRS 7 requires disclosure of the role that financial instruments have had during the period in creating or changing the risks a body faces in undertaking its activities. Because of the relationships with HSC Commissioners, and the manner in which they are funded, financial instruments play a more limited role within the Northern Ireland Social Care Council in creating risk than would apply to a non-public sector body of a similar size, therefore the Northern Ireland Social Care Council is not exposed to the degree of financial risk faced by business entities.

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council has limited powers to borrow or invest surplus funds and financial assets and liabilities are generated by day to day operational activities rather than being held to change the risks facing the Northern Ireland Social Care Council in undertaking activities.

Therefore the HSC is exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

- Currency risk

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is principally a domestic organisation with the great majority of transactions, assets and liabilities being in the UK and Sterling based. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council has no overseas operations. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council therefore has low exposure to currency rate fluctuations.

- Interest rate risk

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council has limited powers to borrow or invest and therefore has low exposure to interest rate fluctuations.

- Credit risk

Because the majority of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's income comes from contracts with other public sector bodies, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council has low exposure to credit risk.

- Liquidity risk

Since the Northern Ireland Social Care Council receives the majority of its funding through its principal Commissioner which is voted through the Assembly, it is therefore not exposed to significant liquidity risks.

### 1.17 Provisions

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no provisions at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

### 1.18 Contingent liabilities/assets

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no contingent assets or liabilities at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

### 1.19 Employee benefits

#### Short-term employee benefits

Under the requirements of IAS 19: Employee Benefits, staff costs must be recorded as an expense as soon as the organisation is obligated to pay them. This includes the cost of any untaken leave that has been earned at the year end. This cost has been determined using individual's salary costs applied to their unused leave balances determined from a report of the unused annual leave balance as at 31 March 2020. It is not anticipated that the level of untaken leave will vary significantly from year to year. [Untaken flexi leave is estimated to be immaterial to the Social Care Council and has not been included].

#### Retirement benefit costs

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the HSC Superannuation Scheme.

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council participates in the HSC Pension Scheme. Under this multi-employer defined benefit scheme both the ALB and employees pay specified percentages of pay into the scheme and the liability to pay benefit falls to the DoH. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities in the scheme on a consistent and reliable basis.

The costs of early retirements are met by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure at the time the Northern Ireland Social Care Council commits itself to the retirement.

As per the requirements of IAS 19, full actuarial valuations by a professionally qualified actuary are required at intervals not exceeding four years. The actuary reviews the most recent actuarial valuation at the statement of financial position date and updates it to reflect current conditions. The 2016 valuation for the HSC Pension scheme updated to reflect current financial conditions and a change in financial assumption methodology will be used in 2019-20 accounts.

### 1.20 Reserves

#### Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve

Accumulated surpluses are accounted for in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve.

#### Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve reflects the unrealised balance of cumulative indexation and revaluation adjustments to assets other than donated assets.

### 1.21 Value Added Tax

Where output VAT is charged or input VAT is recoverable, the amounts are stated net of VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the relevant expenditure category or included in the capitalised purchase cost of fixed assets.

### **1.22 Third party assets**

Assets belonging to third parties (such as money held on behalf of patients) are not recognised in the accounts since the Northern Ireland Social Care Council has no beneficial interest in them. Details of third party assets are given in Note 23 to the accounts.

### **1.23 Government Grants**

The note to the financial statements distinguishes between grants from UK government entities and grants from European Union.

### **1.24 Losses and Special Payments**

Losses and special payments are items that the Assembly would not have contemplated when it agreed funds for the health service or passed legislation. By their nature they are items that ideally should not arise. They are therefore subject to special control procedures compared with the generality of payments. They are divided into different categories, which govern the way that individual cases are handled.

Losses and special payments are charged to the relevant functional headings in expenditure on an accruals basis, including losses which would have been made good through insurance cover had HSC bodies not been bearing their own risks (with insurance premiums then being included as normal revenue expenditure). However, the note on losses and special payments is compiled directly from the losses and compensations register which reports amounts on an accruals basis with the exception of provisions for future losses.

### **1.25 Accounting standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted**

Under IAS 8 there is a requirement to disclose those standards issued but not yet adopted.

IFRS 16 Leases replaces IAS 17 Leases and is effective with EU adoption from 1 January 2019. In line with the requirements of the FReM, IFRS 16 will be implemented, as interpreted and adapted for the public sector, with effect from 1 April 2021.

'The IASB issued new and amended standards (IFRS 10, IFRS 11 & IFRS 12) that affect the consolidation and reporting of subsidiaries, associates and joint ventures. These standards were effective with EU adoption from 1 January 2014.

Accounting boundary IFRS' are currently adapted in the FReM so that the Westminster departmental accounting boundary is based on ONS control criteria, as designated by Treasury. A similar review in NI, which will bring NI departments under the same adaptation, has been carried out and the resulting recommendations were agreed by the Executive in December 2019. With effect from 2020-21, the accounting boundary for departments will change and there will also be an impact on departments around the disclosure requirements under IFRS 12. ALBs apply IFRS in full and their consolidation boundary may change as a result of the new Standards.'

Management consider that any other new accounting policies issued but not yet adopted are unlikely to have a significant impact on the accounts in the period of the initial application.

### **1.26 Going Concern**

In addition, due to the manner in which the Northern Ireland Social Care Council is funded, the statement of financial position will show a negative position. In line with FReM, sponsored entities such as the Social Care Council would show total net liabilities, should prepare financial statements on a going concern basis. The cash required to discharge these net liabilities will be requested from the Department when they fall due and is shown in the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity.

## **NOTE 2: ANALYSIS OF NET EXPENDITURE BY SEGMENT**

The core business and strategic direction of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council is to protect the public through the registration and regulation of the social care workforce and to regulate the training for social workers.

The Board of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council acts as the Chief Operating Decision Maker and receives financial information on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council as a whole and makes decisions on this basis. Hence, it is appropriate that the Northern Ireland Social Care Council reports on a single operational segment basis.

## NOTE 3: EXPENDITURE

	2020	2019
	£	£
<b>Operating expenses are as follows:-</b>		
Staff costs: <sup>1</sup>		
Wages and Salaries	2,049,867	1,931,061
Social security costs	164,662	148,974
Other pension costs	334,723	218,182
Revenue grants to voluntary organisations	599,314	527,379
Supplies and services – general	40,428	51,293
Establishment	725,704	631,976
Transport	-	-
Premises	647,151	613,142
Interest charges	-	-
Miscellaneous	75,853	90,378
BSO Services	216,690	206,513
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<u>4,854,392</u>	<u>4,418,898</u>
<b>Non cash items</b>		
Depreciation	24,613	21,100
Amortisation	101,303	151,132
Impairments	-	-
(Profit) on disposal of property, plant & equipment (including land)	-	-
(Profit) on disposal of intangibles	-	-
Loss on disposal of property, plant & equipment (including land)	-	340
Loss on disposal of intangibles	-	-
Increase / Decrease in provisions (provision provided for in year less any release)	-	-
Cost of borrowing provisions (unwinding of discount on provisions)	-	-
Auditors remuneration	15,900	15,000
<b>Total non cash items</b>	<u>141,816</u>	<u>187,572</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>4,996,208</u></u>	<u><u>4,606,470</u></u>

During the year the Northern Ireland Social Care Council purchased no non audit services from its external auditor (NIAO) (2018/19: £Nil).

<sup>1</sup> Further detailed analysis of staff costs is located in the Staff Report on pages 67- 69 within the Accountability Report.

## NOTE 4: INCOME

### 4.1 Revenue from Contracts with Customers

	2020	2019
	£	£
Other income from non-patient services	1,982,274	1,836,989
Seconded staff	-	-
Charitable and other contributions to expenditure	-	-
Donations / Government Grant / Lottery Funding for non current assets	-	-
Profit on disposal of land	-	-
Interest receivable	-	-
<b>Total Revenue from Contracts with Customers</b>	<b><u>1,982,274</u></b>	<b><u>1,836,989</u></b>

### 4.2 Other Operating Income

	2020	2019
	£	£
Other income from non-patient services	-	-
<b>Total Other Operating Income</b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>1,982,274</u></b>	<b><u>1,836,989</u></b>

### 4.3 Deferred Income

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no income released from conditional grants in 2019/20 and 2018/19.

## NOTE 5: PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT

### 5.1 Property, Plant and Equipment – year ended 31 March 2020

	Land £	Buildings (excl dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant & Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport (Equipment) £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture & Fittings £	Total £
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>									
At 1 April 2019	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	151,181	-	157,591
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	-	60,932	-	60,932
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,769	-	1,769
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2020	-	-	-	-	<b>6,410</b>	-	<b>213,882</b>	-	<b>220,292</b>

### Depreciation

At 1 April 2019	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	102,433	-	108,843
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provided during the year	-	-	-	-	-	-	24,613	-	24,613
At 31 March 2020	-	-	-	-	<b>6,410</b>	-	<b>127,046</b>	-	<b>133,456</b>

## 5.1 (continued) Property, Plant and Equipment – year ended 31 March 2020

	Land £	Buildings (excl dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant & Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport (Equipment) £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture & Fittings £	Total £
<b>Carrying Amount</b> At 31 March 2020	-	-	-	-	-	-	86,836	-	86,836
At 31 March 2019	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,748	-	48,748

### Asset Financing

Owned							86,836	-	86,836
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-			
On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-			
<b>Carrying Amount</b> At 31 March 2020							86,836	-	86,836

Any fall in value through negative indexation or revaluation is shown as impairment.

The total amount of depreciation charged in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Account in respect of assets held under finance leases and hire purchase contracts is £Nil (2019: £Nil).

The fair value of assets funded from the following sources during the year was:

	2020 £	2019 £
Donations	-	-
Government Grant	-	-
Lottery Funding	-	-

**NOTE 5: PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT**

**5.2 Property, Plant and Equipment – year ended 31 March 2019**

	Land £	Buildings (excl dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant & Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport (Equipment) £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture & Fittings £	Total £
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>									
At 1 April 2018	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	150,999	-	157,409
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	-	22,997	-	22,997
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	(22,815)	-	(22,815)
At 31 March 2019	-	-	-	-	<b>6,410</b>	-	<b>151,181</b>	-	<b>157,591</b>

<b>Depreciation</b>									
At 1 April 2018	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	103,808	-	110,218
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	(22,475)	-	(22,475)
Provided during the year	-	-	-	-	-	-	21,100	-	21,100
At 31 March 2019	-	-	-	-	<b>6,410</b>	-	<b>102,433</b>	-	<b>108,843</b>

## 5.2 (continued) Property, Plant and Equipment – year ended 31 March 2019

	Land £	Buildings (excl dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant & Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport (Equipment) £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture & Fittings £	Total £
<b>Carrying Amount</b>									
At 31 March 2019	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,748	-	48,748
At 1 April 2018	-	-	-	-	-	-	47,191	-	47,191
<b>Asset financing</b>									
Owned	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,748	-	48,748
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On SOFP PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Carrying Amount</b>									
At 31 March 2019	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,748	-	48,748
<b>Asset financing</b>									
Owned	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,748	-	48,748
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On SOFP PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Carrying Amount</b>									
At 1 April 2018	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,748	-	48,748

## NOTE 6: INTANGIBLE ASSETS

### 6.1 Intangible Assets – year ended 31 March 2020

	Software Licences	Information Technology	Websites	Development Expenditure	Licences, Trademarks & Artistic Originals	Patents	Goodwill	Payments on Account & Assets Under Construction	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>									
At 1 April 2019	51,976	998,841	-	-	-	-	-	7,955	1,058,772
Indexation	125	2,578	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,703
Additions	7,920	6,108	-	-	-	-	-	82,821	96,849
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	89,007	-	-	-	-	-	(90,775)	(1,768)
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2020	<b>60,021</b>	<b>1,096,534</b>						<b>1</b>	<b>1,156,556</b>

### Amortisation

At 1 April 2019	51,221	583,062	-	-	-	-	-	-	634,283
Indexation	125	1,718	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,843
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provided during the year	977	100,326	-	-	-	-	-	-	101,303
At 31 March 2020	<b>52,323</b>	<b>685,106</b>							<b>737,429</b>

## 6.1 (continued) Intangible Assets – year ended 31 March 2020

### Info to follow from BSO

	Software Licences	Information Technology	Websites	Development Expenditure	Licences, Trademarks & Artistic Originals	Patents	Goodwill	Payments on Account & Assets Under Construction	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Carrying Amount</b> At 31 March 2020	7,698	411,428	-	-	-	-	-	1	419,127
At 31 March 2019	755	415,779	-	-	-	-	-	7,955	424,489

### Asset financing

Owned	7,698	411,428	-	-	-	-	-	1	419,127
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Carrying Amount</b> At 31 March 2020	7,698	411,428	-	-	-	-	-	1	419,127

Any fall in value through negative indexation or revaluation is shown as impairment.  
The fair value of assets funded from the following sources during the year was:

	2020	2019
	£	£
Donations	-	-
Government Grant	-	-
Lottery Funding	-	-

## NOTE 6: INTANGIBLE ASSETS

### 6.2 Intangible Assets – year ended 31 March 2019

	Software Licences	Information Technology	Websites	Development Expenditure	Licences, Trademarks & Artistic Originals	Patents	Goodwill	Payments on Account & Assets Under Construction	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>									
At 1 April 2018	51,571	980,603	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,032,174
Indexation	405	8,238	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,643
Additions	-	10,000	-	-	-	-	-	7,955	17,955
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2019	<b>51,976</b>	<b>998,841</b>	-	-	-	-	-	<b>7,955</b>	<b>1,058,772</b>
<b>Amortisation</b>									
At 1 April 2018	43,467	434,592	-	-	-	-	-	-	478,059
Indexation	391	4,701	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,092
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provided during the year	7,363	143,769	-	-	-	-	-	-	151,132
At 31 March 2019	<b>51,221</b>	<b>583,062</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>634,283</b>

## 6.2 (continued) Intangible Assets – year ended 31 March 2019

	Software Licences	Information Technology	Websites	Development Expenditure	Licences, Trademarks & Artistic Originals	Patents	Goodwill	Payments on Account & Assets Under Construction	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Carrying Amount</b> At 31 March 2019	755	415,779	-	-	-	-	-	7,955	424,489
At 1 April 2018	8,104	546,011	-	-	-	-	-	-	554,115

### Asset financing

Owned	755	415,779	-	-	-	-	-	7,955	424,489
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Carrying Amount</b> At 31 March 2019	755	415,779	-	-	-	-	-	7,955	424,489

### Asset financing

Owned	8,104	546,011	-	-	-	-	-	-	554,115
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Carrying Amount</b> At 1 April 2018	8,104	546,011	-	-	-	-	-	-	554,115

**NOTE 7: FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

As the cash requirements of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council are met through Grant-in-Aid provided by the Department of Health, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body.

The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's expected purchase and usage requirements and the Northern Ireland Social Care Council is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

**NOTE 8: INVESTMENTS AND LOANS**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no investments or loans at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

**NOTE 9: IMPAIRMENTS**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no impairments at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

**NOTE 10: NON-CURRENT ASSETS CLASSIFIED AS HELD FOR SALE**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not hold any assets classified as held for sale at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

**NOTE 11: INVENTORIES**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not hold any goods for resale at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

## NOTE 12: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance at 1 <sup>st</sup> April	74,103	50,642
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	195,908	23,461
<b>Balance at 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>	<b>270,011</b>	<b>74,103</b>

<b>The following balances at 31 March were held at</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Commercial Banks and cash in hand	270,011	74,103
<b>Balance at 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>	<b>270,011</b>	<b>74,103</b>

The bank account is operated by Business Services Organisation (BSO) on behalf of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. The account is in the legal name of the BSO.

**NOTE 13: TRADE RECEIVABLES, FINANCIAL AND OTHER ASSETS**

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Trade receivables	33,755	292,753
Deposits and advances	-	-
VAT receivable	-	-
Other receivables – not relating to fixed assets	-	-
Other receivables – relating to property, plant and equipment	-	-
Other receivables – relating to intangibles	-	-
<b>Trade and other receivables</b>	<u>33,755</u>	<u>292,753</u>
Prepayments	47,158	60,715
Accrued income	-	-
Current part of PFI and other service concession arrangements prepayment	-	-
<b>Other current assets</b>	<u>47,158</u>	<u>60,715</u>
Carbon reduction commitment	-	-
<b>Intangible current assets</b>	<u>47,158</u>	<u>60,715</u>
<b>Amounts falling due after more than one year</b>		
Trade receivables	-	-
Deposits and advances	-	-
Other receivables	-	-
<b>Trade and other receivables</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Prepayments and accrued income	-	-
<b>Other current assets falling due after more than one year</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>TOTAL TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES</b>	<u>33,755</u>	<u>292,753</u>
<b>TOTAL OTHER CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>47,158</u>	<u>60,715</u>
<b>TOTAL INTANGIBLE CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>TOTAL RECEIVABLES AND OTHER CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>80,913</u>	<u>353,468</u>

The balances are net of a provision for bad debts of £Nil (2018/19: £Nil)

## NOTE 14: TRADE PAYABLES AND OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES

	2020	2019
	£	£
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Other taxation and social security	-	-
Bank overdraft	-	-
VAT payable	-	-
Trade capital payables – property, plant and equipment	-	-
Trade capital payables – intangibles	-	-
Trade revenue payables	34,830	19,405
Payroll payables	116,665	73,187
Clinical Negligence payables	-	-
RPA payables	-	-
BSO payables	212	208
Other payables	91,555	-
Accruals	596,140	695,879
Accruals– relating to property, plant and equipment	17,425	-
Accruals – relating to intangibles	-	10,000
Deferred income	17,160	21,055
<b>Trade and other payables</b>	<b>873,987</b>	<b>819,734</b>
Current part of finance leases	-	-
Current part of long term loans	-	-
Current part of imputed finance lease element of PFI and other service concession arrangements	-	-
<b>Other current liabilities</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Carbon reduction commitment	-	-
<b>Intangible current liabilities</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payables falling due within one year</b>	<b>873,987</b>	<b>819,734</b>
<b>Amounts falling due after more than one year</b>		
Other payables, accruals and deferred income	-	-
Trade and other payables	-	-
Clinical Negligence payables	-	-
Finance leases	-	-
Current part of imputed finance lease element of PFI and other service concession arrangements	-	-
Long term loans	-	-
<b>Total non current other payables</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL TRADE PAYABLES AND OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>873,987</b>	<b>819,734</b>

## NOTE 15: PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES AND CHARGES

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no provisions for liabilities and charges at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

## NOTE 16: CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no capital commitments at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

## NOTE 17: COMMITMENTS UNDER LEASES

### 17.1 Operating Leases

Total future minimum lease payments under operating leases are given in the table below for each of the following periods.

	2020 £	2019 £
<b>Obligations under operating leases comprise</b>		
<b>Land</b>		
Not later than 1 year	-	-
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	-	-
Later than 5 years	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
<b>Buildings</b>		
Not later than one year	314,400	261,780
Later than one year but not later than five years	445,398	370,855
Later than five years	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>759,798</b>	<b>632,635</b>
<b>Other</b>		
Not later than 1 year	-	-
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	-	-
Later than 5 years	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-

### 17.2 Finance Leases

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no finance leases at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

### 17.3 Operating Leases

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not issue any operating leases at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

## **NOTE 18: COMMITMENTS UNDER PFI AND OTHER SERVICE CONCESSION ARRANGEMENT CONTRACTS**

### **18.1 Off balance sheet PFI and other service concession arrangement schemes**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no commitments under PFI and other concession arrangement contracts at 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

### **18.2 On balance sheet (SoFP) PFI schemes**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no on balance sheet (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements schemes at 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

## **NOTE 19: OTHER FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not have any other financial commitments at 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

## **NOTE 20: CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND FINANCIAL GUARANTEES, INDEMNITIES AND LETTERS OF COMFORT**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not have any quantifiable contingent liabilities at 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

### **20.1 Financial guarantees, indemnities and letters of comfort**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not have any financial guarantees, indemnities and letters of comfort at 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019.

## **NOTE 21: RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is an arm's length body of the Department of Health and as such the Department is a related party with which the Northern Ireland Social Care Council has had various material transactions during the year.

In addition there were material transactions throughout the year with the Business Services Organisation who are a related party by virtue of being an arms length body with the Department of Health.

During the year, none of the Board members, members of the key management staff or other related parties has undertaken any material transactions with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

## **NOTE 22: THIRD PARTY ASSETS**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council held no assets at either 31 March 2020 or 31 March 2019 belonging to third parties.

## NOTE 23: Financial Performance Targets

### 23.1 Revenue Resource Limit

The Northern Ireland Social Council is given a Revenue Resource Limit which it is not permitted to overspend.

The Revenue Resource Limit for the Northern Ireland Social Care Council is calculated as follows:

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
DoH (excludes non cash)	2,880,894	2,578,579
Other Government Department (HSCB)	-	11,400
Non cash RRL (from DHSSPS)	141,816	187,572
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total agreed RRL</b>	<b>3,022,710</b>	<b>2,777,551</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Adjustment for income received re Donations / Government grant / Lottery funding for non current assets	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total Revenue Resource Limit to Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure</b>	<b>3,022,710</b>	<b>2,777,551</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>

### 23.2 Capital Resource Limit

The Northern Ireland Social Council is given a Capital Resource Limit which it is not permitted to overspend.

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Gross capital expenditure by the Social Care Council	157,781	40,952
(Receipts from sales of fixed assets)	-	-
Net capital expenditure	157,781	40,952
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Capital Resource Limit	159,388	41,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Overspend/(Underspend) against CRL	(1,607)	(48)
	<hr/>	<hr/>

### 23.3 Financial Performance Targets

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is required to ensure that it breaks even on an annual basis by containing its surplus to within 0.25% of RRL or £20,000, whichever is greater.

	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Net Expenditure	(3,013,934)	(2,769,481)
RRL	3,022,710	2,777,551
Surplus/(Deficit) against RRL	8,776	8,070
Break Even cumulative position (opening)	141,207	133,137
Break Even Cumulative position (closing)	<b>149,983</b>	<b>141,207</b>

#### Materiality Test:

	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Break Even in year position as % of RRL	<u>0.29%</u>	<u>0.29%</u>
Break Even cumulative position as % of RRL	<u>4.96%</u>	<u>5.08%</u>

#### NOTE 24: EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

There are no post balance sheet events having material effect on the accounts.

#### Date of authorisation for issue

The Accounting Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 10 July 2020

# Northern Ireland Social Care Council

## The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Northern Ireland Assembly

### Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council for the year ended 31 March 2020 under the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001. The financial statements comprise: the Statements of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Financial Position, Cash Flows, Changes in Taxpayers' Equity; and the related notes including significant accounting policies. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Accountability Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

In my opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's affairs as at 31 March 2020 and of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's net expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 and Department of Health directions issued thereunder.

### Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

### Basis of opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs) and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Entities in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of this certificate. My staff and I are independent of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2016, and have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinions.

### Conclusions relating to going concern

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs(UK) require me to report to you where:

- the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Northern Ireland Social Care Council have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis.

### Other Information

The Council and the Accounting Officer are responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements, the parts of the Accountability Report described in the report as having been audited, and my audit certificate and report. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I

conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Opinion on other matters**

In my opinion:

- the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with Department of Health directions made under the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001; and
- the information given in the Performance Report and Accountability Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

### **Responsibilities of the Council and Accounting Officer for the financial statements**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer Responsibilities, the Council and the Accounting Officer are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

My objectives are to obtain evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of my certificate.

In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

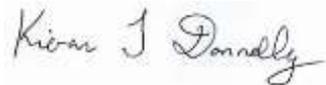
### **Matters on which I report by exception**

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with the Department of Finance's guidance.

### **Report**

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.



*KJ Donnelly*  
*Comptroller and Auditor General*  
*Northern Ireland Audit Office*  
*106 University Street*  
*Belfast BT7 1EU*

10 July 2020

# Northern Ireland Social Care Council Board Membership – 2019-2020



*Chair, Paul Martin*



*Neil Bodger*



*Noelle Barton*



*Sarah Browne*



*Roslyn Dougherty*



*Gerard Guckian*



*David Hayes*



*Christine Hunter*



*Brenda Maitland*



*Jacqueline McGarvey*



*Catherine McPhillips*



*Anne O'Reilly*



*Lee Wilson*

# Northern Ireland Social Care Council Organisational Chart at 31 March 2020



## Organisation Structure at 31 March 2020



**01 July 2020**  
[www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info)

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