

Title: Northern Ireland Social Care Council – Draft Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

Date: 19 April 2023

Presented by: Patricia Higgins, Chief Executive

ACTION REQUIRED

This Paper is	For Approval
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SUMMARY

The Social Care Council consulted on its new draft Strategic Plan 2023-2027 from 19 January to 10 March 2023. The Board were presented with the outcome of the consultation at their Strategic Session on 29 March 2023. At the Strategic Session, the Board gave their approval to a number of changes to the Strategic Plan on the back of the consultation feedback.

The Strategic Plan has now been revised to accommodate those changes and a new final draft [**Appendix I**] is presented to the Board for your approval. At the same time, the Strategic Plan has been Equality Screened and this is attached [**Appendix II**] for your consideration.

Subject to the Board's approval, we will share the Strategic Plan with our Sponsor Department for their approval before it is published.

We will also publish, on our website, a high-level overview of our response to the feedback received during the consultation [**Appendix III**].

We have developed an Evaluation Strategy [**Appendix IV**] which outlines our approach to evaluation and how we will measure our progress (each year this will be supported with a targeted evaluation plan that includes year 0 benchmarks and key indicators of success).

Finally, we have developed an annual Business Plan for 2023/24 – the first year of our new Strategic Plan [*this is being tabled separately to you for your consideration and approval*].

BACKGROUND

The Social Care Council's current Corporate Strategy expired in 2021. As the Board are aware, the Strategy was extended over the last couple of years following a direction from the Department of Health in response to the pressures of delivering business during the COVID pandemic. The Board had already commenced work on a new Strategic Plan (using an outcomes-based approach) – and had developed four strategic themes as a result (these were tested as part of a pre-consultation with key stakeholders, staff and Partnerships) –

- Develop effective regulation;
- Develop the capability of the workforce;
- Lead with influence; and
- Innovate and Improve.

We carried out an active consultation between January and March 2023 – including surveys, emails, social media, videos, and face to face and online meetings. We had 150 responses to the survey and a number of meetings with key stakeholders, staff and workshops with our Partnerships. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and many commented that they found our Plan easy to read and understand.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

The Strategic Plan has been revised to include a number of changes including –

- A new strategic action to ensure employers understand their responsibilities in relation to their Standards.
- A new strategic action to ensure that the experience of people who use services and carers inform the Standards – ensuring their voice is heard and understood.
- A new strategic action to promote careers in social work and social care.
- New strategic actions on diversity in the workforce and creating a more stable and sustainable workforce.
- Outcomes about the cultural differences in the workforce and society.

We have also made edits to some of the graphics and photos.

We have equality screened the Plan [**Appendix II**] – there were no major issues arising – and given the feedback during the consultation we had already addressed issues in relation to the importance of ensuring our engagement and the services we deliver can be accessed by all individuals regardless of disability, gender or dependant status.

We have developed an Evaluation Strategy to explain our approach to evaluation and measurement [**Appendix IV**].

Business Plan

We have developed a draft Business Plan for 2023/24 (the first year of our new Strategic Plan) – this is being shared with the Board under a separate paper.

Subject to the Board's approval we will publish the Business Plan together with our Strategic Plan online by email.

Next Steps

Following approval by the Board, we will also seek the Department's approval. We will then publish our Strategic Plan (and Business Plan online). We have also developed a short high-level note capturing our response to the feedback we received during the consultation [**Appendix III**].

ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The Strategic Plan has been consulted on and equality screened.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board approve the new Strategic Plan [Appendix I] and consider the Equality Screening [Appendix II] and response to the feedback received during the consultation [Appendix III], and Evaluation Strategy [Appendix IV].

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS AND/OR LINKS HERE

Appendix I – Draft Strategic Plan 2023-2027

Appendix II – Equality Screening

Appendix III – Consultation Response

Appendix IV – Evaluation Strategy