

Northern Ireland



Social Care Council
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**Social Care Council Board Meeting
Confirmed Minutes
10.00a.m on Wednesday 9th September 2020
Via Zoom videoconference**

Present:

Paul Martin (CHAIR)
Sarah Browne, Board Member
Roslyn Dougherty, Board Member
Gerard Guckian, Board Member
David Hayes, Board Member
Christine Hunter, Board Member
Brenda Maitland, Board Member
Jacqueline McGarvey, Board Member
Catherine McPhillips, Board Member
Lee Wilson, Board Member

In Attendance:

Patricia Higgins, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Social Care Council
Sean Holland, Chief Social Work Officer, DOH (CSWO), for item 2.1 only
Lorraine Conlon, Government Liaison Officer, DOH, for items up to 2.5
Declan McAllister, Dir. of Registration and Corporate Services, Social Care Council
Maureen Martin, Secretariat, Social Care Council
Marian O'Rourke, Interim Director of Regulation & Standards

Observer(s):

Karen Diamond, Board Apprentice
Kate Harrison, Board Apprentice

Apologies:

Noelle Barton, Board Member
Carolyn Ewart, BASW (N.I)
Roberta Magee, Chair of the Social Care Council Registrants' Forum
Anne O'Reilly, Board Member
Sandra Stranaghan, Policy & Operations Manager

| Item | Agenda | Action |
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| 1. | Welcome and Apologies | |
| 1.1 | <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting via Zoom videoconference facilities and introduced the Board Apprentice 2020/21 placement, Karen Diamond to her first Board meeting. During a short interval in the report from the Chief Social Work Officer, KD thanked members for the opportunity and advised that her background is in Music Therapy and she had joined the Board Apprentice scheme to develop her skills and knowledge base.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the CSWO for attending the Board meeting particularly in light of current pressures. It had been agreed at the last Board meeting to invite the CSWO to attend to deliver an update on Adult Social Care and Family and Child care services.</p> | |
| 1.2 | <p>Apologies were noted from Board members Anne O'Reilly and Noelle Barton, Roberta Magee, Chair of the Social Care Council Registrants' Forum Carolyn Ewart, BASW (N.I) and Sandra Stranaghan, Policy & Operations Manager.</p> | |
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| 2. | Discussion with Sean Holland - Chief Social Work Officer, Department of Health | |
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| 2.1 | <p>The CSWO thanked the Chair for the invitation to the Board meeting to present information on how Adult Social Care and Family & Child Care services have been managed during the first phase of Covid-19 and to reflect on the Landscape Review.</p> <p>The CSWO confirmed that the Permanent Secretary has formally approved the Fitness to Practise (FtP) business case and the recurrent funding of £166k for this financial year. The Chair thanked the CSWO and GLO for their efforts in securing the funding.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that to conclude discussions, the meeting proceeds to item 10 following reflections from the CSWO on the Landscape Review.</p> <p><u>Family & Child Care Services update:</u></p> <p>The CSWO reported that a profile on the differentiation of the impact of COVID-19 across services had been sought and the following noted:</p> <p>Although lot of work has been undertaken to ensure services were maintained, COVID has had the least negative impact on the provision of Children's Services. Some adjustments were implemented which included suspension of services, a delay to</p> | |

service delivery or a change in the service delivery. As Children's Services operate in the context of a highly regulated environment it was necessary to make emergency legislative change to enable the necessary adjustments to services. The Children's Social Care (Coronavirus) (Temporary Modification of Children's Social Care) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 came into effect on 7th May 2020. The adjustments outlined were caused by a dual impact of COVID; a reduction in capacity due to staff who fell ill or were unavailable to work due to self-isolation and staff who were redeployed to support other services.

The following key activities were reported:

- 1% of planned visits for Looked after Children were deferred (23 visits) which is a significant continuation of services in the circumstances. 56% of visits were completed on a face to face basis and 44% completed remotely;
- An extended timescale for reviews was implemented however 59% of reviews were completed within normal timescales and remainder were not significantly delayed;
- 15 children only remained in emergency foster placements for an extended period of time;
- There was more impact on the annual reviews of foster carers and a risk based approach was taken with Looked After Children and cases under child protection investigation prioritised;
- 16.5 % increase in referrals in August from last year;
- 2.3 % increase of children in care at the end of September and 103 more children on the Child Protection register. It was noted that although this seems like a significant increase it is a small number in relation to the overall number of children and proper data analysis is needed;
- 16.5% increase on demand on services week ending 10th August against the same reporting period last year.
- 40% increase in weekly referrals from start of referral to week ending 10 August.

The CSWO noted that the activity outlined was taking place under increased service pressure and while capacity to deliver services was maintained more data analysis is required on the implications of the pressures. As a consequence to the introduction of the emergency legislation, more frequent performance monitoring was requested, as a safeguard, by the Children's Commissioner and the Health Committee. Weekly monitoring identified surges in children's social care referrals particularly on the run up to 12th July and the August Bank Holiday. As this more detailed data is normally subsumed in longer reporting periods it was noted that this granularity was very useful to identify spikes in service demands. It is expected that there will be a broad return to business as usual in Children's Services by the end of September

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| | depending on pandemic developments over the next few weeks. | |
| 2.2 | <p><u>Adult Social Care Services update:</u></p> <p>The CSWO stated that the delivery of Adult Social Care services was more challenging due to the volume of service users as a significant proportion of the population use the services.</p> <p>It was deemed reasonable to have concerns as to how the acute sector would manage with the additional pandemic pressures as it was already operating with narrow margins caused by austerity and increasing demand over previous years, however planning and resilience measures for social care was also undertaken.</p> <p>Global information confirmed that the impact of COVID on older people was more severe with a higher likelihood of co-morbidity. Testing was carried out by the DOH and it was agreed, following engagement with providers and trade unions, that the possibility of community transmission in care homes could not be totally eliminated. Precautions were implemented to minimise the risk however the care home ‘ring of steel’ approach was not a viable option.</p> <p>To provide financial stability to third party providers during disruption of funding streams, the Department mandated that normal contract arrangements with domiciliary care and residential home providers were maintained to ensure that payments did not dip below 80%. As many service users did not want domiciliary care staff in their homes due to the potential risk factor, flexibility was given on how these visits were discharged in order to still qualify for payments. Funding of £15 million was set aside to cover the following additional costs incurred by providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased cleaning ➤ Purchase of additional equipment e.g. oxygen saturation monitors and thermometers ➤ Installation of Perspex screens ➤ Installation of broadband and provision of tablets to facilitate family contact ➤ Sick pay for staff members who had to self-isolate or who were sick and not covered by independent sector employer <p>The first set of guidance, which replicated Public Health England guidance, was issued in mid – March. As the guidance has been developed this has become more specific to Northern Ireland with various versions available for each sector.</p> <p>As one of the ways to reduce footfall in care homes, inspections were suspended and the Regulation & Quality Improvement</p> | |

Authority (RQIA) was repurposed as a support organisation for care homes to ensure they received vital information quickly and accurately. RQIA also provided the Department with daily updates from care homes self-assessment returns on outbreaks and RAG status on the number of staff available and the accessible level of PPE.

At an early stage, the Department instructed Chief Executives of the Health & Social Care Trusts that care homes in their area were to be considered as integral divisions of the organisation with support provided particularly around staff capacity issues and PPE. This integration approach was specific to Northern Ireland and resulted in a significant volume of PPE and staff hours being supplied to independent sector care homes without transaction or a contract being in place.

The Social Care Council was integral in the provision of training/guidance on the use of PPE and infection control and the Trust provided support on fit testing for PPE. The position on testing evolved based on advice from the Scientific Advisory Group and Chief Medical Officer and the policy changes as a result of testing and the increased understanding of asymptomatic transmission. The current position in Northern Ireland is that all care home staff are tested every 14 days and all care home residents tested every 28 days.

The CSWO reflected that there had been very positive feedback to the Health Minister from the independent sector for the support provided by the Trusts. Lessons learned indicate that building a more partnership based and less contract based relationship between the HSC and independent sector would be more mutually beneficial and productive.

The CSWO highlighted the dedicated response to the pandemic of front line workforce, particularly social care workers who are in one of the higher risk groups and earn minimum wage.

There was a varied experience of engagement with membership groups in response to PPE shortage and prioritisation of their needs.

The CSWO confirmed that the first independent evaluation of Covid-19 has been completed and that data on excess deaths has been chosen as the most reliable indicator of performance. Community transmission in N.I was lower than other parts of the UK and it would indicate some of the actions taken have mitigated the impact.

A Planning and Governance Board has been established and all systems set up in the first phase of the pandemic are currently being checked to ensure they can be started up quickly if

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| | <p>pressures increase. A Surge meeting is scheduled this week as a surge peak is anticipated in December based on the current modelling scenario.</p> <p>The CSWO commended the interim Chief Executive on the leadership demonstrated by the exceptional performance and response of the Social Care Council to improve services during the pandemic. It was recognised that although the Council is not a front line service, it could play a vital role in supporting the Department and the sector. Along with the successful move to remote working, guidance and training material was provided, work was undertaken to shorten the qualifying degree to release Social Work graduates at a pressurised time and models for emergency registration applications and fee suspension implemented.</p> | |
| 2.3 | <p><u>Landscape Review report</u></p> <p>The CSWO confirmed that the Landscape Review had concluded that the organisation is well run and fit for purpose with the potential for a broader role. Based on the exceptional performance of the Council during the pandemic, the Health Minister had attended a productive meeting with the interim Chief Executive and the Chair and is keen for the Council to be engaged with key developments in how to increase the resilience and skill set of the workforce.</p> | |
| 2.4 | <p>The Chair thanked the CSWO for a comprehensive, umbrella view on the impact of the pandemic across Adult Social Care and Children & Family Services and for recognising the contribution of the Interim Chief Executive and the organisation in assisting the Department in discharging its responsibilities during a difficult period.</p> <p>The Chair invited questions from members and the following key responses were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Members and SLT were appreciative of the comprehensive and frank insight from the CSWO and of the positive reflection on the performance of the Council; ➤ Members thanked the CSWO for the work in securing funding for the Fitness to Practise business case; ➤ The importance of a policy change to a partnership approach to commissioning with providers was reflected at a recent Procurement Board meeting; ➤ The report reflected that engagement had taken place with only one member of the Participation Partnership and assurance is needed to ensure that service users and carers are involved in planning the way forward. <p>On behalf of the Board and Senior Leadership team, the Chair thanked the CSWO and invited him to attend the Board meeting in December.</p> | |

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| | <p>The CSWO left the meeting at 11.30a.m.</p> | |
| <p>2.5</p> | <p><u>Board review of Landscape Review Report</u></p> <p>The Chair advised that Landscape Review report item would be brought forward on the agenda to follow on from the presentation by the CSWO.</p> <p>The interim Chief Executive advised that the Senior Leadership team had provided the Board with a summary paper of the Landscape Review report.</p> <p>The overriding view of SLT is that the report is very positive and endorses the work of the Council over the last number of years particularly on building relationships and partnership working.</p> <p>It was noted that the report focuses more strongly on social care than social work. The DoH Social Work strategy and Council's PiP framework are in place to support the social work workforce, similar supports are not available for social care. The report recognises the challenges facing social care and the role of the Council in supporting the Department to take forward the reform of Adult Social Care and providing workforce data and intelligence to help plan ahead.</p> <p>The interim Chief Executive noted that the report aligns with the ambitions of the Council and it will be important to take a phased approach to moving the recommendations forward. Initial engagement with the Department should be focussed on agreeing a revised Statement of Purpose and the roles, purpose and required resource needed to support the work.</p> <p>The Chair gave members an update on the meeting with the Health Minister, CSWO and Deputy Chief Social Work Officer (DCSWO) and reported that the meeting had been very positive and informal. The Minister was aware of, and appreciative of the work of the Council to support the Department during the pandemic period, as outlined by the interim Chief Executive.</p> <p>The following issues were discussed with the Minister:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of a compact between government and the social care sector that moves away from transactional arrangements and towards partnership working based on the values of openness and transparency. The Minister agreed and noted that other government departments also have a direct interest in social care. 2. Social Care Workforce Strategy - the interim Chief | |

Executive outlined what the Council could contribute in supporting the Department in taking forward a social care workforce strategy. The Minister referenced the importance of an appropriate wage and good terms & conditions as part of a workforce strategy.

3. **Social care recruitment and retention** – improved data and intelligence is required to support social care workforce planning. The development of a career framework is seen as important in building a sustainable workforce.

The Minister was very receptive to receiving a formal proposal from the Council outlining actions to support the Department and the social care reform agenda. Following the meeting, the interim Chief Executive submitted a proposal to support this work.

Since the meeting with the Health Minister, the interim Chief Executive has met with the DCSWO to discuss the priorities identified and the resources required.

The chair invited comments from members and the following were noted:

- important to ensure that resources and capacity are available to deliver on additional work undertaken alongside core responsibilities and activities to avoid reputational damage;
- Social Work and Social Care need to have parity – Social Work College of Excellence should remain on the horizon for development. The Chair advised that the Minister was pleased to know that the Council had approved the Open University Degree in Social in Northern Ireland;
- Prioritisation of recommendations in the Landscape Review is needed to ensure resources are available to deliver;
- Need to build on the strengths of the organisation around data and intelligence gathering, workforce development for social care and supporting relationships/partnerships;
- Noted the balance achieved by the interim Chief Executive in the letter issued to the DoH between challenge and implications of lack of FtP resources;
- Noted the crossover of recommendations from Landscape Review report and proposals discussed with the Health Minister;
- The Council should be facilitators for the sector with the DoH to help take forward the social care reform agenda;
- The lower representation of social care within the Board membership was noted. The DRCS confirmed that the Standing Orders enable co-option for a period of time. There is currently a gap in membership which will be recruited for in due course. Part of the overarching

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| | <p>recommendation of the report is for the DoH to review the skillset and gaps in the Board. It was noted that the Registrants' Forum membership could be reviewed to strengthen the social care voice in the partnership which would help in the interim;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More understanding needed on the role of RQIA and the relationship with the Council. The Chair confirmed that an offer of engagement has been extended to the new interim Chief Executive of RQIA and further discussion with the RQIA interim Chair and this will be formally progressed once the RQIA Board is back in place. <p>The Landscape Review report has been provided for comment and feedback from members. It was formally agreed that an additional one item Board Strategic session would be scheduled to discuss the report's recommendations in detail to provide a considered response to the Department.</p> <p>It was confirmed that some points in the summary report will be reflected in the response to the DoH on the Landscape Review.</p> <p>The DRCS highlighted that, as with other U.K regulators, a departmental directive to give responsibility to the Council to collect social care data and intelligence would encourage collaboration and sharing of data across a range of contributors.</p> <p><i>Action – An additional one item Board Strategic session on the Landscape Review report to be arranged for September/early October</i></p> <p>The GLO left the meeting at 12.25p.m</p> | Secretariat |
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| 3. | Declarations of Interest | |
| 3.1 | None to note. | |
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| 4. | Chair's Business | |
| 4.1 | <p>The Chair provided an update on engagement undertaken since the last Board meeting. The Chair and Chief Executive had jointly attended the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting with the Health Minister on 22nd July; • meeting with Patricia Donnelly regarding Social Care Governance and the development of Non-Executive Director guidance. The Chair thanked all members who assisted with the content and collation of the guidance document. • introductory meeting with Fiona Murphy, newly appointed UK & Ireland Partnership Senior Advisor ,Skills for Care & Development; | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> introductory meeting with Carolyn Ewart and Orlaith McGibbon, newly appointed Chair of BASW (N.I). <p>The Chair attended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 virtual NICON meetings; A virtual Professional in Practice Awards ceremony was hosted by the Social Care Council on 3rd August. The Chair formally recorded thanks to all those involved with the arrangements for the event. | |
| 5. | Interim Chief Executive's Report | |
| 5.1 | <i>Interim Chief Executive's Report for mid-June – 31st August 2020 - Paper A for information</i> | |
| 5.1.1 | <p>The Interim Chief Executive gave a brief overview of the report which outlines key activity undertaken for the period mid-June – 31st August 2020 to continue to deliver business remotely and support registrants and stakeholders. The interim Chief Executive noted that parts of the report overlap with the Chair's Business update and with Board updates issued throughout the summer period:</p> <p>Decision: The Board noted the Interim Chief Executive's Report.</p> | |
| 6. | Board Minutes | |
| 6.1 | <i>Minutes of the previous Board Meeting of 24th June 2020 and confidential session - for approval</i> | |
| 6.1.1 | <p>The minutes of the previous Board meeting of 24th June 2020 and confidential session were reviewed and agreed as accurate subject to the following amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correction of spelling of surname of Board member, Roslyn Dougherty in the Board minute attendance list. <p>Decision: The Board approved the minutes of the Board meeting of 24th June 2020 and confidential session subject to the correction above.</p> | |
| 7. | Matters Arising | |
| 7.1 | <p><i>The Chair updated on the following Matters Arising:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the process for Non-Executive Director appraisals 2019/20 has commenced and a date canvas for appraisal meetings with the Chair has been issued to members; Two Board members have self-nominated for the Remuneration Committee; The Chair receives a fortnightly letter from the Health Minister sharing key issues arising from the fortnightly meeting of the central Control and Command group chaired by the Permanent Secretary. The Chair and interim | |

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| | Chief Executive are considering the best communication method to share the updates with members. | |
| 8. | Business Matters | |
| 8.1 | <i>COVID 19 Assurance Report and Business Continuity Update- Paper B presented by DRCS for review</i> | |
| 8.1.1 | <p>The DRCS outlined the additional information and key areas of the report as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 staff volunteered to participate in an Agile Working pilot which was run for a 4 week period in July/August to test the effectiveness of the COVID protocol that had been introduced including sanitisation, social distancing and a one way system; • Feedback collected on the pilot was positive with some documented learning to take forward. However, due to the increase in the community transmission rate of the virus and in consideration of the safety and welfare of staff, the Senior Leadership team has decided not to implement Phase one of the Business Transition Plan at this time. It is intended that a communication will be issued to staff to inform them of this decision and that access to the office will only be permitted for pre-approved key business critical needs; • Staff survey results are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 41% of staff like mix of blended working ✓ 11% would prefer a return to office working ✓ 48% prefer remote working <p>It was agreed that the report should more strongly emphasise that the work of the Council has not been affected or interrupted by the impact of COVID-19 or by the implementation of remote working.</p> <p><i>Decision: The Board noted the COVID 19 Assurance Report and Business Continuity Update, and agreed with the SLT decision not to implement phase 1 of the Transition Plan at this time</i></p> | |
| 8.2 | <i>Resumption of Fee Collection - Paper C presented for information by DRCS</i> | |
| 8.2.1 | <p>The DRCS advised that the report has been presented to the Board to provide assurance that the Fee Collection plan is in place and engagement has now commenced. It was noted that there may be additional fee income if emergency applicants decide to remain on the register after 1st October. Discussion has taken place with the Trade Unions on the collection of fees from 1st October in line with the DoH Interim Fee Deferral policy.</p> <p>A series of fourteen <i>Registration Matters</i> webinars have been planned with nine well attended webinar sessions hosted to date.</p> | |

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| | <p>Feedback is being sought at the webinars on fee collection and the registration system to ensure it is strengthened to support registrants and employers. The importance of fee payment is being highlighted via engagement with employers as there are implications for service delivery if fees are not paid.</p> <p>It was noted that the Department of Health have offered additional resources for the collection of fees, if required.</p> <p>Decision: The Board noted the Resumption of Fee Collection Report</p> | |
| 8.3 | <i>Annual Report Accessible version - Paper D presented for approval by DRCS</i> | |
| 8.3.1 | <p>The DRCS advised that the Participation Partnership have recommended that the Council produce an accessible version of the Annual Report. The DRCS confirmed that comments on the content of the draft accessible version have been returned from some Board and Participation Partnership members, and the report will be finalised at the end of September.</p> <p>A member proposed sharing the draft accessible version with the Registrants Forum.</p> <p>Decision: The Board approved the format for the Annual Report Accessible version</p> | |
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| 9. | Performance Reporting | |
| 9.1 | <i>Financial Performance Report and Contingency Plan- Paper E for approval</i> | |
| 9.1.1 | <p>The DRCS presented the Financial Performance Report and Contingency Plan for review and outlined the key highlights. The report provides the current financial position for income and expenditure up to 31st July. It was noted that the announcement of the approval of the Fitness to Practise business case funding would impact some of the information in the report.</p> <p>The following key information was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overspend position reflects year to date fee income of £108k compared to last year's fee income of £600k; • Saving in non-pay expenditure due to the impact of COVID-19; • Current overspend year end position of £97k. The Financial Contingency information indicates that the sustainability of the Council to deliver services would have been impacted without the availability of one off projects/Transformation income. An overall deficit of £250k plus (approximately 9%) would have been incurred over the last 3 years due to substantial in year efficiency savings on RRL e.g. introduction of digital certification and | |

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| | <p>digital transcription;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay expenditure overspend has increased substantially over the last 3 years due to Pay Awards and an increase in superannuation; • Although breakeven would have been achievable if Fitness to Practise cases remained stable and staff continued to work remotely, the approval of the Fitness to Practise business case funding has now secured sustainability. <p>The DRCS confirmed that the recruitment for a permanent FtP Officer will commence once the allocation letter has been received for the FtP business case funding.</p> <p>In response to queries from members regarding potential year end surplus, it was agreed that the Senior Leadership team will review any projects on hold and additional Board training before March in order to avoid a potential underspend position.</p> <p>A member noted that regardless of COVID, Phase 1 of the Business Transition plan may necessitate capital investment to support staff in remote working.</p> <p><i>Decision: The Board approved the Financial Performance Report and Contingency Plan</i></p> | |
| 9.2 | <i>Business Performance Report April – July 2020 - Paper F for information</i> | |
| 9.2.1 | <p>The interim Director of Regulation & Standards presented an overview of the Business Performance Report April - July with particular focus on activities in June/July and highlighted the following key details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report provides assurance that significant progress is being made across all areas of the business and the impact of the pandemic is being managed effectively with remote working ; • KPIs demonstrate that business has not been negatively affected by remote working and remain on target with the exception of the Finance KPI which has been discussed previously; • Current register of over 48,000 of which approximately 2000 are emergency registrants who came on during the pandemic period. Data analysis on the number of remaining emergency registrants will be completed after the re-introduction of fee collection is completed; • Remote Fitness to Practise hearings are in place and the Council is keeping aligned with good practice with other UK regulators; • Increased funding will assist with the development of priority learning resources for the Learning Zone; | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Echo sessions have been successful and the Council uses a significant range of engagement opportunities with registrants. <p>It was agreed that Fitness to Practise data and performance will be reviewed at a future Board meeting.</p> <p>The Board formally commended all Social Care Council staff for their efforts and exceptional performance in continuing to deliver services across the pandemic period.</p> <p>Decision: The Board noted the Business Performance Report April – July 2020</p> | |
| 10. | Governance | |
| 10.1 | <i>Landscape Review Report- Paper G for information</i> | |
| 10.1.1 | Discussed at item 2 | |
| 10.2 | <i>Information Governance – Data Breach Assurance Report - Paper H for information</i> | |
| 10.2.1 | <p>The DRCS advised that the Data Breach Assurance report had been provided to the Board for update following the completion of the investigation by the Policy and Operations Manager.</p> <p>Silverbear have completed their expert report and were able to replicate how the system interfaced with CRM and confirmed that the sharing of the data was due to a technical compatibility issue. New systems and a direct CRM interface template have been put in place to provide assurance that the breach will not reoccur.</p> <p>Each of the initial endorsers informed about the data breach have been updated on the outcome of the investigation and advised that relevant systems are in place to avoid a recurrence. The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and Sponsor Branch are satisfied that there are no further actions required and all appropriate notifications have been issued.</p> <p>The Policy & Operations Manager will work with BSO Information & Governance service to update relevant policies.</p> <p>The Data Breach Action Plan outlines new internal processes implemented for bulk email issue via CRM system including segregation of duties, testing in advance and receipt of confirmation and approval.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) confirmed that the committee is satisfied with the level of information provided on the data breach and investigation. As part of its information governance remit, an update on the action plan will be provided for the ARAC meeting in October.</p> | |

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| | <p>In response to a query, the DRCS advised that engagement is underway with various Boards and the eHealth team on improvements in technology and security for remote working. A VPN system is in place which is managed directly with HSC technologists but work is ongoing to strengthen remote working and information/data sharing.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Policy & Operations Manager and the DRCS on the comprehensive management of the Data Breach investigation.</p> <p><i>Decision: The Board noted the Information Governance – Data Breach Assurance Report</i></p> | |
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| 11. | Any other Business | |
| 11.1 | The Chair thanked everyone for attending and noted the positive outcome to the Fitness to Practise business case. | |
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| 12. | Dates of next meetings | |
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| 12.1 | <i>Board & Committee Schedule 2020/21 - Paper I for information</i> | |
| 12.1.1 | The Board noted the Board & Committee Schedule 2020/21. | |

Signed by: **Paul Martin** (*Chair, Northern Ireland Social Care Council*)

Date: 14th October 2020

Signature: 

ACTION LIST

Wednesday 9th September

| ITEM | ACTION | OWNER | PROGRESS |
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| 2.5 | An additional one item Board Strategic session on the Landscape Review report to be arranged for September/early October. | Secretariat | Open |

Wednesday 27th May 2020

| ITEM | ACTION | OWNER | PROGRESS |
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| 7.2.1 | Comparative Analysis Report on Social Care registrants remaining on register post-COVID to be brought to a future Board meeting | DRCS | Ongoing |

Wednesday 5th February 2020

| ACTION | OWNER | PROGRESS |
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| Aine Morrison to be invited to next Board meeting to present updates on the Mental Capacity Act. | JA/MM | Deferred |