

Title: Chief Executive's Report

Date: 12th October 2022

Presented by: Patricia Higgins, Chief Executive

ACTION REQUIRED

This Paper is	For Information
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SUMMARY

This report outlines key activity undertaken during the period mid - June to 30th September 2022

BACKGROUND

The report gives an overview of the delivery of business to support registrants and stakeholders.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

None

ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Continued active engagement with all stakeholders to ensure the Social Care Council's business activity reflects the needs of the social work and social care workforces.

RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS AND/OR LINKS HERE

Appendix I - CEO's report

Appendix I

Chief Executives Report

Board Meeting: 12th October 2022

This brief report covers the period mid - June to 30th September 2022.

1. Internal Matters

1.1 James House

We are continuing to work towards our move to James House and now have a confirmed moving in date of 3rd and 4th February 2023. Our licence issues have now been resolved to our satisfaction and the additional revenue financial pressures, highlighted to the Department due to the delay, are now being met.

1.2 Staffing

We gave the Board a commitment at the beginning of the financial year to consolidate our permanent posts and reduce the number of agency staff in place. I am pleased to say we have reduced our agency complement from 14 whole time equivalents (wte's) at April 2022 to 3 wte's at 1st October 2022. As permanent appointments in the registration team take up post this will be further reduced to 1 wte by the end of October.

We have also had some staff changes:

- **Communications and Engagement:** Rita Lewtas has joined us as our new Head of Strategic Communications and Engagement replacing Claire Trainor
- **Fitness to Practise:** Nigel Wilkinson has been appointed as our new Fitness to Practise manager replacing Laura McCullough. Nigel has worked with the Council as a Fitness to Practise Officer and we congratulate Nigel on his promotion. We will now move to fill Nigel's post.
- **Senior Leadership Team:**

I am pleased to report that the Senior Leadership Team has now been consolidated. Marian O'Rourke has been appointed into the permanent post of Director of Regulation and Standards, moving from the interim position. We will now seek to fill Marian's previous post of Head of Workforce Development.

1.3 Leadership Development

Following our successful '*Supporting and Empowering You*' programme which we provided to all staff last year, we are now focussing on developing a programme of learning with all of our managers – from team leaders up to the SLT. Our focus is to build management and leadership capacity within the Council and a culture of compassionate and collective leadership.

1.4 People Plan

We have continued to engage with BSO and the Leadership Centre on the development of a People Plan to support the next Corporate Strategy. We have agreed to consider the following priorities as we develop the plan:

- Career Pathways
- Structural review
- Workforce planning
- Hybrid/Agile working
- Digital enablement

1.5 Awards and Recognition

European Social Services Awards:

I am delighted to report that the Professional in Practise framework has been shortlisted for a European Social Services Award. This is tremendous recognition for our unique CPD framework for social workers. Voting for the awards opens in October and we will be publishing this widely among our registrants and stakeholders. The Permanent Secretary has given his permission for 2 people to attend the award ceremony in November.

Unfortunately, our other submission for our digital Grief and Bereavement resource has not been shortlisted for an award. However, we have been invited to submit the Grief and Bereavement resource proposal for a case study, workshop, or thematic panel discussion at the European Social Services Conference 2023. This is a beneficial platform for learning and we will give this some consideration, both in the context of budget and also the opportunity for wider sharing and knowledge exchange.

Investors in People Awards

We have been shortlisted for the Award for Best Flexible Working Policy. We have worked collaboratively as an organisation to develop our policy – which we are still piloting. This award recognises the process which organisations have engaged in. Thanks to Sandra for submitting for this award. The Award ceremony is also in November.

- 1.6 On 1st October the Social Care Council celebrated its 21st Birthday. On the 29th September we held an event for staff along with our Chair, the Chief Social Worker and some of our Board members to mark the occasion. We will use the opportunity of this being our 21st year and link this to stories about social work and social care as part of our communications campaigns.

We produced a short video charting some of our key milestones:

https://youtu.be/iE6NGnmV_Fw

2. External Engagement

- 2.1 In July we welcomed a delegation from the Ministry of Social Development in Jordan to discuss the regulation of social workers in Northern Ireland. We shared our experience of setting standards for the education and practice of social worker, registration requirements and the process of fitness to practise.
- 2.2 Our work to develop career pathways, qualifications and a CPD framework for social care workers has been well received by our colleagues in the Office of Social Services. We jointly prepared a paper on the work to date which was presented to the DoH HSC Performance and Transformation Executive Board.
- 2.3 The Director of Regulation and Standards and I attended the 5 Country social work and social care alliance meeting. We are developing a 5 country workplan with a focus on building a common narrative on social work and social care; developing common datasets for social work and social care; and exploring the role of workforce regulation in workforce improvement.
- 2.4 We held a successful virtual PiP Awards ceremony on 28th September, with 164 social workers receiving a PiP award. The theme for the event was Diversity and Inclusion, and the contributions from social workers and service users were thought provoking and uplifting. The event was recorded and will be available shortly for viewing through our website.
- 2.5 I have been invited to sit on the DoH Transformation Advisory Group chaired by the Permanent Secretary. I have been nominated as a member of NICON along with 2 other NICON representatives. My role is to bring a social care perspective to the Advisory Board.

3. During this period, I have engaged in the following meetings:

Chair and Chief Executive

- Chair and Director of SBNI
- Chair and CEO RQIA
- NIGALA Board meeting

Chief Executive

- Education Welfare Service Reform Programme Board and chairing the programme Reference Group
- Meetings with DoH on Reform of Adult Social Care
- CEO's ALB's group
- CEO RQIA
- Interim Adult Protection Board
- DoH Social work Workforce Implementation Board
- City and Guilds Industry Skills Board
- NICON
- Connected Health Living lab – technology to support care at home

4. Events attended

4.1 I attended the following events:

- DoH workshop on developing Partnership Agreements
- Nuffield – 2 virtual roundtable events on the challenges and issues in social care

5. Looking Forward:

5.1 The Permanent Secretary is meeting with the Senior leadership Team on 6th October in the Social Care Council Office.

5.2 The NICON conference will be held on the 19th and 20th October in person at the La Mon hotel. We have supported the following sessions:

- Parallel session on social care with Sean Holland, Mathew Taylor CEO of NHS Confederation and Camille Oung from the Nuffield trust
- Breakfast session on Children's and Young People's services
- Social Care Council meeting with invited Directors of Adult Social Care from the HSC Trusts.

Patricia Higgins

30th September 2022