

Northern Ireland



Social Care Council  
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**Social Care Council Board Meeting  
Confirmed Minutes**

**10.00a.m on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**Via Zoom videoconference**

**Present:**

Paul Martin (CHAIR)  
Sarah Browne, Board Member  
Roslyn Dougherty, Board Member  
Gerard Guckian, Board Member  
David Hayes, Board Member  
Brenda Maitland, Board Member  
Jacqueline McGarvey, Board Member  
Catherine McPhillips, Board Member  
Anne O'Reilly, Board Member from 11:45a.m  
Lee Wilson, Board Member

**In Attendance:**

Patricia Higgins, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Social Care Council  
Catherine Maguire, Interim Head of Workforce Development, Social Care Council  
Declan McAllister, Dir. of Registration and Corporate Services, Social Care Council  
Helen McVicker, Head of Fitness to Practise, Social Care Council  
Marian O'Rourke, Interim Director of Regulation & Standards, Social Care Council  
Sandra Stranaghan, Head of Business Services, Social Care Council  
Claire Trainor, Head of Strategic Communications & Engagement, Social Care Council  
Maureen Martin, Secretariat, Social Care Council

**Observer(s):**

Deirdre Allison, Board Apprentice  
Anne Mallon, Co Deputy Chair, Participation Partnership  
Gerard McWilliams, Co Deputy Chair, Participation Partnership

**Apologies:**

Carolyn Ewart, BASW (N.I.)  
Roberta Magee, Chair of the Social Care Council Registrants' Forum

## Formalities

Item	Agenda	Action
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting via Zoom videoconference facilities.	
1.2	There were no apologies received for note.	
1.3	The Chair welcomed the Vice Chairs of the Participation Partnership to the Board meeting and thanked them and all involved for their contribution to the Participation Partnership video, <i>A voice for Service Users and Carers</i> .	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
2.1	A Declaration of Interest was received from Jacqui McGarvey who noted her appointment as a Board member of RQIA.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Participation Partnership video – A Voice for Service Users and Carers</b>	
3.1	<p>The Participation Partnership Chair introduced the video - <i>A Voice for Service Users and Carers</i> and explained the video was one of a number of resources and events to raise the profile of the group to promote membership and highlight some of the work that is being delivered regularly.</p> <p>It was noted that members of the Participation Partnership have contributed to the development of many social care council resources and activities including lunchtime seminars, the Review of the Degree in Social Work and contribute to digital learning resources content and accessibility.</p> <p>A pilot event is scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> June and a larger event is being planned for September/October. Invitations will be issued to Participation Partnership members' network links and cascaded as appropriate. The Communications team will share clips of the video across social media to showcase the co-design and co-production approach within the group to encourage engagement.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all those involved in the production of the video.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Board Minutes</b>	
4.1	<i>Minutes of the previous Board Meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022</i>	
4.1.1	<b>The Board approved the minutes of the Board meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> February as a true and accurate record.</b>	
4.2.	<i>Action List</i>	
4.2.1	See Annex I for action list review, and new actions arising out of the meeting of 27 <sup>th</sup> April 2022 (and previous meetings).	
<b>Business Briefings</b>		
<b>5.</b>	<b>Chair's Business</b>	

5.1	<p>The Chair reported the following activity since the last meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An advertisement has been placed for the Chief Executive recruitment exercise. Shortlisting and interview dates have been scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> May respectively. An announcement on the outcome of the recruitment exercise and appointment of the Chief Executive is expected week commencing 9<sup>th</sup> May.</li> <li>• Peter May has been confirmed as Permanent Secretary, Department of Health and his predecessor, Richard Pengelly, has been appointed as Permanent Secretary, Department of Justice.</li> <li>• Skills Audit is due for completion by June 2022. A paper will be shared with Board members for consideration in advance of the Board Strategic session on 18<sup>th</sup> May.</li> <li>• Attended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ NICON Reset meeting - review of health and social care operations during pandemic and lessons learned. Baroness Heather Hallett has been appointed to oversee the UK review of COVID-19 public enquiry. The terms of reference are in the process of being defined and will be shared for Board input once specified. It is likely that direct evidence will not take place until January 2023.</li> <li>➤ Participation Partnership meeting – the focus of the meeting was on the review of Adult Social Care and it was a useful opportunity to hear the views of service users and carers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Interim Chief Executive's Report – Paper B for information</b>	
6.1	<p>The Interim Chief Executive advised that the report had been provided for information and reflected key activity and engagement undertaken during the period of 1<sup>st</sup> February – 15<sup>th</sup> April 2022.</p> <p>The ICEO invited the Board Apprentice to address the Board to seek approval for circulation of an electronic Communications Preference questionnaire and score card. The test had been part of a recent training program attended by the Board Apprentice and may be a useful development tool to support the Board Self-Assessment around Board composition and communications style. It was proposed that Board members complete and return the</p>	

	<p>questionnaire and feedback will be presented at the May Board Strategic session.</p> <p><b><i>The Board approved the request to share the Communications Preference questionnaire for completion and return by the required deadline date.</i></b></p>	
6.2	<p>The ICEO highlighted the following key matters for note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ UK Review of COVID-19 – the Director of Registration &amp; Corporate Services has been nominated to attend the departmental stakeholder group in response to a letter from the Permanent Secretary requesting ALB representation.</li> <li>➤ James House – a provisional moving date of 3<sup>rd</sup> October has been agreed for lease end at 31 August and office preparations to vacate are underway. September will be a period of remote working and alternative office space will be sought for this period for those who require it.</li> <li>➤ There are two outstanding matters in relation to the office lease and the outcome of negotiations is awaited.</li> <li>➤ Following staff consultation, the Agile Working pilot will commence from 3<sup>rd</sup> May. The pilot requires a minimum of one day office attendance per week and staff are requested to clear their office space. The pilot will be reviewed at the end of a 6-week implementation period and the Agile Working Policy will be brought to the June Board meeting for endorsement.</li> <li>➤ Recruitment exercises are underway to consolidate vacant positions covered by agency staff during the pandemic.</li> <li>➤ Elizabeth Moore is now in post as Information Analytics and Intelligence Officer. This is a new post provided by additional resource from the Department of Health to help build a data analytics resource in the organisation.</li> <li>➤ Meetings are progressing with Partnerships on the Reform of Adult Social Care consultation. A response will be prepared for presentation at the Board Strategic session for consideration in advance of the submission date on 1<sup>st</sup> June.</li> <li>➤ Engaged in the Fair Work Forum – an independent chair is to be sought and the Forum is currently chaired by the Chief Social Work Officer.</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that a full report on the logistics of the move to James House and arrangements for post. telephony and licence agreement will be presented to at the June Board meeting.</p> <p><b><i>The Board noted the Interim Chief Executive’s Report</i></b></p>	

## Subcommittee Minutes

7.1	<p><i>Unconfirmed minutes of PiP Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> February 22 - Paper C for note</i></p>	
7.1.1	<p>The Committee Chair gave a summary of key matters arising from meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There have been a number of changes in representation from participant organisations. Nominations were made from members which indicates a positive level of interest in the Partnership.</li> <li>➤ Significant discussion took place around recruitment and retention and the development of primary care and multi-disciplinary teams</li> <li>➤ Wide ranging discussion took place around the Reform of Adult Social Care and the significant impact of the outcomes of the consultation on the workforce</li> <li>➤ Noted the Social Care Council as a repository of research papers in social work and social care that could be shared externally</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Decision: The Board noted the PiP Committee Minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022</i></b></p>	
7.2	<p><i>Unconfirmed minutes of Leaders in Social care Partnership 31<sup>st</sup> March 22 - Paper for note</i></p>	
7.2.1	<p>The Committee Chair noted the key matters from the meeting of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 which considered the consultation on the Reform of Adult Social Care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>;</li> <li>➤ Strategic use of intelligence and sense making is vital</li> <li>➤ The focus of the meeting was on the Reform of Adult Social Care consultation</li> <li>➤ Consideration is needed on how the Social Care Council can support learning and training needs for self-directed support and direct payments unregulated workforce.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Decision: The Board noted the unconfirmed minutes of the Leaders in Social Care minutes of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.</i></b></p>	
7.3	<p><i>Registrants' Forum unconfirmed minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022 – Paper D for note</i></p>	
7.3.1	<p>In the absence of the Committee Chair, the Director of Regulation &amp; Standards gave a summary of key matters discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Extraordinary meeting was convened on 14<sup>th</sup> April to consider the response to the Reform of Adult Social Care and significant discussion took place on workforce issues and the crisis around recruitment and retention.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BASW have been funded for 18 months to provide a professional support service to social workers and free coaching is also available for non-members.</li> <li>• Promotion and how to support and consolidate engagement with registrants through the forum and other platforms.</li> <li>• Consideration is needed on how to take the forum forward as the Committee Chair is retiring in May. The Interim Director of Regulation and Standards confirmed that individual conversations with members will be arranged to explore the best way forward in terms of composition and purpose.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision: The Board noted the Registrants' Forum unconfirmed minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022.</b></p>	
7.4	<i>Participation Partnership unconfirmed minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022 – Paper E for note</i>	
7.4.1	<p>The Chair of the Participation Partnership gave a summary of key matters discussed at the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted the meeting was first for the newly appointed vice Chairs and was attended by the Board Chair as part of engagement with the Partnerships.</li> <li>• Sarah Browne has been appointed as the incoming Chair and joined for the Extraordinary meeting on the Reform of Adult Social Care consultation and will attend the June meeting.</li> <li>• Debate on the Reform of Adult Social Care included issues raised around Direct Payments, workforce support and relationship building between the Health &amp; Social Care Trusts and services users and carers.</li> <li>• Discussion on the composition of the Board and concerns raised on the short-term loss of a lay representative</li> <li>• Positive feedback from members on the experience of technology to allow meeting attendance.</li> <li>• Incoming Chair and Vice Chair to report at the June Board meeting in the absence of the Committee Chair.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision: The Board noted the Participation Partnership unconfirmed minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022.</b></p>	
<b>Governance</b>		
<b>8.</b>	<b>Draft Annual Report – Paper F for review</b>	
8.1	Members were invited to review and send feedback to the Business Support team over the following week. A draft copy will then be sent to the Northern Ireland Audit office on 13 <sup>th</sup> May for review and the final draft will be presented for approval at the June Board meeting.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Standing Orders Change to Support Committee Recruitment – Paper G for approval</b>	

9.1	<p>The Director of Registration &amp; Corporate Services gave a summary of the paper and sought approval for the amendment to the Panel Committee rules outlined below.</p> <p>Panel Committee Rules are now included within Standing Orders therefore the Board have the authority to approve any updates or amendments.</p> <p>The rule changes for approval are as follows:</p> <p><b>Section B, Paragraph 5 of the Standing Orders sets out as follows:</b></p> <p><i>5.3.7 Committee members shall be appointed for a period not exceeding 4 years and shall be eligible for re-appointment for a further period not exceeding 4 years.</i></p> <p><i>5.4.7 Members of the Registration Committee shall be appointed for a period not exceeding 4 years and shall be eligible for re-appointment for a further period not exceeding 4 years.</i></p> <p>It was noted that the terms ‘Committee member’ and ‘panel member’ refer to same.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was agreed to remove the stipulation of one term of 4 years only and no time limit will be in place. Clarification will be included that this relates only to lay Committee members- <b>ACTION DRCS.</b></p> <p>The PiP Committee Chair noted that a recent attendance at a Fitness to Practise hearing in an observation capacity had reflected a high level of formality, professionalism and integrity shown by all officials involved.</p> <p><b>Decision: The Board approved the proposed change to the Standing Orders to Support Committee Recruitment subject to the recommended changes above.</b></p>	
<b>Business Matters</b>		
<b>10.</b>	<b>Board Self-Assessment Review - Paper H for approval</b>	
10.1	<p>The Director of Registration &amp; Corporate Services reported that the Board Self – Assessment will be finalised by the June Board meeting as part of the sign off of the Annual Report and Governance Statement.</p> <p>The paper provided highlights tracked changes to the Self-Assessment Pro Forma and Action Plan for Board review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Progress made around Chief Executive recruitment exercise</li> <li>➤ Development of a Board induction programme 2022/23</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Board and Departmental Endorsement of the Landscape Review</li> </ul> <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Board membership - revision of arrangements due to the termination of some appointments in 2022/23.</li> <li>➤ Joint work with the Public Appointments Unit around the Board Skills audit.</li> </ul> <p>The Board were invited to review the documents and provide comments or questions to the Director of Registration &amp; Corporate Services or the Head of Business Support over the next week.</p> <p>The following Board comments were noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A gap in financial skill was proposed for addition to the Risk Register due to the termination of a relevant board appointment at the end of August.</li> <li>2. Agenda composition and duration of Board meetings is not sufficient time to allow discussion of key performance and financial papers. The Chair reiterated that officials were requested to raise issues in advance of Board meetings to maximise board time allocation. It was agreed that the Chair and Senior Leadership team would meet to review Board business and agenda composition. A formal proposal will be drafted and circulated for advance comment and approval sought at the June Board meeting. <b>ACTION Chair/SLT</b></li> </ol> <p>Discussion will be held at a future Board Strategic session on the best method of noting appreciation or commenting on a report to the author. It was proposed that exploring the full range of functions on Decision Time may be an option for consideration.</p>	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Draft Business Plan 2022 23- Paper I for approval</b>	
11.1.	<b><i>Decision: The Board approved the Draft Business Plan 2022 23</i></b>	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Finance Performance Report to 31st March 2022 - Paper J for review</b>	
12.1	<p>The Director of Registration &amp; Corporate Services presented the Finance Performance report to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 for approval. No significant issues were identified and it was confirmed that a year-end breakeven position is anticipated.</p> <p>Confirmation has been secured that the 2022/23 RRL amount allocated by the Department of Health will remain the same as the current year's allocation and will include non-recurrent funding identified in the report. An allocation letter on the non-recurrent</p>	



	<p>funding for the work around Adult Social Care Reform is expected and the amount is as yet unknown.</p> <p>The DRCS commended colleagues for the support in managing the non-recurrent funding to enable reaching a break-even position.</p> <p><b><i>Decision: The Board noted the Finance Performance Report to 31st March 2022</i></b></p>	
<b>13.</b>	<b>Quarter 4 Business Performance Report - Paper K for note</b>	
13.1	<p>The Director of Regulation &amp; Standards and the Director of Registration &amp; Corporate Services reviewed the Q.4 Business Performance report and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Activity and progress data given with explanations behind 4 of 11 Fitness to Practise KPIs assessed as amber rating based on external pressures which are being managed;</li> <li>➤ A placement from the Disability Scheme has commenced and permanent recruitment exercises are underway;</li> <li>➤ CBLT bi weekly meetings are continuing;</li> <li>➤ Staff absence target has been maintained with a slight increase over the previous few months which is linked to several longer-term absences;</li> <li>➤ Data Analytics and Intelligence Officer is now in post;</li> <li>➤ 91% of registration applications are processed within target and key improvements implemented around telephony/emails and digital support for registrants;</li> <li>➤ Committee hearings all continue to be delivered remotely within expected time frames;</li> <li>➤ Specification on procurement for a Fitness to Practise Case Management system has been completed and is expected to positively impact Fitness to Practise processes;</li> <li>➤ Promotion of Standards of Fitness to Practise and work is continuing with employers on referral thresholds;</li> <li>➤ 360<sup>0</sup> reviews with committee members have been completed and will assist in improving experience and learning;</li> <li>➤ Report captures the highlights of the extensive range of engagement and events across year;</li> <li>➤ Social Care Managers forum - online event with presentation by keynote speaker, Professor Michael West which will be developed into webinar for wider dissemination;</li> <li>➤ Learning Zone resources for social work and social care will continue to be produced;</li> <li>➤ A resource intensive program allowed £150k of accredited training to be delivered to frontline social care workers;</li> <li>➤ All activity is underpinned by a high level of output and support by the Communications team through a range of promotion and activity/engagement with the Department of</li> </ul>	

	Health, stakeholders and working with partners to provide access to internal and external events.	
	The Board commended all officials involved in the delivery of activity and the production of a detailed and comprehensive report	
	<b><i>Decision: The Board noted the Quarter 4 Business Performance Report</i></b>	
<b>14.</b>	<b>Independent Review of Registration and Action Plan – Paper L for approval</b>	
14.1	<b><i>Decision: The Board noted the Independent Review of Registration and approved the Action Plan</i></b>	
<b>15.</b>	<b>Fee Proposal for International Social Work Applicants – Paper M for approval</b>	
15.1	The Director of registration and Corporate Services sought Board approval for a proposed increase to the fee for International Social Work Applicants. The paper identifies a clear basis for a fee increase to £435 and would align the Social Care Council with counterpart regulators in the U.K.	
	<b><i>Decision: The Board approved the revised fee proposal for International Social Work applicants</i></b>	
<b>Closing Formalities</b>		
<b>16.</b>	<b>Any other Business</b>	
16.1	Decision Time Refresher training has been scheduled for 2. 00p.m on 27 <sup>th</sup> April.	
<b>16.</b>	<b>Dates of next meetings – for information</b>	
16.1	The Board noted the meeting dates.	

Approved by: Paul Martin, Chair

Signature: 

Date of Approval: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022

## **ANNEX 1 - ACTION LIST**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>NEW ACTIONS- 27 April 2022</b>	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>
9.1	<i>Stipulation that Lay Committee members can serve one term of 4 years only to be removed from the Committee Standing Orders and clarification this relates only to lay Committee members</i>	DRCS	Open
10.1	Meeting to be arranged to review Board business and agenda composition. A formal proposal to be drafted and circulated for advance comment and Board approval at June Board meeting	Chair/SLT	Open

## CLOSED ACTIONS

### WEDNESDAY 21ST APRIL 2021

ITEM	ACTION	OWNER	PROGRESS
5.2a	<i>Martina Moore, Director of Organisational Change, DoH to be invited to a future Board meeting</i>	Secretariat	Open- item removed as of 26.04.22

### WEDNESDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2022

ITEM	NEW ACTIONS	OWNER	PROGRESS
14.1a	<i>Action plan to be developed on collective response to RASC Consultation.</i>	SLT	Closed
14.1b	<i>Dates to be canvassed for an initial meeting on a Partnerships' State of the Nation report and additional Board Strategic sessions.</i>	Secretariat	Completed

### Wednesday 8th December 2021

ITEM	ACTIONS	OWNER	PROGRESS
3.2.4	<i>Consideration to be given to the nature and format of an event for Board Members to attend with the staff of the Social Care Council next year and feedback to be submitted to the Head of Business Support in January 2022.</i>	Board Members/ Head of Business Support	Closed
8.1.1	<i>Letter to be sent to the Permanent Secretary to request permission to review or advertise the Chief Executive position</i>		

### Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

ITEM	ACTION	OWNER	PROGRESS
6.1a	<i>A Board session to focus solely on the Mental Capacity Act will be arranged</i>	Secretariat	Closed
6.1b	<i>The ICEO will write to the Trust and providers to inform them of the MoU with RQIA and the work that is being done once the MoU is finalised.</i>	ICEO	Closed

### Wednesday 21<sup>ST</sup> April 2021

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>
11.1	<i>Proposal paper on the Northern Ireland Social Work Degree Partnership reporting to be brought back to the Board</i>	<i>Interim Chief Executive</i>	<i>Completed</i>

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>
7.2.1	<i>Comparative Analysis Report on Social Care registrants remaining on register post-COVID to be brought to a future Board meeting</i>	<i>DRCS</i>	<i>Completed</i>